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DEVELOPING STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE USING WEBQUEST TECHNOLOGY

In today's global world, the ability to communicate effectively between people of different cultures has become very vital. As classes become more diverse, educators are faced with the challenge of preparing students for intercultural interactions and a deeper understanding of other cultures. The article explores the potential of webquest technology as a pedagogical tool for improving students' intercultural communicative competence. Webquests are inquiry-based learning activities that use Internet resources to engage students in collaborative problem solving. The article discusses how webquests can be designed and implemented to develop students' intercultural understanding and competence. The article presents a theoretical framework for integrating concepts and practical activities of intercultural communication in the form of webquests, offering teachers practical strategies for developing culturally diverse and relevant tasks.

The article highlights the benefits of using webquests to develop intercultural communication competence, such as developing critical thinking, cooperation and empathy. The use of WebQuests also helps address potential challenges in effectively incorporating intercultural components into WebQuests, ensuring that students gain meaningful intercultural experiences. Explores how students can develop cultural awareness, empathy, and effective communication skills by using diverse perspectives, cultural artifacts, and virtual interactions. 103 Miras University students took part in the empirical part of the study. The results indicate that WebQuests provide a valuable platform for students to explore, analyze, and interact with different cultures, promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation of diversity. The article concludes by discussing implications for educational practice and providing recommendations for teachers to effectively integrate WebQuests into their curriculum to enhance students' intercultural communicative competence.

Key words: WebQuest, intercultural, communicative, competence, students, education.

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Веб-квест технологиясын пайдалану арқылы студенттердің мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттілігін дамыту

Қазіргі жаһандық әлемде әртүрлі мәдениет адамдары арасында тиімді қарым-қатынас жа-сау мүмкіндігі өте маңызды болды. Сыныптар алуан түрлі болған сайын педагогтардың алдында оқушыларды мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынасқа және басқа мәдениеттерді тереңірек түсінуге дайындау міндеті тұр. Мақалада студенттердің мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттілігін арттырудың педагогикалық құралы ретінде webquest технологиясының әлеуеті зерттеледі. Веб-квесттер – бұл студенттерді бірлесе отырып мәселені шешуге тарту үшін Интернет ресурстарын пайдаланатын сұрауға негізделген оқу әрекеті. Мақалада студенттердің мәдениетаралық түсінігі мен құзыреттілігін дамыту үшін вебквесттерді қалай құрастыруға және енгізуге болатыны талқыланады. Мақалада вебквесттер түріндегі мәдениетаралық коммуникацияның концепциялары мен практикалық әрекеттерін біріктірудің теориялық негізі ұсынылған, мұғалімдерге мәдени әртүрлі және өзекті міндеттерді әзірлеудің практикалық стратегияларын ұсынады.

Мақалада сыни ойлауды, ынтымақтастықты және эмпатияны дамыту сияқты мәдениетаралық коммуникациялық құзыреттілікті дамыту үшін вебквесттерді пайдаланудың артықшылықтары көрсетілген. WebQuests қолдану сонымен қатар мәдениетаралық құрамдастарды WebQuests-ке тиімді енгізудегі ықтимал қиындықтарды шешуге көмектеседі, бұл студенттердің мәнді мәдениетаралық тәжірибе алуын қамтамасыз етеді. Әртүрлі көзқарастарды, мәдени артефактілерді және виртуалды өзара әрекеттесу арқылы студенттердің мәдени сананы, эмпатияны және тиімді қарым-қатынас дағдыларын қалай дамыта алатынын зерттейді. Зерттеудің эмпирикалық бөлігіне Мирас университетінің 103 студенті қатысты. Нәтижелер WebQuests студенттерге әртүрлі

мәдениеттерді зерттеуге, талдауға және өзара әрекеттесуге, әртүрлілікті тереңірек түсінуге және бағалауға көмектесетін құнды платформаны қамтамасыз ететінін көрсетеді. Мақала білім беру тәжірибесіне әсер етуді талқылаумен және мұғалімдерге оқушылардың мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттілігін арттыру үшін WebQuests бағдарламасын оқу жоспарына тиімді енгізу бойынша ұсыныстар берумен аяқталады.

