

Learning, and learning about learning, in Wikiversity

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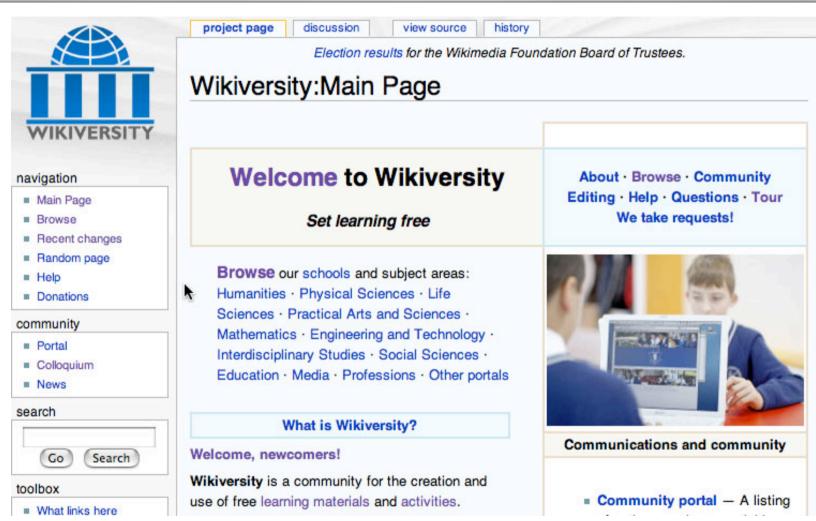
Wikiversity

- Officially launched in August 2006
- (Had been previously "incubated" in Wikibooks for 2-3 years)
- Process of defining project 1 long year on Meta :-)
- Educational materials & activities (including research)
- All learner levels and languages





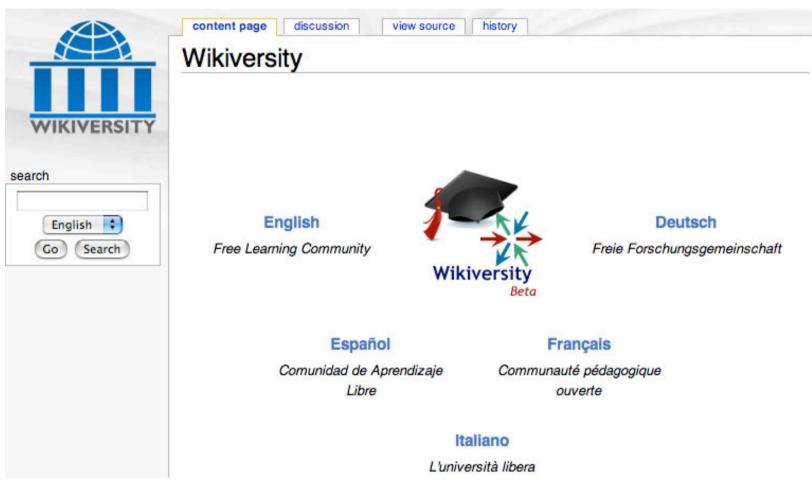








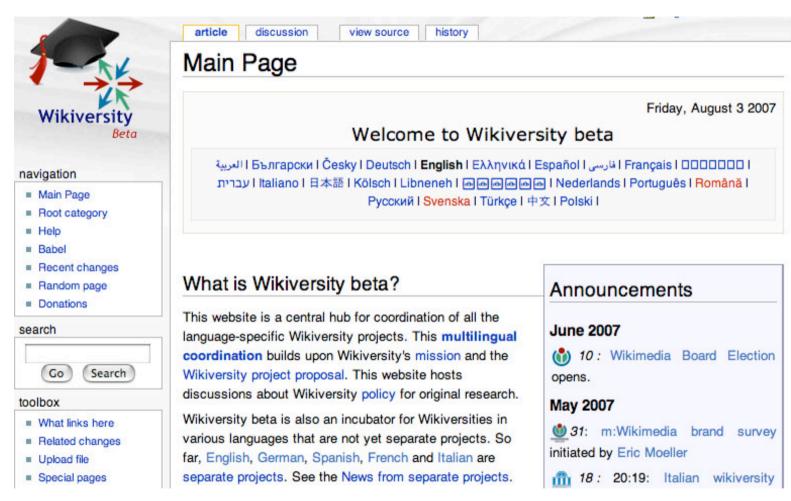


















Wikis and education

What is the "wiki way", and what does it mean for education?

- Discuss validity of information
- Store, manage, but also construct knowledge
- Create a Community of Practice around its activity
- People participate in the very definition of the space itself (policies, processes, structures, etc)







Wikiversity so far...

- Some good materials and courses (eg. Filmmaking)
- Some sense of a learning model (learning by doing)
- Some active contributors (5-10 v.a; 50-100 a)
- Some new structuring 'namespaces' ("School", "Topic")
- Some policies (some adapted from Wikipedia) NPOV
- Apprenticeship model of adminship ("custodians")
- Research guidelines
- Logo, motto & slogan







However, Wikiversity lacks...

- Intuitive structure
- Good introduction (main page & support pages)
- Comprehensive tutorials about this wiki and the "wiki way"
- Focused and targeted search (not just subject, but level, etc)







Problems

"...it's like climbing a mountain. From a distance it's clear where the peak is, but up close it's just a sheer cliff with no obvious route to follow." (Mystictim)







Wikis can be intimidating...

"In 1989 I brought home my first ever company car, a Toyota Camry with fuel injection and electronic ignition and all fuel and servicing provided, free. Up until that day I had usually done my own engine tune-ups because I liked fiddling with points and carburettors. After six months I decided to open the bonnet 'to see if it had an engine'. I noted the sealed systems and need for special diagnostic equipment and closed the bonnet on that area of interest. In a strange way wiki is like re-opening that bonnet." (Anon)







But wikis offer new possibilities...

"When I think about the ultimate goal of Wikiversity, I think about the historical origins of universities, collaborative efforts to facilitate learning that brought together learners and teachers. In a sense, we are starting over from that fundamental starting point but doing it in a new medium, a virtual world that is not constrained by the need to work in a restrictive physical space. We are able to explore what can be done in this new virtual space." (JWSchmidt)







Wikiversity - a new paradigm?

- Wikiversity is moving in new territory
- Redefinition, or fresh look at "university"
- However, it is not working in a vacuum of learning theory & practice







My/our research

- Focus on how a wiki impacts on the practice of education
- How the Wikiversity community organises itself around this activity
- Collaborative research ("Action research")
- Multiple outcomes (PhD thesis, academic papers)...
- A community of practice, learning about learning







Feedback...

Now :-), or...

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