

THE IMPACT OF USING WEBQUESTS ON IMPROVING READING SKILL OF FIRST SECONDARY CLASS IN AMMAN GOVERNORATE

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Abstract:

The study aims at analyzes the effect of WebQuests on improving reading skill of the first secondary class in Amman governorate. The sample of the study was randomly selected, consisted of (70) students, where the sample divided in two groups; the control group (35) students; and experimental group of (35) students. In order to achieve the objectives the study used pre and post-reading comprehension tests. The results of the study showed that there are significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in favor of the experimental group, and no statistical significant difference between male and female at experimental group. In light of the study results have been suggested a set of recommendations, including: the Jordanian educational institutions need to adopt the WebQuests strategy in its educational operation, and need for further studies on actual educational benefits of WebQuestss in other classes and other subjects.

Key Words: *WebQuests, Reading skill, Teaching English, E-learning.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Study Background and Significance

At the present time, the use of technology tools such as (computers, internet, networks) is a key element in the educational process within educational institutions in different forms and types, where the use of computers and the Internet contributes to increasing the number of educational resources available to students, as well as to enhancing students' communication skills, whether in the same place and in different places.

The use of computers and the Internet in education helps students find a variety of useful information on the Internet, providing them with a wide range of reading, assessment and selection of information relevant to the topic they are studying (Asgari & Salehi, 2018).

In addition, rapid technological development has provided a range of opportunities and tools suitable for the educational environment, such as educational programs and text programs and many internet activities such as WebQuestss, so there is no doubt that these tools create new opportunities for students and provide them with numerous benefits such as, discussing ideas on interesting issues, listening to peers' opinions and enhance their skills in reading (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2018).

With the availability of many technological tools for students today, such as IPod and laptop devices, teachers can easily implement WebQuestss, the WebQuestss will be implemented through the use of the students' favorite technological tools, and therefore students will be connected to various aspects of the world (Alshumaimeri & Bamanger, 2018).

On the other hand, in most Arab countries English language is studied as a second language, which can be a real challenge for teachers and students, especially through using conventional teaching methods which depend on teacher more than students (Alshumaimeri, 2012).

In English language teaching students must have four basic skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing, so officials and teachers are seeking for find a suitable method to enhance these skills among students, therefore they towards to use technology like Internet application and WebQuestss model in

order to improve those four skills

Reading skill is one of the basic skills in teaching English, which must be focused from the beginning of learning the language. Also, reading skill impact individual's lives in all aspects whether academically or socially or economically, where individual read in order to gain knowledge and information or to critique the idea and style of the writer (Haboush, 2010).

This study aims to analyses the impact of WebQuests on the reading skill in English language of first secondary class students in Amman governorate. This study is hopefully significant in enhance learning process through explain the importance of using technology tools in teaching methods, where these tools such as WebQuests can provides teachers and students with many resources and information for teaching English language skills.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The conventional way of teaching reading skills in English language became more difficult for the student, because it just using the book for teaching student, also it will not improve the reading skills of students. In addition technology such as WebQuest has changed the world's educational ways and the computer is having a major impact on the ways we interact with information and with each other, and make education process more efficiency.

Also, using WebQuests provides students with many resources and information during their classroom, where WebQuests enhance the deep understanding of content for students more than the traditional method.

The problem of this research will analyses the effect of using WebQuestss on improving reading skill of the first secondary class in Amman Governorate.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The significant of this study came from its attempt to detect the impact of Web Quest's use in improving students' reading skills, in addition, the significant of the study come out from the following:

1. The results of this study may lead to clarification the significant of using WebQuests as a method of teaching reading skill which may improve the learners' reading skills in general more than the traditional methods.
2. The results of this study might encourage students to use WebQuests to gain more information and knowledge from different resources.
3. The results of this study may contribute to attracting the attention of officials in the Jordanian Ministry of Education to the importance of employ WebQuestss in teaching English.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the impact of using WebQuestss on improving reading skill of the first secondary class students in Amman Governorate.

1.5. Questions of the Study

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Are there any statistical significant differences at the level of ($\alpha=0.05$) in the improvement of the reading skill due to the teaching strategy; WebQuests and conventional?
2. Are there any statistical significant differences in the improvement of the reading skill due to student's gender; (male and female)?

2. Related of Literature Review

E-learning is one of the means that support the educational process and transform it from the stage of indoctrination to the stage of creativity, interaction and skills development, and combines all forms of electronic teaching and learning, using the latest methods in the fields of education, publishing and entertainment by the adoption of computers and storage media and networks (Jahromi, et al, 2016).

