## Fatieieva D.M.
## Mediaeducative WebQuests as the Means of Training Future Politologists to Work in the Professional Environment

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**Abstract.** This article deals with an innovative media educational interactive technology of training in high school media educational WebQuests as the effective means of training future politologists to work in the professional environment. The author describes in detail the structural components, technology, basic tasks and criteria for evaluating the WebQuests. The article also shows how to use a new technology in practical training classes for students of political science department in institution of higher education.

*Keywords: WebQuest, media education, critical thinking, professional skills, media educational technology*

**Introduction**. The acquirement of information, the methods of its production, handling and use through modern media means is a necessary condition for successful entry of a human into the informational society. Nowadays informational and communicational technologies are the basis of social development. Therefore, humanity is an active user of information, amount of which is constantly increasing. Every day the media world creates around the people a special media reality, which influences the formation of their world views, culture and life values. There is the shortage of specialists in various scopes of human activity who are capable to solve problems both independently and in teams, to think critically, to separate truthful information from subjectively distorted and misinterpreted facts. That is why learning in the institution of higher education should ensure the formation of future specialists' skills to organize their own informational activity and to plan the results of it. The current stage of development of higher education is related to the transition to a pragmatic implementation of the new educational paradigm, which envisages the creation of an integrated system of continuing education, the formation of students' scientific and critical way of thinking, the adoption of mobile information vision and high-level of professional skills by future professionals. Everything mentioned above is a reason why one of the main tasks of higher education is the informatization of the educational process which includes the creation and development of media-oriented learning environment.

In recent years, scientists consider the usage of media technologies in educational process of higher school as an important source of improving the quality of the educational process. Media education and media educational technologies contain a huge informational, didactic and motivational potential in the educational process of higher school. The representatives of UNESCO logically associate media education and media competence with the development of democratic critical thinking, public accountability of the individual, which are one of the most important professional qualities of future politologists. That is why it is especially important to implement the media educational technologies, in particular WebQuests into the process of training future politologists to work in the professional environment [4].

**Overview of publications.** A significant number of scientists paid attention to various aspects of the problem of the media technologies usage in the educational process. The impact of mass media on the individual and society are reflected in the works of D.Buckingham, I. Dzialoshynskyi, J. Lalla, L. Sellers. The use of media materials were at the center of scientific interest of E. Miller, G. Onkovych, N. Saienko, O. Serbenska, V. Usata, O. Fedorov, I. Chemerys, O. Yanyshyn and others. The role of computer technology in the educational process are discussed in the works of S. Danylov, H. Kozlakova, V. Krasnopolskyi, L. Pavliuk, T. Solodka, and other researchers. Important contribution to the problem of the use of informational technologies in the educational process was made by the following scholars: A. Asherov, V. Bykov, B. Hershunskyi, M. Zhaldak, V. Klochko, and others. The above mentioned reserchers took up in their papers the problems of the informational culture formation of future professionals, informatization of education, the readiness of future professionals to work in the professional environment under the conditions of informational society. However, the use of media technologies, in particular the WebQuests in the educational process of training future politologists to work in the professional environment has not received proper attention and this fact has caused the choice of the topic of this article.

**The purpose of this article** is to draw attention to the importance of prior implementation of the media educational technologies into the process of professional training of future politologists in high schools of Ukraine and to determine the possible ways of implementation the technology of media educational WebQuests in the training of future politologists.

**Main body**. The use of online sources to explore how the media operate, the way we interact with them and how we can use them to our greatest advantage, can serve as a base for training of analysis, synthesis and evaluation of information skills, for development of critical and creative thinking of future politologists. The practical exercises as identifying the main idea, the cause-effect connections, the differentiation major and secondary information, goals and motives of the author, comparison, ranking information, content analysis, comparing different sources and points of view on one issue, the facts and subjective opinions, stimulate analytical professional skills of students. Making conclusions and generalization, predicting outcomes and results train the synthesis skills. The monitoring of Internet awareness of students should precede the implementation of the Internet to the media educative process (one of the aspects of internetdidactics) [3].

