Students and Teacher’s Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Collaborative Writing with Wiki in a Primary Four Chinese Classroom

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Abstract

This case study investigated the attitudes and perceptions of primary school students and their teacher toward collaborative writing using a wiki technology in a Chinese writing class in China. An online collaborative writing environment named “Joyous Writing Club” (JWC) was designed and developed using a wiki. Participants included 59 primary four students and their Chinese language teacher. The study adopted a mixed-methods design, using quantitative and qualitative data.

A writing attitude test was administered to the students using a pretest-posttest design, and JWC was used by the participants for a period of two months. After that, a questionnaire using responses on a 5-point Likert scale was administered to examine the students’ perceptions on the use of the wiki-based collaborative writing environment. A questionnaire consisting of open-ended queries was also administered to the teacher to gain her insights on using JWC with her students.

The results indicated that students showed improvement in writing attitudes after engaging in collaborative writing with wiki. Students’ responses to the questionnaire revealed that they perceived the collaborative writing using a wiki as beneficial in facilitating motivation to write, heightened group interactions, and widening the reading audience of their writings. Students’ positive perceptions on the use of JWC were also found to associate positively with students’ writing attitudes in the posttest. The strongest positive correlation was found between perceptions on motivation to write and writing attitudes. The teacher reported that students expressed higher interest in writing on JWC compared relative to writing on paper. She also indicated that factors such as the topic of the Chinese composition and students’ computer skills may affect the quality of collaborative writing with wiki.

This study provides information that may help teachers and researchers to understand students’ responses towards collaborative writing with a wiki environment in a Chinese writing class, and the factors that may facilitate the effective use of such wiki environment.