There are many definition of e-learning, so, we present some definitions and related terminology of the e-learning, as follow:

E-learning is the way that use technology tools such as internet and computer in teaching methods, in order to enhance the understanding level of students and make the teaching process easier for teachers (Kocoglu, 2010).

In addition, e-learning is an Information Communication Technology (ICT) using in order to improve the skills and knowledge of students through develop the teaching method using technology tools, in order to solve problems in more effective ways (Mostafa, 2009).

2.1. Overview of WebQuests

WebQuests introduced for the first time in 1995 by "Dr. Bernie Dodge, a professor at San Diego State University (SDSU)". The original form is designed to integrate the Web tool into teaching process, so it is known as a query-oriented form with some or all information for students to work with, where this information can be found on the web and from different resources (Dodge, 1997).

In addition, WebQuests provide learning with many advantages such as: enhance higher thinking skills of students, use time in effective way, providing information from different resources, encourage students to read, think, analyze, and evaluate, which will effect on their thinking way at future (Tuan, 2011).

WebQuests are designed to provide a real exchange information opportunity for students, in order to create meaningful communication among them, also WebQuests encourage a work as team among students to access the web and gathering information and reproduce it in various forms (Oliver, 2010).

WebQuests is a method that can use for teaching all curriculum areas, where students will be able to use internet more than textbook to gain Knowledge, therefore students will connected to online resources directly depend on the context of specific curriculum tasks (Jahromi, et al, 2016).

The researcher believes that WebQuests will organize the time and tools which used by teachers to provide students with a set of related information from various internet sources, and WebQuests help students to identify problems in order to find the solution, and enhance their skills.

The objective of using WebQests in the teaching operation is to help students to learn in a constructivism way and to enhance their critical thinking, where WebQuests enhance cooperation between students through encourage them to work together; and improve their skills through verbal interaction with each other (Halat & Peker, 2011).

Also, WebQuests strategies have impact on the teaching performance of environmental education, where it encourage students' to use critical thinking skills through using various teaching tasks and missions of opinions, in addition WebQuests can used as a method to organize the learning process (Hsu & Hwang, 2017).

The WebQuests instructional strategy is used as an inquiry-oriented activity, which effectively integrates technology in teaching and learning. This strategy has a positive effect on team work skills and students attitudes, and there is little advantage for improve student achievement when compared it with other education activities (Ali, 2015).

A WebQuests contains six elements. These six elements are commonly used in WebQuestss activities and serves, through specific processes for transforming learning, as follow (Alshumaimeri & Bamanger, 2013):

1. Introduction: a group of instruction that provides some information to the student to help them to deal with the WebQuests.
2. Task: a set of activity that help students to improve their knowledge through gathering information from the WebQuests sorces.
3. The process: explain the phases of the operations that lead teacher and students to complete the mission.
4. Resources: a set of link are embedded in the WebQuests and contains information and knowledge.
5. Conclusion: a set of points reminding students of what they have learned, and help them to increase their experience in other fields.

6. Teacher page: a set of instruction for teachers, which contains detail about standards and objectives.

WebQuests has many advantages, as follow (Alshumaimeri, 2012; **Asgari & Salehi**, 2018):

1. Provides students with opportunities to use a technology tool such as Internet, so they will become more creative individuals of using internet.
2. Expanding critical thinking skills of the students.
3. Engage students in real-life activities.
4. Increase student motivation, in order to improve students' ability to learn more information and knowledge.
5. Students use many resources and various opinions instead of textbooks that only depend on one point of view.
6. WebQuests can be a good substituted for the textbooks.
7. WebQuests focus on four constructs: application, social skills and scaffolding.
8. WebQuests helps students to develops exploration skills and search strategies.
9. It allows students to use language in a meaningful and authentic manner.
10. It enhances the abilities of the talented students.
11. It improves the communication skills between students.

2.2. Reading

There are many definitions for reading; we will mention some of these definitions, as follow:

Cain (2010) defines it as a visual operation which starts with use vision ability in order to interpret graphic, text, and symbols. Reading requires great visual activity, also the person needs to be able to visually distinguish the letters to identify and record them in order to recreate and pronounce the letters.

Also Farlex (2009) defines reading as a way for Reading is the primary source of information exchange and language learning and interpersonal communication. It is a skill that needs special and varied training to recognize the meanings of new and unknown words, and should provide reading to the novice student gradually.

The researcher indicates that reading is not only collection a set of letters and words together but beyond that, where reading focuses on think, imagine and feel, not on memorizing practicing fluency and patterns.

