Wikis

Code: <wikis>

Originaux

> *url:* http://tecfa.unige.ch/guides/tie/html/wikis/wikis.html
>
> *url:* http://tecfa.unige.ch/guides/tie/pdf/files/wikis.pdf

Auteurs et version

- Vivian Synteta
- Version: 0.1 (modifié le 3/7/02)

Abstract

> Just a quick introduction to wikis

Objectifs

- Define wikis (technically, conceptually, educationally)
- List some problems that one might face
- Give some guidelines to use in education

1. Table des matières détaillée

2. What is a wiki?

Various names: wiki, WikiWikiWeb, Swiki, CoWeb, phpWiki, ...

First wiki from Ward Cunnigham

Installations at tecfa:

- PhpWiki: http://tecfa.unige.ch/proj/seed/wiki/

Swiki/CoWeb: http://tecfa.unige.ch:8888/

2.1 Technical point of view

- collaborative web site
  - every page can be edited by anyone (through simple HTML forms)
  - simple mechanism for creating new pages
  - formatting is being done through a simple text language inside the text (ex: *http://tecfa.unige.ch* makes a link in a swiki)
  - every version of hypertext is stored and versions can be compared (diff)
- linking is done automatically on the server-side
- all pages are stored in a database
- is programmed in Squeak, Php, Perl, ... and for various platforms and OS

2.2 Conceptual point of view

vulnerability   *Power of wiki*   flexibility

⟵————————————————————⟶
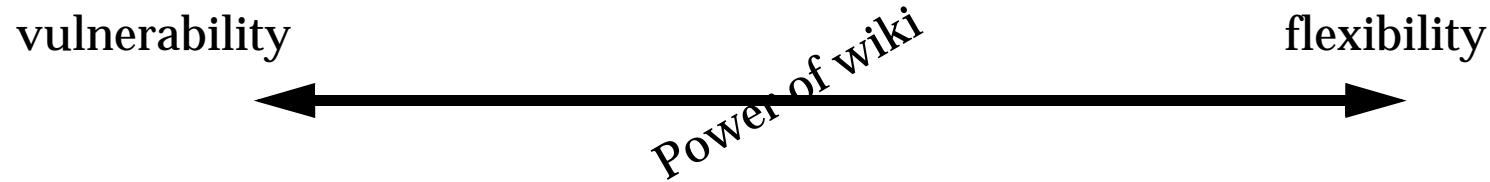
The power of wiki is that is completely open and every page can be annotated by various persons and evolve with time which means 2 things:

- vulnerability
  - no security (in a way)
  - no synchronization checks (first submits, first saved)
  - in case of a problem, admin or any user should fix it OR restore prom previous version
- flexibility
  - no passwords (sort of)
  - no firewalls
  - democracy (teachers and students at the same level)

2.3   Educational point of view

Wikis have been used succesfully in education (Guzdial, 1999)

Exemple 2-1: Swiki/CoWeb by Collaborative Software Lab, Georgia Tech, last 4 years, more than 120 wikis

At Tecfa, we started with a pilot project for a biology class and we experiment with an embedded version of wiki (module) in a PostNuke portal for SEED project partners

url: http://tecfa.unige.ch/proj/seed/wiki/index.php/Cyber2OsCalvin (Cyber2Os phpWiki by Lombard F.)

For those interested in wikis in education a "must" is to read:

url: ftp://ftp.cc.gatech.edu/pub/gvu/tr/2000/00-19.pdf (A Catalog of CoWeb Uses by Collaborative Software Lab, Georgia Tech, 2000)

2.4 <u>Uses in education</u>

Research has shown that teachers and students can get very creative and develop innovative and very useful activities for learning (Collaborative Software Lab, 2000) inspired from constructivism and socio-constructivism like:

- Information sources (simple websites easily created)
- Student assignement hand-in (with the advantage of peer ratings)
- collaborative web-writing (to co-contsruct collective knowledge, KB)
- problem solving
- project spaces
- anchored collaboration (anchored newsgroup-like discussions for reviews), term invented by Turns and Guzdial
- focused discussions (forum-like discussions)
- case libraries (projects "Hall of Fame")
- cross class/courses projects (interdisciplinary projects)
- for community building among students ("Hot Lists", common interests, adventure games!)
- for learning to collaborate (to change the individualism culture of traditional instruction)

2.5   Problems, guidelines, resources

A. Problems, solutions (?)

Some common problems are:

• teachers don't have time to share their experiences

Solution:

  • catalogs, knowledge bases, meta-wikis, Brown Bag Seminars :)

• collaboration is an important challenge, students don't know how to collaborate or resist to collaborate (especially from certain disciplines like engineering, math, comp. science). Result: either refuse to participate or participate to the extend required (Guzdial et al., 2002)

Solutions:

  • Change student and faculty attitudes, curriculum, way of teaching
  • Scaffolding! collaboration and collabarative learning are processes themselves that need to be learned. => take time to design the activities and scaffold all the way through!!!

B. Guidelines

Here are some advises that might help the organisation of an activity:

- period of open use (ex:a sandbox, movie reviews)
- introductory activities (ex: "who's who")
- not-required-but-useful activities to convince students for utility (discussions)
- closing activities (presentations, discussion, coll. book)
- extra credit opportunities (for motivation and enrich the case libraries)

C. Resources

Some of the Wiki variants that exist:

- PhpWiki: http://phpwiki.sourceforge.net/
- Swiki/CoWeb: http://coweb.cc.gatech.edu/csl/9
- WikiWiki: http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?WikiWiki