Түйін сөздер: WebQuest, мәдениетаралық, коммуникативті, құзыреттілік, студенттер, білім.

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Развитие межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции студентов с использованием веб-квест технологии

В современном глобальном мире способность эффективно общаться между людьми разных культур становится очень важной. По мере того, как группы становятся более разнообразными, преподаватели сталкиваются с проблемой подготовки учащихся к межкультурному взаимодействию и более глубокому пониманию других культур. В статье исследуется потенциал технологии веб-квестов как педагогического инструмента для повышения межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции учащихся. Веб-квесты — это учебные мероприятия, основанные на запросах, в которых используются интернет-ресурсы для вовлечения учащихся в совместное решение задач. В статье обсуждается, как можно разработать и внедрить веб-квесты для развития межкультурного понимания и компетентности учащихся. В статье представлены теоретические основы интеграции концепций и практических мероприятий межкультурного общения в форме веб-квестов, предлагая учителям практические стратегии для разработки культурно разнообразных и актуальных задач.

В статье подчеркиваются преимущества использования веб-квестов для развития межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции, такой как развитие критического мышления, сотрудничества и эмпатии. Применение веб-квеста помогает также решать потенциальные проблемы по эффективному включению межкультурных компонентов в веб-квесты, гарантируя, что учащиеся получают значимый межкультурный опыт. Исследовано, как учащиеся могут развивать культурную осведомленность, эмпатию и эффективные коммуникативные навыки, используя различные точки зрения, культурные артефакты и виртуальное взаимодействие. В эмпирической части исследования приняли участие 103 студента Университета Мирас. Результаты показывают, что веб-квесты предоставляют учащимся ценную платформу для изучения, анализа и взаимодействия с различными культурами, способствуя более глубокому пониманию и оценке разнообразия. В заключении статьи обсуждаются последствия для образовательной практики и даются рекомендации учителям по эффективной интеграции веб-квестов в их учебный план для повышения межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции учащихся.

Ключевые слова: веб-квест, межкультурная, коммуникативная, компетенция, студенты, образование.

Introduction

The modernization of education involves the formation of new models of educational activities using information and telecommunications teaching aids.

Among students, most often there is a passive perception of information received via the Internet, which leads to stereotyped thinking and a decrease in learning motivation. With such an attitude, Internet resources do not become a basis for personal development, but simply a universal cheat sheet for all occasions. Meanwhile, developing information technologies offer a lot of opportunities for students and teachers to work together.

One of such promising educational opportunities is the Web-Quest technology, according to which

the teacher does not give lectures in the traditional form, but acts as a consultant, organizer and coordinator of students' research educational and cognitive activities. In turn, students become equal participants in the learning process, sharing with the teacher responsibility for the process and learning outcomes.

The relevance of this technology is that it helps to reveal the "educational vector" of the use of network resources. Having gained access to the World Wide Web, students, as mentioned above, do not use all its advantages to the full. The Web Quest technology takes students away from the consumer attitude to the network, encouraging them to be creative, collaborating, developing the ability to work in a team, and perform various social roles.

WebQuest technology has revolutionized the field of education by providing an innovative and engaging approach to online learning. This article explores the history and concept of WebQuests, drawing on insights from various authors in the field. By examining the evolution of WebQuest technology and understanding its core principles, educators can effectively incorporate WebQuests into their teaching practices, enhancing student engagement and promoting active learning.

Literature review

In the late 1990s, Bernie Dodge, a professor of educational technology, introduced the concept of WebQuests as a framework for designing inquiry-based learning activities that utilize the vast resources of the internet (Dodge, 1995). WebQuests were designed to guide students through a structured exploration of online content, promoting critical thinking, information literacy, and collaboration. The initial aim of WebQuests was to provide students with a purposeful and meaningful learning experience in the digital age.