There are many reasons for reading; here we will mention some of these reasons, as follow:

According to Haboush (2010) The reasons are divided into two major parts, as follows:

1. Instrumental/ Usefulness motivate: in this category individuals read in order to gain some knowledge and information, where reading tells the reader something they need to know, such as instructions, rules and road signs.
2. Pleasurable/Interest motivates: in this category individuals read in order for amusement, pleasure and enhance their intellectual stimuli, such as reading a novels, newspaper and magazines.

While Ali (2015) mentioned additional reasons for reading:

1. Practical application: the reason of reading here is to gain information and knowledge to apply them on a practical case, such as computer manuals and laboratory manuals.
2. To get an overview: the reason of reading in this case is to get a sense about the topic, the benefits of it, such as doing an assignment and conducting an initial research.
3. To identify the central idea: the reason of reading here is to extract the main idea of the topic, such as identify the main results in an article.
4. To develop a critical understanding: the reason of reading here is to develop the critical thinking of individuals in order to gain fully understanding of the material, whether in a book or journal.

3. Empirical Studies

Falasca and Altstaedter (2011) investigated the effect of using WebQuestss in develop intercultural competence from the view point of students in the foreign language classroom. The study collected data

from (43) students in "Spanish college classes at a major North American university", the sample consisted of (13) male and (30) female. The study used questionnaire in order to collect data from students, the study achieved many results, including: students had positive views about the nature of the WebQuests, students had significantly positive perceptions of the effect of the WebQuests on their willingness to take advantage of more opportunities to interact with others, and there is a positive impact of using WebQuest's on students' desire to research and explore.

Alshumaimeri and Bamanger (2013) conducted a study aimed to find any significant differences between English foreign language students learn using WebQuest and students learn using traditional method in writing instruction. The sample of the study consisted of (14) Saudi male students, and divided them randomly into control and experimental groups, the results showed many results, including that the writing skill of the experimental group students (WebQuest method) was better than the control group students (traditional methods) in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and length.

Ebadi and Rahimi (2018) investigated the effect of using WebQuest-based classroom on English foreign language student's academic writing skills and their critical thinking, to achieve these objectives the study used mixed-methods approach, through apply "California Critical Thinking Skills Test form B", "IELTS academic writing task 1 and task 2" and interview, the sample of the study consisted of (100) students from "language institute in Sanandaj, Iran", the results of the study showed that the WebQuest-based classroom has significant impact on academic writing skills and critical thinking for students.

Asgari and Salehi (2018) conducted a study aimed to analyze the effect of teaching Iranian pre-university students through web-quests on their learning vocabulary, the sample of the study formed (72) students divided into two groups, the experimental group consisted of (49) students and the control group consisted of (23) students, the study achieved many results including that, there is significant effect of using web-quests on improve students learning vocabulary.

Berezova, et al (2018) investigated the effect of using WebQuests on improving reading skills and writing skills for university students, the sample of the study consisted of (72) students "at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine", the study used semi-experimental approach in order to achieve the objectives through divided the sample into two groups (experimental and control), the study found many results including that, there is significant impact of using WebQuests on enhancing writing and reading skills for university students.

3.1. Population and Sample of the Study

The population of study consisted of all first secondary class students in Amman governorate, during the second semester 2017/2018, which form (2500) male and female students; (1050) male and (1450) female. While the sample of the study comprised (70) first secondary class students in Amman governorate. The study sample was divided into two groups: control group (35) and experimental (35), where the females (40), (19) in the experimental group and (21) in the control group, while males (30), (16) in the experimental group and (14) in the control group.

3.2. Instruments of the Study

The study used pre- and post-reading tests in order to test the students' reading skills before and after using a new teaching method.

For the study sample, the test used unit 4 from English book (Action Book); this test is designed to measure the extent of gain, the first secondary grade students for reading skills, it also contains (4 pages), contains on (20) paragraphs, mark of the test is (20), and the time is one hour. In addition the test has some of creative question, and grammar question (Appendix, 3).

3.3. Reliability of the Test

The instructional design for developing the WebQuests module was rely on the five phases (Analysis, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate). The following figure explains the five phases of ADDIE:

