Students' personal ways to work and learn within a collaborative Wikipedia writing assignment

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Motivation

• Inquiry learning for developing information literacy

• e.g. Guided Inquiry based on the information search process (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2007)

• Need to understand students' natural ways to work in inquiry tasks
Research setting

• Upper secondary school
• Students 16-17 years of age
• A compulsory 8-week course, included
  • a source-based writing assignment (groupwork)
  • IL-related learning goals
• Writing in the Wikipedia genre
## Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>History class</th>
<th>Literature class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publishing forum</td>
<td>School’s own wiki</td>
<td>Wikipedia (Finnish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing style</td>
<td>Wikipedia conventions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Topics</td>
<td>Related to Finnish history 1918-1939</td>
<td>Selected Finnish classical novels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project groups</td>
<td>7 groups of 3-5 students</td>
<td>10 groups of 3 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research questions

1. Are there patterns in high school students’ work in the collaborative source based writing assignment? If so, which?

2. How do these patterns link to
   a. students' difficulties in the project
   b. their learning experience
   c. approach to studying?
Approaches to studying

• Deep: intrinsic motivation, personal understanding
• Surface: extrinsic motivation, rote learning
• Strategic: achievement-oriented, organized
Study approaches in inquiry

- Deep: enjoy exploring
- Surface: complete only necessary requirements
- Strategic: attentive to organizational aspects
Method

- Surveys
- 53 respondents
- Likert scales measuring
  - Ways to work (18 statements)
  - Challenges (12 statements)
  - Learning experiences (11 statements)
- OPPI test of approach to studying
- Individual within the group
Findings

Three work patterns:

• collaborative
• labor intense
• subject oriented
• I discussed about the sources in the group.
• I discussed about the sources with the teacher.
• I wrote the text together with my team.
• I asked group members to comment on my text.
• I asked the teacher to comment on my text.
• I read my text many times and added to it.
• I adjusted my text to the texts of the group members.
• I corrected my text based on comments.
Collaborative: difficulties

Difficulty: Publishing the text on Wikipedia

Easy:
- Understand the goal of the project
- Planning my own share of the text
- Planning the content of the article
- Finding suitable sources from the public/school library
- Judge the relevance of the retrieved sources
- Forming an overview of the topic
Collaborative: learning & study approaches

• Learning: Wikipedia & referring to sources

• Study approach: no connection

• Course differences: literature teacher encouraged collaboration, instructed about Wikipedia & gave feedback on citing practices
• I made the list of contents before beginning to write.
• I read the sources and made notes.
• I read the sources and discussed about them at home.
• I continued to look for sources while I was writing.
• I adjusted my text to the texts of the group members.
• I read my text many times and added to it.
• I asked others (e.g. parents) for comments.
Labor intense: difficulties & study approaches

• No connection to difficulties

• Study approach: no connection

• Course differences: no connection
Labor intense: learning

- Subject area
- Information seeking in the library/library catalogue
- Information seeking on the Internet
- Use of new kinds of sources
- Difference between Wikipedia and other sources
- Critical evaluation of sources
- Referring to sources
- Recognizing different viewpoints in sources
Subject oriented

• I did not know the topic from before.
• I read the sources and tried to understand their content.
• I wrote at the same time as I checked my notes.
• I did not write from memory (of what I had read in the literature).
Subject oriented: difficulties, learning & study approaches

- Difficult: Finding suitable sources from the Internet
- Easy: Adjusting my text to that of others

- No learning experiences
- Deep study approach
- Course differences: no connection
Conclusions

• Individual paths within the same collaborative assignment

• Relation to course context, teacher instruction and study approaches
Thank you!

Further information on Know-Id project pages: https://www12.uta.fi/blogs/know-id/