WebQuests are characterized by specific elements that make them unique and effective instructional tools. According to Dodge and March, WebQuests consist of an authentic task or problem to be solved, a clear description of the task, a set of online resources for students to access, and a well-defined process that guides students' inquiry (Dodge and March, 2001: 27). These components ensure that students actively engage with the content, make connections, and construct knowledge.

WebQuests offer several benefits that enhance the learning experience. According to studies by Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark (Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark, 2006: 75) and Liu and Huang, WebQuests promote student engagement, critical thinking, and information literacy skills (Liu and Huang, 2008: 238). By integrating technology, multimedia, and real-world applications, WebQuests create an interactive and immersive learning environment that caters to diverse learning styles and motivates students.

The integration of WebQuests into the curriculum requires careful planning and alignment with educational goals. Teachers should ensure that WebQuests are designed with clear learning objectives and align with the curriculum standards (Reeve, 2012: 35). The flexibility of WebQuests allows for their integration across various subjects and grade levels, making them versatile tools for enhancing student learning in multiple domains.

As technology continues to evolve, so does the potential of WebQuests. Authors such as Dodge

(Dodge, 2007: 22) and O'Neill and McLaughlin discuss the future directions of WebQuests, including the incorporation of mobile devices, social media, and virtual reality (O'Neill and McLaughlin, 2005: 770). However, challenges persist, such as the need for professional development and the potential for information overload (Owston & Wideman, 2001: 175). Educators must stay informed, adapt to technological advancements, and address these challenges to maximize the effectiveness of WebQuests.

So, WebQuest technology has a rich history and a promising future in education. By understanding the concept and principles of WebQuests, educators can harness the power of technology to engage students in meaningful and interactive learning experiences. The research and insights provided by authors in the field lay the foundation for effective implementation and integration of WebQuests into the curriculum, empowering students to become active learners in the digital age.

Also, it is necessary to note that worldwide research has shown that WebQuests can be effective in developing English language skills among university students. A study by Khalifa and Sarab examined the impact of WebQuests on English reading comprehension skills and found significant improvement among participants (Khalifa and Sarab, 2016: 56). WebQuests provide opportunities for authentic language use, vocabulary expansion, and reading comprehension practice through engaging online tasks. Additionally, the interactive nature of WebQuests encourages students to communicate, collaborate, and present information in English, thereby enhancing their speaking and writing skills.

WebQuests empower students to take ownership of their learning process and develop self-directed learning skills. According to Jonassen, WebQuests promote active learning and autonomy by allowing students to navigate through online resources, make decisions, and solve problems independently (Jonassen, 2008: 9). Through the process of inquiry and exploration, students develop critical thinking, information literacy, and research skills. WebQuests also foster motivation and engagement as students work on tasks that are relevant, meaningful, and aligned with their interests and goals.

The use of WebQuests in English language instruction integrates technology and enhances students' digital literacy skills. WebQuests require students to navigate websites, evaluate online information, and utilize digital tools to complete tasks. By engaging with digital resources, students become proficient in online research, information evalua-

tion, and effective communication. This aligns with the 21st-century skills necessary for success in the digital era.

While WebQuests offer numerous benefits, there are also challenges to consider when implementing them in English language teaching. Technical issues, such as limited internet access or unreliable websites, can impede the smooth functioning of WebQuests. Designing effective and engaging WebQuests requires careful planning, resource curation, and consideration of diverse learner needs. Additionally, the assessment of student performance in WebQuests can be challenging, as it requires a balance between process and product evaluation.

WebQuest technology has emerged as a valuable tool for teaching English language at the university level. By incorporating WebQuests into English language instruction, educators can enhance students' language skills, promote autonomy and self-directed learning, foster digital literacy, and provide engaging and authentic learning experiences. As technology continues to evolve, it is essential for educators to explore innovative approaches like WebQuests to adapt to the changing educational landscape and meet the needs of 21st-century learners.

According to the above mentioned facts, and the requirements of the educational system to the learners and teachers to move with the times and keep cultural values, we combined modern technology with moral cultural values in order to make learning and teaching English more effective and productive. As we know, in an interconnected world characterized by diverse cultures and global interactions, the development of intercultural communicative competence has become crucial for students. Educators are constantly seeking innovative approaches to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively communicate across cultural boundaries.

