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Alamat redaksi jurnal : Jl Conge Ngembalrejo PO BOX 51, Telp. (0291)
432677, 438818 fax 441613 kodus 59322 Email: jetl@stainkudus.ac.id

Website: <http://journal.stainkudus.ac.id/>

FOREWORD

Our deep gratitude goes to the presence of Allah SWT who has given us strength and ability, so that we can publish JETLI: Journal of English Teaching and Learning Issues at English Studies Program IAIN Kudus.

This edition contains about theoretical and empirical studies in the field of English, especially on education, teaching and linguistics. Observers of English education have contributed in this journal, both from within and outside of IAIN Kudus. Hopefully the scientific treasury in this journal is useful for the implementation of English education that develops and integrates the linguistic, Islamic, scientific, and professional educators, and competitive aspects.

With the publication of the Journal of JETLI, it is expected that the input and constructive criticism from the academic community and the various competent parties, so that the next issue will be better and better quality.

Finally the editorial team expressed gratitude to the lecturers, editors and related parties who participated in the publication of this journal.

Journal team

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Using Webquest to Improve Fun Writing for the Ninth Graders at MTs Madrasatul Qur'an Tebuireng Jombang

Wardani Dwi W^{1*}

¹STKIP PGRI Jombang, Jombang, Indonesia



wardani@stkipjbl.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study describes how the process of teaching and learning using WebQuest can develop the ninth graders' writing ability of report text. The subjects consist of the 15 ninth graders. The students are taught to be able to write report texts by using WebQuest after they visit the web addresses given in the two cycles of classroom action research. Their writing ability achievement and the information on students' interaction during the teaching and learning process are attained by overseeing writing products at the end of each cycle and by using observation checklists and field notes. The result indicates that WebQuest successful in developing the students' writing ability of report texts. The comparison of the students' scores in the preliminary study and in Cycle 2 was significantly developed. In preliminary study, the students' average score is 50.8. While in the cycle two, the students' score is 76.8.

KEYWORDS:
Fun Writing;
Webquest;
Action Research;

Introduction

Writing as one of the four language skills plays an important role in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia. Hyland (2003, p. 9) views that writing is a way of sharing personal meanings and it emphasizes the power of the personality to construct someone's view based on a certain topic. Writing comprises communicating a particular message in the written form (Spratt, 2005, p. 26). However, writing is regarded as the most difficult skill for foreign language learners to master

because it involves several components which need to be considered while the learners are writing, such as content, organization, vocabulary, and punctuation (Brown, 2004, p. 244–245). In addition, writing is linked with several components of language such as choice of word, grammar, syntax, mechanism, and generating of ideas (Gebhard, 2000, p. 211). Furthermore, writers should pay attention both to the goal of writing itself and the readers (Gebhard, 2000, p. 211).

Writing is one way of making meaning from experience for ourselves and for others. In addition, writing can provide the opportunity for students to express themselves through a written form. Moreover, writing can also develop the students' understanding of an issue by organizing their ideas on a piece of paper.

However, in *MTs.Madrasatul Qur'an TebuirengJombang*, the writer has learned that the teaching of writing is somewhat underestimated. This school is inside Islamic Boarding School (*PondokPesantren* or shorten as *ponpes*) Madrasatul Qur'an or it is well known as *ponpesHuffadz*. The students of this *ponpes* are all boys and so are the students of the school. They come from all over Indonesia such as Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Irian Jaya and so on, three of them even come from Malaysia and one is from Brunei Darussalam. English subject at the school is allocated 4x45 minutes a week and each meeting lasts for 2x45 minutes. This school is very interesting to be the setting of the research because the students have low motivation in learning English. It is because the school where they study places/focuses on religious lesson better than general ones such as English, math, physic, biology and others. Like in other Junior High Schools, in *MTs*, writing is also taught in an integrated way along with other skills such as reading, speaking and listening. Writing has very little time allotment. Although it is important, writing is excluded in mid-term test or final test in every semester as well as in the national examination. The teachers as well as the

government prefers objective test in the form of multiple choices to writing text in evaluating students' achievement in English. In other words, writing is considered not too important to discuss in class by both teachers and students. It seems that the teachers do not teach writing seriously. In practice, they simply assign the students to write any topic without further discussion. As a result, the students' writing products are far from satisfactory.

