



Learning Idioms Collaboratively through Wiki

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Abstract

Idioms form a natural and essential part of the general vocabulary of the English language. Since they are typically learned through experience, idioms can be confusing for students, particularly for those who learn English as a foreign language. It is essential to introduce idioms in a meaningful and personalized context. Web 2.0 tools can make learning idioms fun and memorable for students.

Wikis belong to the new wave of Web 2.0 technologies, which are changing the way information is spread around the web. In contrast to asynchronous learning tools such as discussion boards and blogs, wikis give students the ability to create, edit and restructure content. Wikis also allow students to represent data in a more organic format (Choy & Ng, 2007).

In this specific study, the researcher chose an intact group consisting of twelve students as her main participants. An online idiom learning environment named "Let's Learn Idioms" was designed and developed using a wiki. After each meeting, a new page was built by the researcher in order to present an idiom. On each page, a picture with its related idiom was presented. Students would write their opinions about the meaning of the presented idiom, read each other's opinion, and write their opinion about other entries. By doing this, students collaboratively attempted to find the reasonable meaning for the idiom. The researcher gave her feedback before the subsequent session. She presented the idiom in sentences in order to provide the participants some examples of its usage in context. The next meeting, after discussing the meaning of the idiom, students attempted to make a short conversation by using the discussed idiom. The researcher would then check if the students had accurately learned the meaning and correct usage.

Learning idioms through wikis is an effective way of relaying the meaning of certain common sayings. Through the aforementioned research, the students enjoyed learning these sayings, making the process more of a success. This research is ongoing, although the results in favor of utilizing wikis are substantial even now.