WebQuests, inquiry-based learning activities that leverage internet resources, offer an engaging and interactive platform for students to collaborate on problem-solving tasks. By integrating intercultural communication concepts and activities into WebQuests, educators can create meaningful learning experiences that foster intercultural understanding, empathy, and effective communication skills. This article delves into the theoretical foundations, practical strategies, and empirical evidence supporting the use of WebQuests in developing students' intercultural communicative competence.

Integrating intercultural communication concepts into WebQuests is grounded in theoretical frame-

works such as the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) model proposed by Byram (Byram, 1997). This model emphasizes the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for effective intercultural communication. It includes components such as cultural awareness, empathy, knowledge of cultural norms, and intercultural communication strategies. By designing WebQuest tasks that explicitly address these components, educators can create a holistic learning environment that enhances students' intercultural competence.

To design culturally diverse and relevant WebQuest tasks, educators can adopt several practical strategies. Firstly, selecting appropriate cultural content is essential. It involves choosing authentic materials that represent different cultural perspectives, practices, and values. Secondly, educators can incorporate collaborative learning experiences within WebQuests to encourage students to interact with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds. This interaction fosters empathy, cultural understanding, and teamwork. Additionally, leveraging technology allows students to engage in virtual exchanges with peers from different countries, providing authentic intercultural communication opportunities.

While integrating intercultural components into WebQuests, educators may encounter challenges such as cultural biases, misconceptions, or the risk of reinforcing stereotypes. However, these challenges can be mitigated through careful task design and facilitation. Educators should encourage critical thinking, reflection, and respectful dialogue to address cultural biases and promote accurate representations of diverse cultures. Moreover, providing guidance and scaffolding throughout the WebQuest process can help students navigate intercultural challenges and develop a deeper understanding of cultural differences.

The first strategy for using webquest technology to develop ICC is creating opportunities for interaction and collaboration among students from different cultures. Kim and Kwon note that online intercultural exchange can promote ICC development (Kim and Kwon, 2018: 130). Webquests can be designed to require students from different cultures to work together on a task, such as researching a topic or creating a project. This can promote communication across cultures and encourage students to understand different perspectives.

The second strategy for using webquest technology to develop ICC is including materials that provide information on different cultures. Koc et al. suggest that telecollaborative webquests can facili-

tate ICC development (Koc et al., 2019: 444) . Webquests can include links to websites, videos, and articles that provide information on various cultures worldwide. Students can use these resources to develop a deeper understanding of the customs, beliefs, and values of people from diverse backgrounds.

The third strategy for using webquest technology to develop ICC is providing opportunities for reflection. Li and Gao note that reflecting on one's experiences can facilitate the development of cultural awareness and sensitivity. Students can be encouraged to reflect on their experiences working with students from different cultures. This can help them identify areas where they need to improve and foster a growth mindset (Li and Gao, 2017: 12) .

Through the use of webquest technology, students can develop a range of skills that are essential for ICC development. These include improving knowledge of different cultures, promoting cultural empathy, and encouraging intercultural communication. Lu (2019) conducted a study that found that students who participated in a web-based language teaching program improved their intercultural communicative competence significantly. Students who participate in webquest activities can develop a deeper understanding of different cultures, promoting empathy and effective communication skills across cultures (Lu, 2019: 15) .

The integration of WebQuests in developing students' intercultural communicative competence has several implications for educational practice. It emphasizes the importance of promoting intercultural understanding and empathy in curriculum design. Educators should receive professional development opportunities to enhance their own intercultural competence and effectively implement WebQuests. Additionally, collaboration among educators, curriculum specialists, and intercultural experts is crucial to ensure the design of culturally responsive WebQuest tasks.

WebQuest technology presents a promising avenue for developing students' intercultural communicative competence. By integrating intercultural communication concepts and activities, educators can create immersive and engaging learning experiences that foster cultural awareness, empathy, and effective communication skills. The theoretical foundations, practical strategies, and empirical evidence presented in this article highlight the value of WebQuests in preparing students to navigate a diverse and interconnected world. As educators embrace this technology, they empower students to become effective intercultural communicators,

equipped with the skills needed for successful intercultural interactions.