One of the means of the work with media sources – WebQuest. The WebQuest concept was developed in 1995 at San Diego State University by Professor Bernie

Dodge and Tom March. It came about as the result of thousands of schools being internet connected with no agreed upon terminology for the kinds of instructional activities the schools were creating. They saw a need to define these learning environments and defined one as a WebQuest and developed a set of desirable attributes for this newly defined activity. Since it was first developed, the WebQuest model has been incorporated into hundreds of education courses around the world. WebQuests provide an authentic, technology-rich environment for problem solving, information processing, and collaboration. This inquiry-based approach to learning makes excellent use of internet-based resources by involving students in a wide range of activities [6]. There are lots of guidelines, numerous examples and templates to help teachers and students to create their own WebQuest on the University of San Diego portal (http://webquest.org)of WebQuests.

WebQuest in pedagogy – a problematic task with elements of role-playing game with the usage of the informative sources of the Internet for its accomplishment. This is an educational site devoted to independent research of students on a specific topic with hyperlinks to various web pages. WebQuests focus students on analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information as they work collaboratively to solve a real problem or complete the task. Each team member assumes roles that best represent some aspect of reality. Students engage in problem-solving investigations to construct their own knowledge [5].

The WebQuest is defined by Bernie Dodge as an inquiry-oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web. WebQuests are designed to use learners' time well, to focus on using information rather than looking for it, and to support learners' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. What makes WebQuests so appealing is that they provide structure and guidance for both students and teachers [8].

All WebQuests should include the same basic elements to achieve clarity of purpose and efficiency. The basic elements or critical attributes are listed as follow:

1. Introduction: The introduction sets the stage and provides some background information.

2. Task: The task should be interesting and doable.

3. Information Resources: This element includes such resources as web documents, experts available via e-mail or conferencing, searchable databases on the net, and books and other documents physically available in the learner's environment.

4. The Process: This element clearly describes the steps for the learner to accomplish the task.

5. Guidance: This step describes how to organize the information acquired by using guiding questions, or directions to complete organizational frameworks such as timelines, concept maps, or cause-and-effect diagrams.

6. Conclusion/Evaluation: This step brings closure to the activity, reminds the learner what he has learned and encourages him to extend the experience into other domains [8].

Some non-critical attributes of WebQuests include group activities, motivational elements such as role-playing, a possible scenario to work within, or simulated e-mail persons to communicate with. WebQuests can be designed within a single discipline or they can be inter-

disciplinary. There are at least two levels of WebQuests that should be distinguished from one another: short term WebQuests and longer term WebQuest. The instructional goal of a short term WebQuest is knowledge acquisition and integration. The learner will deal with a significant amount of new information and try to make sense of the information. It is designed to be completed in one to four class periods. The instructional goal of a longer term WebQuest is extending and refining knowledge. In the longer term WebQuest the learner analyzes a body of knowledge deeply, transforms it in some way, and demonstrates an understanding of the material by creating something that others can respond to either online or in real time. This level of WebQuest will usually take between one week and one month in a classroom setting [8].

Technology of WebQuest using Internet sources and integrating them into the learning process helps to solve a number of competencies: use of media technologies to solve professional tasks (including the search for relevant information, writing down the results in the form of computer presentations, websites, etc.); self-learning and self-organization; team work (planning, division of labor, mutual assistance, mutual control), i.e. the skills of problem solving in command; ability to find several ways to solve the problem situation, to determine the most efficient variant and to ground their choice; public speaking skills etc. According to educational-job description, these skills are essential for future politologists in the work in the professional environment [1].

In addition, the use of WebQuests increases students' learning motivation to study some specific branch of science. WebQuest is not a simple search for information online because students, during working on the task, collect, summarize information, draw conclusions. Moreover, the participants of the WebQuest learn how to use the information space of the Internet to expand the scope of their artistic activity [2].