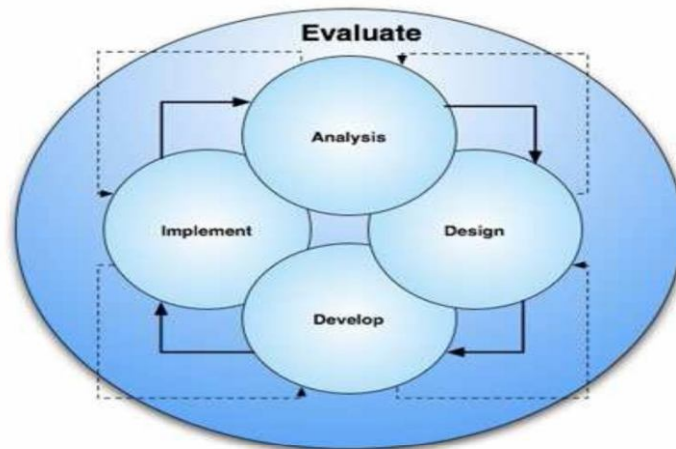


Figure (1): General Method of Design
Source: (Haboush, 2010)

Development Stage:

The researcher used this website to develop her WebQuests:
<http://editor.wix.com/>.

Instructional Material

The fourth unit from the English book of the first grade secondary students was the material of this study, Unit four entitled people and their selves; the main topic of this unit is about Abu Haif, one of the best Egyptian athletes ever, and what Abu Haif did to be a hero. In addition, the unit teaches students how to talk about them self and about the other, also teach them the attributes of hero, and how they can be hero, finally the unit teach some grammar such as using of (since and for), and gave students extra vocabulary.

Statistical Treatment

To analyze the data, Means, Standard Deviation and t-test were used.

2. Results of the Study

In this part the researcher presents the answer of the questions of the study, as follows:

Table 1: Means and standard deviation and t-test of the groups of the pre-test

Variables		Number	Means	St.D	test (t)	Significance
Teaching method	experimental	35	35.06	7.41	0.166	0.478
	control	35	34.76	6.52		
Gender	Male	30	34.62	7.06	0.265	0.532
	Female	40	35.05	6.82		

Table (1) showed that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) between the experimental group students and the control group students, this mean equal of two study groups. As we noted from the table (1) there was no statistically significant difference (≥ 0.05) in the test reading among the students attributed to gender.

2.1. Results Related to the First Question: “Are there any statistical significant differences in the improvement of the reading skill due to the teaching strategy; WebQuests and traditional?”

To investigate the first question, means and standard deviation of the experimental and the control groups' results were computed. (T- test) was used to measure the significance of differences. Table (2) shows the results.

Table 2: Means and standard deviation and t-test of the groups of the post-test

Variables		Number	Means	St.D	test (t)	Significance
Teaching method	experimental	35	18.06	4.504	3.252	0.001
	control	35	13.35	4.417		

Table (2) indicated that the means score was (18.06) and standard deviation was (4.504) for the experimental group. While means score was (13.35) and standard deviation was (4.417) for the control group. In addition, the table showed that (T- test), (3.252), was higher than the (T- test), (2.66), in the post test. This means that there are significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.01$) between the experimental group and the control group in favor of experimental group.

2.1. Results Related to the Second Question: “Are there any statistical significant differences in the improvement of the reading skill due to student gender; (male and female)?”

To investigate the second question, means and standard deviation of the male and female at the experimental group results were computed. (T- test) was used to measure the significance of differences. Table (3) describes the results.

Table 3: Means, standard deviation and t-test of the impact of gender on the performance of students in the experimental group

Variables		Number	Means	St.D	test (t)	Significance
Gender	Male	30	18.8	3.661	1.012	0.306
	Female	40	17.3	3.768		

Table (3) showed that the means score was (18.8) and standard deviation was (3.661) for the male at experimental group. While means score was (17.3) and standard deviation was (3.768) for the female at experimental group. In addition, the table indicated that (T-test), (1.012), was less than the (T-test), (2.66), in the post test. This means that no significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.306$) between the male and female at experimental group.

The researcher attributes this result that students, whether male or female, to have the same tendencies to use WebQuests, where both males and females using the internet and computer most of their lives, without that there will be a preference for one over the other.

2. Conclusion

The results of the first question showed significant differences between the two study groups due to the teaching method and in favor of the experimental group. While the results of the second question pointed that there's no significant difference among the students of the experimental group due to gender variable (male and female).

The researcher attributes this result to the useful of using the WebQuests as a modern teaching strategy, such as motivation and authenticity, learning in groups, cognitive development, interaction analysis, cooperative work, and improves the communication skills among students.

In addition, this significant effect can be due to the techniques and activities of WebQuests through the various links and the different of teaching tools in it, therefore this will develop reading skills for students. In light of the results of the study, it was suggested the following recommendations:

1. The need to employ the WebQuests method as a teaching strategy in the educational operation in the educational institutions of Jordan.
2. The need to hold training courses in order to determine the suitable curriculum units for the WebQuests strategy.

3. The need for further studies on actual educational benefits of WebQuests in other classes and other subjects.

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