Methods and Materials

This section discusses the approaches for the implementation of the formation of intercultural communication using the webquest, which contribute to the mastery English language as the third language and the development of intercultural communication among future specialists.

This research aims to investigate the effectiveness of using WebQuest technology in enhancing intercultural communication skills and intercultural competence among the 1st year students of non-linguistic specialties at Miras University, Shymkent.

This research paper was focus on intercultural communication which is closely connected to the ideology of implementation of trilingual education at the Universities of Kazakhstan. Also, the research methodology outlines the approach, participants, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques that will be employed to achieve the research objectives.

According to the standard curriculum of the cycle of general education disciplines in the universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the discipline "Foreign language" in 1 course of non-linguistic specialties is a mandatory component of the general education cycle, with a duration of 5 credits per 1 semester (150 academic hours) (Order of MHES,2016).

Results of research

In the content of the discipline "Foreign Language", the inclusion of elements of trilingual education is welcomed in a multilingual and multicultural world. Unfortunately, at present, for mastering a trilingual program by students of non-linguistic specialties, there are problems that create obstacles to high-quality trilingual education in the conditions of Kazakh-Russian (Russian-Kazakh) bilingualism, which prompted us to develop a webquest site for students of non-linguistic specialties, such as:

- lack of methodological recommendations for students depending on their language skills;
- there are not enough methodological teaching materials using innovative technologies within the framework of psychological and pedagogical conditions that will make it possible to more productively master trilingual education in foreign language classes;
- low language training among students of non-linguistic specialties;

- insufficient motivation of students in the process of learning the language and cultural traditions of other countries.

According to the above problems, for the effective implementation of trilingual education, it is necessary to create additional changes in the educational basic modules to improve the personal and professional needs of students in mastering trilingualism. According to the above mentioned reasons, I have created webquest site for students of 1st year of non – linguistic specialties at Miras University (Intercultural communication, information from Google sites).

In the experiment, teachers of English and me used materials from the electronic textbook “Intercultural Communication” using innovative technologies, which is an additional material to the main subject “Foreign Language”. The topics of this textbook and the webquest correspond to the topics in the modules of the standard curriculum of the cycle of general education disciplines in the universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, “Foreign language” in 1 course of non-linguistic specialties. The electronic text book was created for teachers of English but the webquest site was created for the 1st year students of non-linguistic specialties (Intercultural communication, information from Google sites). This site is aimed at developing an understanding of the importance of intercultural communication in trilingual education and covers current topics on culture, traditions, national clothes, food, poetry, music and national sports games in the countries of the USA, Great Britain, Russia and Kazakhstan. This site contains tasks using audio and video materials, online resources, authentic materials, role-playing games, games (online) that contribute to the development of foreign language communicative competence and positive motivation for trilingualism.

The task section outlines the main goal of the webquest, which is to navigate through three cultural contexts (Kazakh, Russian and English) and engage in interactive activities that promote intercultural understanding. It provides a clear and concise

description of the tasks to be accomplished throughout the webquest (Intercultural communication, information from Google sites).

For example, to improve language skills, interpersonal communication, as well as improve intellectual abilities and breadth of views, the following texts of the intercultural context “The cultural heritage of Kazakhstan”, “Russian Culture Facts for Heritage and Traditions” and “Some facts about the USA” on 2 languages (English, Kazakh or Russian), where students must read the text (if in Kazakh, Russian) translate into English, and if the text is in English, then translate into Kazakh or Russian, respectively, depending on the group (Kazakh or Russian). Also, the students were divided into 2 language teams (Kazakh or Russian, English), where each team had to read their texts and be ready for a story. The team that read the text in English should prepare for a story in Russian or Kazakh, and vice versa, the team that read the text in Kazakh or Russian should prepare a story in English. After the discussion of each section about Kazakhstan, Russia, English-speaking countries, “virtual excursions” were organized by the innovative WebQuest method, where students were given links to a site with assignments about countries. Students must follow the links and read the task carefully, find on their own information about the sights of each country in the languages of that country, and then they prepare an oral report or presentation. Classes were based on the method of projects, discussions, and Internet/computer technologies (Intercultural communication, information from Google sites).