The former of WebQuests Bernie Dodge, identified the following tasks for WebQuests: *retelling* – demonstration of the topic understanding based on the presenting of the information from various sources in the new format: the creation of presentations, posters, stories; *planning and design* – plan or project development based on specified conditions; *self-knowledge* - any aspects of the personality study; *compilation* – transformation of the information format obtained from different sources: the creation of books, virtual exhibitions, time capsule; *creative task* – creative work in a particular genre - the creation of plays, poems, songs, videos; *analytical task* – to find and organize information; *detective puzzle, mystery story* - conclusions based on contradictory facts; *consensus achievement* - a solution for an acute problem; evaluation – how to ground a particular point of view; *investigative journalism* - an objective presentation of information; *persuasion* – lerning how to entice your opponents or neutral-minded individuals; *research* – the study of various phenomena, discoveries, facts on the basis of unique online sources [8].

A key section of each WebQuest is detailed scale of evaluation criteria according which the project participants evaluate themselves and teammates. A teacher (professor) serves the same criteria. For example, if an oral form is selected for the presentation of the results, the

evaluation will include gestures, grammar and pronunciation, speech organization, if a Power Point presentation is selected, so it is considered aesthetic design, technical implementation, etc. For each criterion the compliance descriptors are arranged (from the worst to the best) which are represented in scores [2].

While creating a project, students gain not "prepared" knowledge, but they are involved in the search activity. Naturally, any media WebQuest should not be isolated from the educational process as a whole, it must be in close connection with the previous and subsequent cognitive activity of students. According to the criteria made up by Tom March any effective WebQuest should include an intriguing introduction, clearly articulated tasks, roles setting that provide different views on the issue, informed use of online sources. The best examples of educational media quests demonstrate the connection with real life, their conclusions directly relate to the purpose [9].

Using the structure of the educational WebQquest and templates to create it, it is possible to design a variety of mediaeducational sites for students of political science department. Especially relevant for future politologists is to create the media educational WebQuests, which by their subjects reflect current social and political events in Ukraine and worldwide. Such WebQuests can improve their professional skills, teach them how to understand better and to evaluate critically the current socio-political events [7]. For example, one of the popular topics of television policy - numerous political talk shows on Ukrainian television ("Svoboda Slova", "Chorne Dzerkalo", "Shuster Live", "Hromadske TV", etc.) which are on in prime time on multiple channels. In the process of work teams, students study different aspects of the show and the different views on the specific issue. They use political talk shows' websites, social networks, the information about television ratings data in Ukraine and other countries, interviews with politicians, producers, presenters, critical articles of competent journalists, political scientists, etc. Later on the students express their own ideas (the reason for the popularity of the show, who takes part in them, what is the purpose of participants to take part in it, which shows are helpful, informative and persuasive, and which are boring and meaningless, why and for what audience they are created). Such classes are developed in line of teledidactics [3; 4]. As a result, participants offered a project of creation an original political educational WebQuest.

One of the best students' ideas in the experimental group was to create a Web-Media-Political Quest following the idea of creating political educational show "Big Politics of My Country". In the beginning of the WebQuest the online ad was to appear on the site, in which everyone who is interested was invited to visit the new political show and to take part in its organization. The topic for our program of political show was "Presidential Race" because this quest was held on the threshold of presidential elections in Ukraine. It was proposed to hold the political debates with the representation of presidential contenders' companies (electioneering). The purpose of the WebQuest – generalization and systematization of future politologists knowledge about the procedure of holding presidential elections and the organization of the campaign; the formation of students skills and abilities

of searching information on the Internet; improvement of the skills and abilities to analyze, organize the information and draw conclusions; developing skills of critical and democratic thinking, forming the bases of oriented activities, developing skills of independent work, teamwork and responsibility [7].

