Learning by Collaboratively Writing in Wikis: a Strategy for the Development of Learners’ Autonomy

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Abstract

In view of the emergence of ICT and of the need for collaboration as a process approach to learning, an urge to analyse computer-mediated collaborative language learning comes forward.

Communication is definitely today’s goal when learning a language and we surely believe in the relevance of having learners constructing their own learning in an authentic context of autonomous collaboration. In this context, wikis emerge as a promising tool, once they enable learners to merge the advantages of collaborative synchronous and asynchronous edition with a history function that enables them to be aware and keep track of text changes as well as with a discussion function in an integrated forum.

The decade-long concern for oral communication has lately been replaced by a need to focus on writing, as the growing use of instant messaging as well as of social networks such as Facebook demonstrated that writing could also be a very communicative medium which easily promotes content and language integrated learning.

What is the impact of web peer review in wikis on learners’ autonomy? What factors can be perceived as conducive to autonomy? What is the relationship between autonomy and learning in such a setting? In this paper I mainly aim at analysing the potential of this tool in the context of web peer review. I will be looking into collaborative writing through an international inter-institutional partnership as a strategy for the development of learners’ autonomy in the regulation of their learning practices.