For clarity, there is another example from the lesson plan, where the process section guides participants through the step-by-step process of completing the webquest activities. It includes instructions on how to access and utilize the resources provided, as well as guidelines for conducting research, engaging in cultural exchanges, and reflecting on the learning experience (Intercultural communication, information from Google sites).

Table – 1 Theme “Wedding customs and traditions”

STAGES	PROCEDURE/MATERIALS	SOURCES OF MATERIALS (Internet links)
Lead-in	T shows the pictures of weddings customs in different countries and asks the questions: In what countries are these weddings? Do you know the wedding customs of these countries?	Wedding pictures

Vocabulary is given in three languages (Kazakh, Russian, English)	T reads and asks Ss to repeat the words Bride – қалындық – невеста groom religious ceremony crockery rituals gift wishes kidnap ransom	
Reading	Ss go to the link and listen to the audio, then fill in the correct words in the text “Wedding customs”	Links to the WebSite
Speaking	<i>Answer the following questions</i> 1. Do people follow these traditions nowadays? 2. What saying is there about wedding clothes in England? 3. What and why do the bride and groom exchange garlands of flowers after the wedding ceremony? 4. What specific wedding customs are there in Germany, Greece, and China? 5. Is Kazakh wedding complicated? Why? <i>Discuss the following topics:</i> 1. Find the similarities and differences between Kazakh, Russian and these cultures. 2. Prepare information and act out about «Kazakh wedding custom, Bride kidnapping or Ransoming “Kalyn bery” », «Russian wedding customs», «American wedding customs». (Students are divided into three teams)	
Debate	T divides the students into 2 teams “For” or “Against” the theme “Bride kidnapping and ransoming “Kalyn bery”	
Homework	Find and present interesting facts about wedding traditions and customs of other countries	

The resources section offers a curated collection of multimedia materials, including articles, videos, interactive websites, and case studies. These resources cover a wide range of cultural topics, traditions, customs, communication styles, and cultural dimensions. Participants can access these materials to gather information and deepen their understanding of three cultures (Kazakh, Russian and English).

To find out and see the effectiveness of the Webquest site, the test results (University test centre) were taken. The placement test results showed that students have a low level of language proficiency, not only because of the ineffective study of a foreign language as a third language in secondary schools, but mostly because of the lack of high-quality teaching materials in universities. In order to clarify the root causes of this situation, a formative stage of experimental work was carried out.

Based on the information presented above, the following research objectives were formed:

- observation and analysis of the obtained data at the stage of formation of the experimental work;

- assessment of the degree of productivity of the web quest site using innovative technologies in the process of learning a foreign language in a trilingual environment.

To conduct experimental work to test the effectiveness of the site, the Miras University was chosen as the base for the study. Within the framework of this study, the following research method was applied: testing at the beginning of the academic 2022 year and at the end of the semester. The study sample consisted of 103 students of this university, Shymkent.

The purpose of the testing was to determine the level of English in the 1st year students of non-linguistic specialties of the Miras University. 2 stages of testing were carried out in order to see the dynamics of learning:

The level test “placement test” was conducted at the beginning of the semester (at the beginning of the experiment) to determine the level of knowledge of the English language according to the Cambridge Placement Test (Cambridge Placement Test, 2019).

- The final test “final test” was held after the end of the semester to assess the learning content of the introduced educational module with elements of trilingualism on the topic “Intercultural Communication” in the content of the basic course “Foreign Language”. That is, during the 1st semester, on the basis of teaching a foreign language, additional practical classes of an intercultural nature were introduced with elements of trilingualism based on innovative technologies, that is, a Webquest on the topic “Intercultural Communication”, developed for 1st year students of non-linguistic specialties of the Miras University.