On the basis of the unsatisfactory condition above, the writer intends to find a solution to solve the problems through an appropriate strategy that guide the students as much as possible in writing. A teacher also must be creative and innovative in selecting teaching strategy as well as the material. Internet-based teaching is one of creative and innovative options.

Internet-based teaching (IBT) is not widely implemented yet, though some studies revealed that this teaching strategy is beneficial. Teacher can use IBT as a resource of ideas such as teaching approaches, teaching aids, teaching strategy, etc., in order to help students learn better. This global technology offers a mode of communication that provides at first sight convenient, authentic, direct and speedy access to native speaker and their cultures (Block and Cameron, p. 2002). According to Kilickaya (2004) authentic materials, such as Internet-based materials, enable students to interact with the real language as well as the content. Teachers are being challenged to find ways to integrate the use of computer technologies into their teaching to both address these outcomes and to enhance what they have previously done in their classrooms. There are many strategies and learning materials offered by the Internet in enhancing students' ability in mastering English such as podcast, video podcast, online game, Wikipedia, online dictionary, online encyclopedia, WebQuest and so on. Therefore, this study employs WebQuest to solve the problems that raise in the classroom.

The term *WebQuest* is a compound from the word *Web* which refers to the *World Wide Web* or the internet and the word *Quest* which means "a search or pursuit made in order to find or obtain something". A WebQuest is defined as "an inquiry-oriented lesson format in which most or all the information that learners work with comes from the web" (Dodge, 2007). The model was developed by Bernie Dodge at San Diego State University, United States of America, in February, 1995 with early input from his colleague, Tom March, from the same university. The primary function of a WebQuest is to "make the best use of a learner's time" when using the Internet to search for educational materials (Dodge, 1997, p. 5).

WebQuest, devised by Dodge and March in 1995, was considered to be an effective way to organize chaotic Internet resources and help learners gain new knowledge through a guided learning environment. It has been widely used in subjects such as social science, biology, English and writing.

The WebQuest model is based on constructivism, self-directed learning, collaborative learning, situated learning and scaffold learning. It can be designed for use in either short-term or long-term instruction. The aim can be either to integrate knowledge to create new objectives or to use information to criticize from many perspectives. The resources on the Internet should be carefully selected by the instructor for both their credibility, and in order to include diverse perspectives on the topic being investigated.

Dudeney (2003) recognizes the WebQuest model as a potential pedagogical tool by pointing out several advantages. They include providing a relatively easy way to incorporate the Internet into the language classroom, encouraging critical thinking, leading to more communication and interaction through group activities, and eliciting greater learner motivation through interdisciplinary studies as well as "real-life" tasks.

As suggested by GeStoks (2002), WebQuest benefits language learning in several aspects. Engaged in a WebQuest activity, learners have the possibility of being exposed to the target language by surfing on the web. In addition, the problem-solving approach of WebQuest may facilitate language learning.

Method

The study employs Collaborative Classroom Action Research (CCAR) design. The writer works collaboratively with one of the English teachers of MTs. Madrasatul Qur'an Tebuireng Jombang who was involved from the beginning up to the end of the process of the research activities. The writer acted as the practitioner who taught writing by using WebQuest, whereas, the collaborator acted as the observer who observes the implementation of the action in the classroom.

Since the writer collaborates with the teacher in handling and conducting the study, this is relevant to Kemmis and McTaggart's idea (1988) cited in Burns (1999, p. 13) that the approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members.

