

ORGANIZING STUDENTS' INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING THROUGH WEB QUEST TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract:

This article explores the specific characteristics of students' independent learning activities. It highlights the application of web quest technology as an effective tool for organizing independent study within the educational system. The author argues that web quests serve as a productive form of independent work that fosters students' creative cognition, autonomy, and the development of essential skills such as analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation.

Keywords: Foreign language learning, independent study, web quest, students' independent work, pedagogical education.

Introduction

Independent learning constitutes a fundamental component of the modern educational system, particularly in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan. The overall effectiveness of the educational framework depends largely on the proper organization of independent study. In the context of the transition toward an information-based society, there is a growing need to identify innovative approaches that enhance the quality of pedagogical education. At present, higher education institutions are increasingly focused on implementing advanced teaching methodologies that contribute to the development of students' cognitive abilities, academic independence, and research skills. In this regard, improving the organization and effectiveness of independent work has become one of the central priorities of the educational process.

As Uzbekistan strengthens its position within the global community and expands its cultural and economic relations, the importance of foreign language education continues to grow. Teaching students to communicate effectively in foreign languages and developing their communicative competence has become one of the most urgent challenges in contemporary education. In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" and the established qualification requirements, one of the primary objectives of the higher education system is to prepare spiritually mature individuals who meet international standards, are capable of independent learning, continuous self-development, and creative work, and are able to independently solve professional and life-related problems in the future.

Technology has become an integral part of teaching in a foreign language teaching system. With the increasing use of learning technology, web-based learning resources are increasingly entering the curriculum. Today, computers and the Internet are playing an increasingly important role in the teaching process around the world. The internet is a very important tool for reading and teaching because it provides the opportunity to teach a true language. In the context of rapid globalization and the process of informatization, the training of competitive specialists in the global labor market using effective methods to ensure the quality of education in our country has been identified as an important task. This issue is still relevant today. In particular, the process of independent education is a significant factor in the training of qualified and competitive specialists.

Studies indicate that students' motivation significantly increases when they recognize the practical relevance of their learning. Compared to repetitive instructions such as "you must learn this," a more effective approach is when students perceive knowledge as essential for their personal and professional development. This shift in perspective leads to higher levels of engagement, accelerated individual growth, improved employability, and increased intellectual competitiveness.

Independent learning also plays a crucial role in developing critical thinking and self-directed learning skills. A future teacher who demonstrates dedication to their subject, continuously engages in self-improvement, and enhances both methodological and theoretical knowledge is more likely to cultivate motivated and capable learners. Another important advantage of independent study lies in the integration of modern information and communication technologies. Today, the speed of information exchange has reached unprecedented levels, allowing learners to access, process, store, and utilize diverse types of data (textual, visual, audio, and multimedia) within seconds. This creates continuous opportunities for intellectual development and encourages students to remain actively engaged in the learning process.

Furthermore, the expansion of international cooperation in fields such as science, technology, and industry necessitates the reform of foreign language education systems. Effective communication with international partners, participation in global conferences, and collaboration on joint projects require a high level of language proficiency. Therefore, the success of such cooperation largely depends on the professional competence of young specialists and their ability to communicate in foreign languages.

The organization of students' independent work is a mandatory component of the higher education system in Uzbekistan. It is aimed at achieving several key objectives:

- consolidating, generalizing, and reinforcing acquired knowledge;
- applying knowledge in both standard and complex problem-solving situations;
- developing subject-specific, interdisciplinary, and research skills;
- enhancing students' academic and research activity while taking into account their individual characteristics;
- preparing students for lifelong self-education and professional development.

In the context of modern educational technologies, where the learning process becomes increasingly student-centered, it is essential to develop effective systems of independent tasks

supported by information technologies. The Internet provides unique opportunities for foreign language learners to engage with authentic materials, communicate with native speakers, and participate in various online activities, including web quests. A web quest is defined as a structured form of independent research activity in which students search for and analyze information from pre-selected online resources. This method promotes efficient time management, enhances critical thinking, and develops the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information.

The concept of web quests was introduced in 1995 by Bernie Dodge and Tom March at San Diego State University and has since gained widespread recognition among educators worldwide. Although the development of web quests requires considerable effort, time, and expertise from teachers, the educational benefits significantly outweigh these challenges. Web quests offer numerous advantages in the process of foreign language learning. They encourage learner autonomy, support individualized instruction, and motivate students to apply their knowledge in practical contexts. Additionally, they provide access to authentic and up-to-date materials, facilitate both individual and collaborative research, and promote the development of decision-making and critical thinking skills.

The design of a web quest typically involves several key stages: introduction, task formulation, selection of information resources, description of the process, evaluation criteria, presentation of results, and reflection. This structured approach ensures clarity, consistency, and effectiveness in the learning process. For example, within a web quest focused on planning a trip to the United Kingdom, students may be required to work collaboratively, gather relevant information, analyze various options, and present their findings in the form of a structured presentation. Such tasks contribute to the development of both linguistic competence and analytical skills.

Overall, the implementation of web quests shifts the focus of education from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered model. Students assume greater responsibility for their learning, manage their time effectively, and make informed decisions regarding the use of resources and the presentation of their work. In this process, the teacher acts as a facilitator and mentor, guiding students toward achieving their educational goals.

The web-quest is an effective approach to learning that allows pre-service teachers the opportunity to connect curriculum, technology, and pedagogy in ways that help their students become more independent learners through a learning-to-learn approach versus the transmission model of instruction. This Web-based approach assists students in making cognitive connections and construct more complex mental schema in a real world task that can lead to confidence, higher motivation, and ultimately higher achievement.

In conclusion, the demand for specialists who possess strong independent learning abilities and creative thinking skills continues to grow. The integration of innovative methods such as web quests into the educational process not only enhances the quality of learning but also prepares students to successfully navigate the challenges of the modern world.

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