This WebQuest should be preceded by the lecture and practical classes on the revision of the theory and practice of sequence of presidential elections in Ukraine, as a form of direct democracy and the declaration of will of the Ukrainian people and content analysis, as qualitative and quantitative methods of study and critical evaluation of the social and political information. The motivation of students of the political science department was the fact that the Internet is a very powerful source that facilitates life and offers almost unlimited opportunities for self-realization and self-development of the expert in any industry, but at the same time it is an extremely powerful arm of misinformation and propaganda machine, especially in the mainstream of social and political events. The future politologist should be armed with the knowledge, abilities and skills that will help in their future careers to evaluate information critically and objectively, to rank it in importance, to separate the true facts from their subjective distortion, etc.

This WebQuest is short term and involved four stages. On the *first stage* there was a registration of presidential contenders, their teams and experts and political show. Each of the participating teams was to determine the political party they were to represent and to elect the candidate from their "party".

On the *second stage* of the media educative Quest the preparation of the contenders' companies (electioneering) was carried out. The teams had to collect information from various media sources, to study the ratings of their "presidential contenders", to evaluate critically his candidature and his or her chances to win the elections, to study the biography and political career of the "presidential contenders", to check whether there were the web sites of each candidate, to learn political advertising and the advancement of the political company and so on. After accumulating enough information teams were advised to hold a mini-conference or roundtable entitled "The Congress of the Party," where students were to exchange information about their candidate, to assess strengths and weaknesses of their contender, to discuss urgent issues and strong position of the electioneering, to choose a character for "presidential contender" and to arrange the remaining roles (press secretary of the candidate, experts). The results of the round table should be sent by email to the organizers of the project.

The *third stage* of the WebQuest involved political debate which was preceded by the performance of the contender and the presentation of his or her electioneering by each team (political force). It could be a video clip (short film), Power Point Presentation, Web booklet, media art project, etc. Then each contender's team and experts should send their rivals in the presidential race questions and comments on the presented election programs. The answers to this questions should be presented in the form of public emails. Later on, all participants had to evaluate performances of rivals on the following criteria: credibility, relevance, logic structure, aesthetics, creativity, tech-

nique, availability and efficiency impact. After that all participants of the WebQuest should virtually vote for a presidential contender who up to their minds should win the election according to their presented electioneerings.

The election results should be announced on the *fourth stage* of the media Quest (the name of the elected "President" and the best media electioneering). This stage also envisages the presentation of students reports "My impression of the election process. How this WebQuest can be useful for me." Students share their impressions from the WebQuest, tell about their feelings and about obtained knowledge and experience. On the ceremony of awards the best accounting works (electioneering) should be presented.

**Conclusion**. To conclude we may say that our study showed that the media educative WebQuest is a new and promising technology in mediadidactics, which can and should be used in the branch of professional training, in particular for future politologists. The use of media educational WebQuests encourages students to learn and to perfect themselves for work in the professional environment, diversifies the educational process, stimulates students to self-education, favours the formation of professional skills. Topics for creating WebQuests are various and can be implemented as into professional training of future politologists, and into the subjects of general education of the high school. This media educational technology encourages the independence of students in the search for new knowledge and fully meet not only the needs of informative Ukrainian society, but also modern requirements for professional training in the high school.

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**Фатеева Д.Н. Медиаобразовательные веб-квесты как средство подготовки будущих политологов к профессиональной деятельности**

**Аннотация.** В данной статье рассматривается инновационная медиаобразовательная интерактивная технология обучения в высшей школе – медиаобразовательный веб-квест, как эффективное средство подготовки будущих политологов к профессиональной деятельности. Автор детально описывает структурные компоненты, технологию, основные задания и критерии оценивания веб-квестов. Также в статье показано использование новой технологии на практических занятиях по подготовке студентов-политологов в высшем учебном заведении.

*Ключевые слова: Веб-квест, медиаобразование, критическое мышление, профессиональные умения, медиаобразовательная технология*