The study was conducted at MTs Madrasatul Qur'an Tebuireng Jombang. This school had been facilitated with some equipment which was needed in applying WebQuest in the teaching and learning process, namely computer or laptop and of course Internet connection (it can be hotspot area or Local Area Network, LAN). The subjects of the study were the students of ninth grade class (B) as the subjects; the class consisted of 15 students and all of them are boys. They were chosen based on several considerations namely. First, based on the way of grouping the class, the ninth grade (B) was assumed as the lowest competency class among the other ninth grade classes. Second, an informal preliminary study which has been

conducted shows that the students' abilities in writing were poor.

The writer started the study by doing preliminary study. In this case, the writer observes the teaching and learning in the study of English subject. He identifies the students' real problems and interest and the learning materials used. Afterward, the general plan was designed referring to the idea of how the students' writing ability could be improved by WebQuest. The general plan, then, is implemented and observed. Finally, the reflection is conducted in order to identify all facts including the success and the failure in the implementation as well as the effect of it. The reflection result is used to determine whether the second cycle needs to be conducted. The procedure of classroom action research utilized in this study was a cyclical process adopted from the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988: 11) comprising four steps: 1) planning the action, 2) implementing the action, 3) observing the action, and 4) reflecting.

Using WebQuest to develop students' writing ability is started with pre writing activities. In this stage, the writer/teacher introduces the students what WebQuest was. He then give the students WebQuest web pages to be read. Afterwards, he give students worksheet of WebQuest which consists of some stages namely introduction, the task, the process, and conclusion. In introduction, students were provided by general information about the topic; in this case, the topic is about animal life cycles. Then, in the task, the students get some direction and clues about what they should do. There are some steps to be done here. The next stage is the process, here the students are provided with some web addresses related to the topic. Students get several web addresses to be visited. The last is conclusion, here students get summary of what they do in the task and the process stages.

The next activity is whilst writing. Here, the teacher ask the students to visit the web addresses they has got. Students then should collect any information related to the topic. In collecting information, they are helped by tables on the worksheet of WebQuest provided by the teacher. So, the students only need to fill the tables. Based on the information they get from the web, they are asked to make a composition of report text with their own language. But before that, the teacher give explanation how to make a good report text until they understood well. Then, they make a first draft of report text based on the information in the tables. Finally, in the last activity is post writing. In this stage, students get chance to have mini conference with the teacher to consult any difficulties they get such as unknown vocabulary. By having this activity, students are really helped since they do not need to be afraid of or ashamed with other students for their incapability. At last after having mini conference, they have to revise and make a final composition of report text.

Result

The implementation of WebQuest in this study take two cycles since the score in the first cycle did not meet the criteria of success. Therefore the lesson plan is revised and it is continued to the second cycle. In this cycle, the score of students' writing is improved and meet the criteria of success. Consequently, the action is stopped to draw conclusion. Based on the results of the students' final composition, there is an improvement of the students' mean score from the preceding score in the preliminary study to Cycle 1. The mean of score in the preliminary study is 50.8 and the mean score of the students' writing in Cycle 1 was 60.27.

Apparently, the result of Cycle one has not met the criteria of success. The scores of students' writing do not reach the score used as criteria of success. It means that the teaching of writing by using WebQuest in the first cycle have not made a significant

improvement yet in terms of content, organization, facts, and grammar. Students' Score in Writing Report text of Cycle 1 can be seen in Appendix 4e. From the Appendix 4e, we know that only 4 students out of 15 students get more than the total score/criteria of success (preliminary and improvement score). The student's lowest score is 52 and the highest student's score is 72. Meanwhile, the result of students' final writing achievement is 60.27 at average of 65.8 determined as criteria of success. In terms of content, the students get 26.66 in average of 40 maximum scores or 6.67 in average of 10 maximum scores. Then in terms of organization, facts, and grammar, the students only get 2.8, 2.67, and 2.93, respectively, in average of 5 maximum scores, or 11.2, 10.66, and 11.73 in average of 20 maximum scores.