The level of language preparation of students was assessed on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The following table 2 presents the results of the English language proficiency levels of the students of the Miras University in accordance with CERF for one semester.

Having carried out a comparative analysis of the Placement and Final testing results obtained in the course of the study, it is worth noting that the indicators are higher, i.e. the level of foreign language proficiency is 77.5%, which is clearly shown in Figure 1.

The site's efficiency ratio turned out to be 44.3%. As a result, the level of English at the end of the experiment increased by 44.3%, which means that the implementation of the online tasks we proposed for the web quest as part of trilingual education turned out to be quite productive.

Table 2 – The indicators results of English proficiency levels among students of Miras University in %

English proficiency levels		Placement		Final	
		n	%	n	%
High	(Advanced) C1	-	-	24	23.3
Middle	(Upper-inter) B2	-	-	55	53.4
	(Intermediate) B1	25	24.3	16	15.5
low	(Pre-inter.) A2	36	35.0	6	5.8
	(Elementary) A1	38	36.9	2	1.9
Zero	(Beginners)	4	3.9	-	-
Total	Cp.	33.2		77.5	
	G.	44,3			

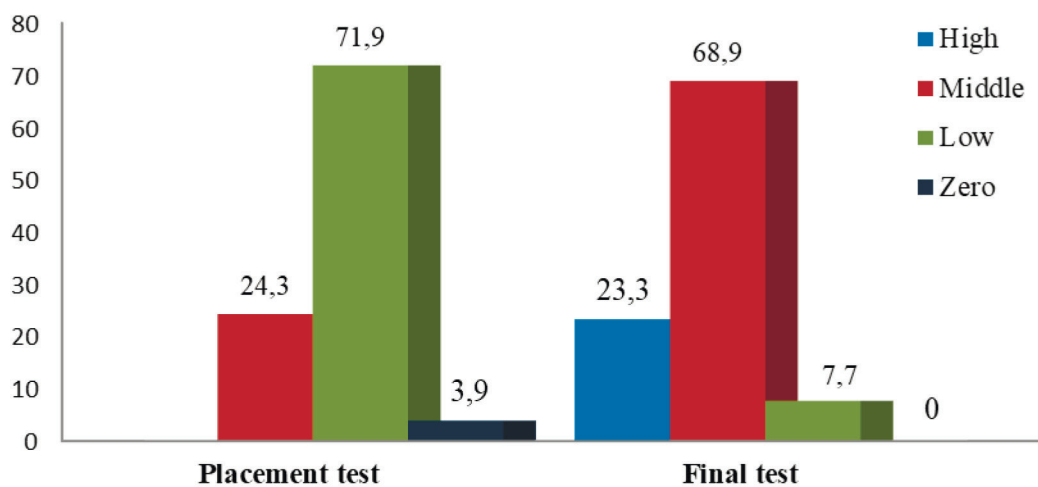


Figure 1 – Comparative analysis of the results of placement and final testing at Miras University in %

Based on the presented data, the participants of the experimental group showed great interest in learning a foreign language, as well as cultures and traditions of the countries of the studied language and we can conclude that 1st year students of non-linguistic specialties had noticeable differences, which was clearly shown by the results of the final testing.

Thus, the test results indicate a positive perception of WebQuest technology in teaching the English language oriented on Intercultural Communication at the university level and clearly demonstrated that incorporating webquests into the curriculum has the potential to significantly increase student engagement. The interactive and dynamic nature of webquests, coupled with the promotion of autonomy and collaboration, proved effective in enhancing students' interest and participation in the learning process. Both students and instructors recognize the effectiveness of WebQuests in enhancing engagement, providing authentic language practice, and integrating technology into language learning. However, challenges such as limited technology resources, time constraints, and technical difficulties need to be addressed for the successful implementation of WebQuests. The findings of this test can serve as a valuable resource for educators and institutions interested in incorporating WebQuest technology in their English language teaching practices oriented on developing and forming intercultural communicative competence among the students.

Discussion

The theme of developing students' intercultural communicative competence using WebQuest technology offers tremendous potential for enhancing students' understanding and appreciation of different cultures while improving their communication skills. Throughout this exploration, I have delved into the significance of intercultural competence in today's globalized world and recognized the role of technology in facilitating its development.

