# DESIGN OF A WEBQUEST FOR LANGUAGES

## A. SOME FACTORS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT:

1. Students: age, grade, language command, etc.
2. Resources: availability, appropriateness, usability, etc.
3. Your curricular contents: didactic unit in which the WebQuest will be integrated, etc.
4. Linguistic objectives in relation to: vocabulary, form, use of language, etc.
5. Other non-linguistic objectives: collaboration skills, time organisation, social values, etc.

## B. STEPS TO FOLLOW IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WEBQUEST

**1. Decide on the topic** of the WebQuest and within what course it would fit.

Not all the topics are good to be explored with the WebQuest format, especially in a second language. There should be some reasons to choose the format of a WebQuest instead of a different one, among them:

- There are good web resources on the selected topic.
- The topic can be examined in a way that requires "a degree of understanding that goes beyond mere comprehension".

a. Write down a list of topics that may be interesting to start your WebQuest. Think of:
   - The topics in your students' book or in your curricula.
   - Your students' interests.
   - Some local or general topics that may be of interest for at least a few years.

b. Check if there are at least some useful resources on the Web, if not, you can always change the topic:
   - Tip: search any other WebQuests on the same topic; they may include some links to useful resources for you.

**2. Define the setting and the TASK**

a. Have your students clearly in mind as you design the task of your WebQuest:
   - Who are they?
   - What is their grade?
   - What is their command or language?

b. Have in mind the linguistic interaction and output the task will imply.
   - Be sure that the task matches the linguistic goals and, therefore, it should trigger L2 use in many ways.
   - The task has elements that promote the command of form aspects.

c. Think exactly of the final material result that you want your students to accomplish:
    - A survey, a poster, a web page, a panel discussion, a magazine, etc.

**3. Define the transformation of the information** that will take place in accomplishing the task.

a. Consider if the task represents the result of higher level thinking.
b. Define what type of cognitive activity the students will go through by doing the task: Acquire knowledge, comprehend or understand information, apply knowledge, analyse, synthesise or evaluate information.

**4. Define the roles that the students will play**
a. Be sure that the workload is similar for each of the roles.
b. All roles should involve using web resources.

**5. Search for the best resources to achieve linguistic and non-linguistic goals**
a. Be sure that the selected resources involve the processing of a lot of materials in the L2.
b. Resources are authentic, attractive and varied.

**6. Write down the PROCESS**
a. Describe step by step what the students will do:
    - First, in the initial phase where they will examine all the information.
    - Then, in the second phase where students should start transforming the information they have looked at.
    - Finally, in the production phase where they have to finish the end product.

b. Say what resources will be used by everybody in the group and what resources will be specific for each role.
    - Explain how students will treat the information.

c. Prepare the "scaffolding" to support the students in the three phases of the process, including linguistic scaffolding focused on meaning and form aspects:
    - Reception scaffolding: brainstorming activities, discussions, any background materials, dictionary links, glossaries, etc.
    - Transformation scaffolding: quizzes, diagrams, tables, treasure hunts, etc.
    - Production scaffolding: outlines, examples, formats, templates, etc.

**7. Define the EVALUATION**

a. Decide which dimensions we are going to consider in the evaluation of the WebQuest, as well as the indicators of a bad or good performance.
    - Choose the most relevant dimensions according to the task and final product.
    - Fill the matrix with the description of each performance.

**8. Write the CONCLUSION**

a. Ask the students to reflect back on what they learned and about their own process of learning.
    - Summarise what they have gone through.

b. Ask the students to go ahead in learning about the topic:
    - Suggest a few more links to resources.