The students' final products mostly present limited information with lack of facts in parts of the paragraphs. The organization is not clear and lacked of continuity. The structures of the text are not well-constructed. Some mistakes in grammar and mistakes in spelling are noticeable. Therefore, the writer concludes that the action is to be continued to the next cycle.

The result of students' final writing achievement in the second cycle is 76.8 at average of 65.8 determines as criteria of success. In terms of content, the students get 7.33 in average of 10 maximum scores, or 29.33 in average of 40 maximum scores. Then in terms of accuracy of facts, vocabulary, and grammar, the students obtain 4.07, 4.2, and 3.6, respectively in average of 5 maximum score, or 16.26, 16.53, and 14.66 in average of 20 maximum scores.

To figure up, the result of the students' final drafts has met the criteria of success. Therefore, the writer concludes that the action come to an end.

Discussion

Based on the data of this research, it is found that using WebQuest as a source of learning materials to develop students' writing ability is one of appropriate ways to teach report texts and gives beneficial contribution in improving students' ability in writing. This WebQuest is implemented in view of writing as process that consists of four stages, namely prewriting, drafting, revising and editing (Gebhard, 2000). Therefore, the teacher has to follow a particular procedure in implementing this WebQuest.

In the prewriting stage the teacher has to introduce to the students' apperception about the concepts by conducting brainstorming to lead the students to focus on the activities which will be done. The brainstorming was done by asking the background knowledge of students such as *"Do you know elephant? What does mosquito eat? Tell us the characteristics of ant"*. The teacher should create the appropriate activities to guide the students to generate ideas, exploring their own or other ideas, from the web. It is in line with Seow's (2002, p. 317) opinion that prewriting activities can lead students in generating ideas and collecting information for writing. In this case, the students are involved by surfing the Internet/web and they are lead to complete tables on worksheet by answering leading questions *"How many stages do these animals have lifecycles?"* and *"What do these animals eat/drink?"*. From their answers, the students are guided to make sentences based on the information they get from the web. Subsequently, in giving instruction and explanation, the teacher uses English and Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia). It is done in order to avoid misinterpretation and to facilitate the students in accomplishing the task more easily. Gebhard (2000: 79) stated that the students had the tendency to start working a task sooner when it was clear to them. So, the use of Indonesian is to assist students in accepting the unclear explanation in order to get more understanding.

In the drafting stage, the students write the first drafts based on their information that they collected in the previous stage. It is

supported by Gebhard (2000, p. 228) who stated that drafting is a process of jotting down the ideas that they have got in the pre writing. In this stage, the teacher has to facilitate the students to exploring their ideas freely without thinking greatly on grammar. This finding is in accordance with the idea stated by Smalley, et al., (2001, p. 8) that in the drafting stage, the writer may not exceedingly concern with the grammatical form but the writer should focus more on finding the ideas to be put in the paper. Brown (2001, p. 347) states that by reading and studying a variety of relevant models of texts, students could gain important insights about how they should write about the subject matter that they may become the topic of their writing. Before having students write their first drafts, the teacher gives a model paragraph then followed by the explanation. In this case, the teacher gives model on report text followed by the enlightenment about generic structure and generic features (simple present tense, action verbs) of report texts.

In the revising stage, the students were brought to the real activity sitting in groups to do peer-revising activity by exchanging their first drafts each other. In the revising stage, the students helped each other to be responsible to their team and their own (Slavin, 1978 cited by Rasyid, 1999). The students were assigned to check their friends' drafts in terms of the spelling, accuracy of facts and grammar. In terms of the research finding, at first, the students got difficulties in correcting their friends' work because there were no revising guidelines. Later on, in the second cycle, they could progressively revised their drafts or their friends' drafts in terms of the spelling, accuracy of facts and grammar based on the teacher's guidance and revising guidelines. The finding of this research showed that having mini-conference could give positive impact on the students' drafts. At first, the students were reluctant to come to the teacher's desk, but later on they enjoyed the activities very much. As the result, in the second cycle, most of the students could work

cooperatively by giving comments or suggestions although they were still in simple ones.

