Developing Effective Tasks for Teaching Academic Writing Through Wiki

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Many Malaysian students fail to master the writing skills and frequently face difficulties in writing.

Feel demotivated and dislike the writing task.

Only 8.27% who managed to get Band 4 and above for the writing Component.

Weaknesses: Ideas (vaguely expressed), structures and vocab (lacked variety), basic grammar errors etc.
A wiki is a web communication and collaboration tool that can be used to engage students in learning with others within a collaborative environment. A wiki is a web tool that allows users to easily create and edit web pages collaboratively.
Wiki

* As a tool that can be used to enhance the learning process
* A useful tool for involving students in the process of creating and sharing among them.

This rapidly growing technology in school can create an attractive, interactive and creative learning environment.
Wiki could be an effective tool
- to help students to improve in their academic writing
- as an additional platform for students to learn
- to use the language in a more authentic environment with the help from teachers and friends through collaborative tasks.
The critical features of constructivist learning are:

- Active and manipulative
- Constructive and reflective
- Intentional
- Authentic, challenging and real-world
- Cooperative, collaborative and conversational.
Choosing Writing Tasks and Activities

Harmer (2004): An engaging writing task is one that involves students not just intellectually but emotionally as well; it amuses them, intrigues them or make them feel good. What engages students may differ from one another, therefore writing tasks can be initiated and conducted in a number of different ways.
Wiki as a tool for collaborative writing through Task-Based learning

Godwin (2003): By using Wiki in the writing classroom, teachers have the opportunity to change paper-bound, solitary act to a public, collaborative and critical forum where all students benefit from multiple exposures to writing and by having the option to comment on or even edit what they read.
Wiki as a tool for collaborative writing through Task-Based learning

Mak et al (2008): “... the place of authentic writing, situated between the domains of creativity and task-based learning” (pg.437)
* Wiki as a means of supporting knowledge construction

  * Opportunities to engage in knowledge construction or building occur frequently as students work together.

  * Vygotsky (1978) - ... students construct their own knowledge as a result of interacting with the environment and that learning and sharing knowledge occurs between individuals.
STEP 1:

* CREATE A GMAIL ADDRESS
* OPEN A GROUP ACCOUNT
* REGISTER YOUR STUDENTS WITH GMAIL ACCOUNT
* INVITE STUDENTS TO JOIN THE GMAIL GROUP
STEP 2:

- TEACHER POST ACTIVITIES/TASKS IN THE GMAIL GROUP
  * PRE-COURSE, AN INQUIRY BASED, A PROBLEM-BASED & A PROJECT-BASED TASK
STEP 3:

- STUDENTS COMPLETED THE TASK AND POSTED THE ASSIGNED GROUP WORK IN THE GMAIL GROUP.
ACTIVITIES:
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We can see that the collaboration, extended audience, and purpose behind the writing through different tasks done on wiki motivated students and strengthened their writing. The overall results suggests that students generally enjoyed the supporting atmosphere created through online collaborative tasks and regarded the use of wiki as a tool to help in their writing skills.
Thank You