Analyzing the results of the Final Test on English in the part of methodology which demonstrated a notable enhancement in student engagement through the implementation of webquests, the utilization of webquests, which are inquiry-based learning activities using online resources, positively impacted students' interest and participation in the learning process.

Firstly, the incorporation of webquests allowed students to explore English language concepts in a more interactive and dynamic manner. The web-

based nature of these quests provided students with diverse multimedia resources, including videos, articles, and interactive exercises, fostering a multi-sensory learning experience. This variety not only catered to different learning styles but also captured students' attention, making the learning process more engaging.

Secondly, webquests facilitated a sense of autonomy and self-directed learning among students. By navigating through the online materials, students took on a more active role in their education, which not only deepened their understanding of English concepts but also instilled a sense of ownership in their learning journey. This increased level of autonomy contributed to higher motivation and sustained interest in the subject matter.

Furthermore, the collaborative and inquiry-based nature of webquests promoted peer interaction and teamwork. Students collaborated on tasks, shared findings, and collectively solved problems, fostering a sense of community in the classroom. This social aspect of learning not only made the English Final Test a more engaging experience but also contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment.

Assuredly, the final testing in the subject can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of webquests, but it should be considered as *one component* among various assessment measures. While the results of the final test can offer a snapshot of students' performance and understanding, a comprehensive evaluation of the webquest's effectiveness should encompass a broader range of assessments and considerations.

To determine the efficacy of webquests, it is essential to analyze multiple factors, including student engagement, participation, and qualitative feedback. Assessments should go beyond traditional tests and incorporate diverse measures such as project outcomes, collaborative learning experiences, and the development of critical thinking skills within the context of the webquest.

Moreover, a holistic assessment should consider the long-term impact of webquests on students' language proficiency, retention of knowledge, and their ability to apply language skills in practical scenarios. It's important to look for trends and patterns across various assessments to draw more robust conclusions about the effectiveness of webquests in the Foreign Language – English class.

So, while the final testing in the subject "Foreign Language – English" can provide useful data, it should be part of a broader assessment strategy that includes di-

verse measures and considers both short-term and long-term impacts. A comprehensive evaluation will offer a more nuanced understanding of whether webquests are effective in achieving the desired educational outcomes.

Conclusion

WebQuest technology, with its interactive and inquiry-based approach, provides an effective platform for students to engage with diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives. By utilizing online resources, collaborative activities, and authentic tasks, students are encouraged to actively explore and critically analyze various intercultural contexts. They become more aware of their own cultural biases and assumptions, fostering empathy, tolerance, and respect for others.

Moreover, WebQuests offer opportunities for students to interact and collaborate with peers from different cultural backgrounds. Through virtual exchanges, discussions, and joint projects, students can bridge cultural gaps, exchange ideas, and develop cross-cultural communication skills. They learn to navigate intercultural challenges, negotiate meanings, and adapt their communication strategies accordingly.

By incorporating WebQuests into educational settings, educators can effectively foster students' intercultural communicative competence. Through a

carefully designed curriculum, teachers can guide students to explore diverse cultural topics, analyze cultural artifacts, engage in cross-cultural dialogue, and reflect on their intercultural experiences. As a result, students become more competent and confident communicators in multicultural environments, equipping them with invaluable skills for their personal and professional lives.

However, it is important to acknowledge that WebQuests alone cannot fully develop students' intercultural communicative competence. They should be integrated into a comprehensive intercultural education framework that encompasses face-to-face interactions, cultural immersion experiences, and ongoing reflective practices. Additionally, teachers need to receive appropriate training and support to effectively implement WebQuests and address the challenges that may arise.

In conclusion, the integration of WebQuest technology into educational practices holds great potential for developing students' intercultural communicative competence. It enables them to navigate the complexities of our interconnected world, embrace diversity, and communicate effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds. By nurturing these skills, we empower our students to become global citizens who contribute to a more inclusive and harmonious society.

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