The last stage is editing. In this stage, the students had to work individually to re-write the first drafts in order to construct the final drafts based on the feedback from their friends and the teacher. The finding of this study showed that the students' ability in writing had improved significantly. It could be observed on the students' final drafts which were evaluated by using Analytical Scoring Rubric adapted from Cohen (1994). At preliminary study, the students' average score was 50.8. In the first cycle, the result of the students' final writing achievement was 60.26 at average of 65.8 determined as criteria of success. Then, in the second cycle, the students' average score was greater than 65.8 in their final draft. The result of the students' average score was 76.8. Since the mean score for every cycle gave significant improvement and in the second cycle it had met the criteria of success, the study could be deemed successful.

WebQuest which was used as source of learning materials in this study could give a significant improvement on students' ability in writing report text. It is because WebQuest has a lot of potential topics (as stated by Dogde, 2007). By using WebQuest, students could be more involved in the teaching and learning process since it provides interesting materials with various topics. Students who were reluctant to be active in the class could pay more attention when WebQuest was applied. Students were motivated, they not only made more effort, but their minds were also more alert and ready to make connections. WebQuests use several strategies to increase students' motivation. First, WebQuests use a central question that honestly needs answering. When students were asked to understand, hypothesize or problem-solve an issue that confronts the real world, they faced an authentic task, not something that only carried meaning in a school classroom. Although writer could not count on getting a response, when students received feedback

from their friends they did not previously know, they joined a community of learners and had their presence, if not, their contribution, were not acknowledged. The second feature of WebQuests that increases students' motivation is that students were given real resources to work with. Rather than turning to a dated textbook, filtered encyclopedias or middle-of-the-road magazines, with the Web students can directly access individual experts, searchable databases, current reporting, and even outlying groups to gather their insights.

Lastly, the answer or solution the student teams develop can be posted, emailed or presented to real people for feedback and evaluation. This authentic assessment also motivates students to do their best and come up with a real group answer, not simply something to fulfill an assignment.

As stated by Dogde (2002), by using WebQuest, students can develop their thinking skills. It was identified in the teaching and learning process. Students tackled questions that prompted higher level thinking. Certainly, the Web could be used as a source for simple information retrieval, but this missed its power. Built into the WebQuest process are the strategies of cognitive psychology and constructivism. First, the question posed to students cannot be answered simply by collecting and spitting back information. A WebQuest forces students to transform information into something else: a cluster that maps out the main issues, a comparison, a hypothesis, a solution, etc.

In order to engage students in higher level cognition, WebQuests use scaffolding or prompting which has been shown to facilitate more advanced thinking. Technical scaffolding is a newer approach in which computers replace the teachers as the experts or guides, and students can be guided with web links, online tutorials, or help pages (Yelland and Masters, 2007). Educational software can help students follow a clear structure and allows students to plan properly (Lai and Law, 2006). In other words, by breaking down the task into meaningful "portions" and

asking students to undertake specific sub-tasks, a WebQuest can step them through the kind of thinking process that more expert learners would typically use. Then, constructivism suggests that when students need to understand a more complex or sophisticated topic like those that encompass WebQuests, it does not help to serve them shortened truths, bubbled down examples, or step-by-step formulas. What they need are many examples with lots of information and opinions on the topic through which they will sift until they have constructed an understanding that not only connects to their own individual prior knowledge, but also builds new schema that will be refined when students encounter the topic again in the future. Until the Web, this kind of activity was very difficult for the average teacher to create because collecting such a breadth of resources was next to impossible. Besides, the students could use their time effectively to do the task in the WebQuest. It is in line with Dogde (1997) that stated the primary function of WebQuest is to make the best use of learners' time when using the Internet to search educational materials.

The other reason why students could be more engaged using WebQuest comes from the other features of WebQuest that is cooperative learning. As stated by David and Johnson (2001) that cooperative learning promotes students learning and academic achievement, enhances students' satisfaction with their learning experience. As the writer has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, in this WebQuest students take on roles within a small student group and this tends to promote motivation. In addition, because the WebQuest targets learning about large and complex topics, it is probably not realistic to expect each student to master all of its aspects. This is not to say that students do not gain the overall understanding, but it does suggest to learners the reality that not everyone knows everything. Having students develop proficiency and be appreciated for it by their peers is built into each WebQuest. By

running several WebQuest groups in the same class, students will also see that different solutions were chosen by each team because of the quality of the group members' research and argumentation skills. As students complete more WebQuests they will become increasingly aware that their individual work has a direct impact of the intelligence of their group's final product.

The most important factor related to student learning and technology use is how teachers relate the technology-based activity to other learning activities. Relatedly, WebQuests are not the endpoint, but the beginning of student use of the Web for learning. Ideally, in the not so distant future, students will have internalized many of the cognitive strategies built into WebQuests, so that students direct and guide their own studies and findings. Teacher might call this idea "WebQuests as training wheels."

Perhaps the highest obstacle some teachers will face in implementing WebQuests relates to technology access. No one's situation epitomizes the perfect technology set-up, and the exact details of implementing our WebQuest will vary depending on the kind of Web access we have and the number of computers available. Still, feel comforted by the fact that no classroom or school is free from dealing with the constraints imposed by limitations in technology. Even schools with lots of computers may not have adequate bandwidth to access the Internet quickly. Or, perhaps access is fine, but the computers do not have enough RAM and therefore have to run older versions of Web browsers. Or, maybe the school does not even have an Internet connection and we are doing all our Web navigation from home. The varieties are infinite, but this is a misery we all share.

Dealing with the students' participation in the process of writing, the results of the writer's and observer's observation obtained during the implementation of WebQuest in two cycles

showed that the students' participation on teaching and learning process improved from the first cycle to the following cycle.

In the first cycle, most of students did not participate actively in the teaching and learning process. Some students looked reluctant to come together with the others to share and discuss ideas. They did not give good responses. They were not actively involved in a group work and could not give meaningful contribution in the revising and the editing their first drafts to be a better drafts based on feedback from the friends and the teacher. In addition, their perception toward WebQuest is good even though still there is negative viewpoint.

Finally, in the second cycle, most of the students had been enthusiastic, motivated, and actively involved in joining all the activities incorporated in the teaching and learning process using WebQuest. Besides, they showed positive responses toward the implementation of WebQuest and recommended WebQuest for the upcoming writing activities.

Conclusion

Referring to the findings obtained during the implementation of WebQuest in the two cycles, it can be inferred that WebQuest that can be used effectively to develop the ability of the ninth grade students of MTs Madrasatul Qur'an TebuirengJombang in writing report texts, include several steps as follows (1) leading students to the topic by giving some questions and showing web addresses related to the topic discussed, (2) introducing the WebQuest and distributing the worksheet, (3) assigning the students to work in group, (4) informing students about the things they should do in their groups, (5) asking the students to do task and answer the questions in the worksheet: "How many stages do these animals have life cycles?" and "Mention the stages of their life cycles" (6) asking the students to make sentences based on their information from the web, (7) giving a model of report texts and explaining generic structure and

generic features (Simple Present Tense, action verbs) of report texts, (8) assigning the students to write the first draft, (9) exchanging the works in group to get feedback by peer-revising (10) giving time to the students to do conference with the teacher, and (11) editing the first draft to make the final drafts.

WebQuest has some strength in teaching and learning report texts. First, it encourages students to interact with information based on Internet resources. Second, it gives the students an easy way to generate the idea by referring to the information they get from the web. Third, it encourages the students to write without being afraid of making mistakes. Fourth, it is motivating (stimulates learners' imagination). Fifth, it requires students to work cooperatively in order to solve their problems by giving feedbacks, suggestions, and comments. Finally, it encourages positive teacher feedback rather than judgmental comments.

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