Title of Session: Reflection through experience and experiment with the Webheads
Moderator: Elizabeth Hanson-Smith
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Room: On Tap Café

DianneA: Welcome to Reflections through experience .. with Webheads.   I am here to provide Event Helpdesk. Your leader tonight is Elizabeth Hanson-Smith.   If you need assistance at any time send me a private message. Please check the 10 steps to a successful chat just under the Featured Passageways for how to [detach your chat window and send a private message].
DianneA: I see that some are old friends, so that is perhaps enough from me for now, over to you Elizabeth
ElizabethH: Ok--We have a few minutes before the session actually begins officially.
ElizabethH: Is anyone here not already a Webhead?
MichaelHo: I'm not a Webhead.
ShuniI: I was.
ElizabethH: That is, a member of the Webheads in Action (WiA) group?
AmieF: I'm not a webhead
MacC: What is a webhead?
ElizabethH: I hope you will come to join us eventually.
ElizabethH: Maybe Michael, Amie, and Mac (and Shun) could tell us a little about their interests as we start?
DafneG: you will find out what being a webhead means
ElizabethH: Hello Jennifer--we are just starting--would someone like to begin introducing him or herself?
AmieF: I am a research analyst for the National Center for Technology Innovation in Wash. DC. I love technology and my main area of interest is Assistive Technology
JenniferK2: I teach dyslexic students in a pull out program in K-8
MichaelHo: I'm a former biology professor and founder of the online math and science learning community PersonalProfessors.com
MacC: I am a Tech Director at a K-12 district. I like to bring anything of interest to help teaching and learning.
ElizabethH: I am a freelance ed tech consultant and I also write software and surf a lot.
ChinChiC: I [am a] teacher in Taiwan
DianneA: I am Dianne Allen, from Kiama Australia currently working with pre-service training for primary educators (elementary K-6)
RenataS: I teach efl in Japan
KarenGar: I am Karen and I am a webhead....
DianneCM: I am a teacher librarian in Hong kong - like the web a lot and its potential
ShuniI: I am taking M Krauss Integrating the Internet course online. Still I can't get rid of the idea much of projects or contents don't fit our needs. Teaching web-based LL EFL in Tokyo.
JosephinC: Hi, there!
JeanMC: I teach French and use of ICT in an university in Colombia

RustyS: I'm a policy analyst and part time teacher at the community college level

DafneG: I am Dafne, an ESP teacher from Caracas, Venezuela. Now in Spain

ElizabethH: Anyone else--tell us about yourself a bit?

PearlY: My name is Pearl. I am an English teacher.

MichelleLB: I'm Michelle, a 4th grade teacher

ElizabethH: OK, you may all pour yourself a virtual glass of your favorite drink, and we'll get started!

JosephinC: Hi, I am Josephine. I teach both junior and senior high students.

RustyS takes his sake cold with a little ice

ElizabethH: We are going to talk about the conditions needed to catalyze an online community, the benefits of having a community, and how this might apply to language learning.

ElizabethH: To give an example, let's look at the Community Portal Page of the Webheads.

ElizabethH: Please click and explore for a few minutes:

ElizabethH: http://www.geocities.com/vance_stevens//papers/evonline2002/webheads.htm

ElizabethH: If you look at the page, you will see one of the basics for communities--you have to know each other a little, at least.

ElizabethH: If you click on any picture, it will take you to their links, homepages, recent publications, etc.

JenniferK2: Do common interests count?

ElizabethH: For the Webheads, it's mainly EFL/ESL and technology.

ElizabethH: We are all teachers or consultants in ed tech.

RitaZ: this is our commonest interest, Jennifer ;-))

ElizabethH: So yes, I think common interest do count.

ElizabethH: Anyone want to speak to that?

BryanM: I think that that is part of the definition of a "community"

BryanM: there must be common interest

ElizabethH: Thanks Bryan, yes

DianneA: common interest and diversity perhaps Elizabeth ..

RitaZ: we all meet to share sth we are all interested in

DafneG: willingness to learn and share

ElizabethH: Vance Stevens started the Webheads.

ElizabethH: One of the things he always says is "if something needs to get done, someone will do it"

ElizabethH: So maybe willingness to contribute is important too.

DianneA: definitely Elizabeth

BryanM: wow, a guy with a lot of faith

ElizabethH: Here is another of several sites built by Webheads to help keep track of what we do:

ElizabethH: http://www.malhatlantica.pt/teresadeca/webheads/wia-index.htm

JenniferK2: *L* He must have seen my schedule!

DafneG: it happens in our community, Bryan

ElizabethH: Teresa gives us an even more extensive idea of how wide our interests are and how much we are involved with.

DafneG: the first thing Vance asked for was an intro and a pic

DianneA: helps with the presence ...

ElizabethH: The pictures are also handy when we do a chat or a presentation together-- we can grab those photos and stick them into the Webpages easily.

RenataS: Daf's map was good too

ElizabethH: Oh yes--I meant to include that right here--Daf put up the URL!

DafneG: we got together for a TESOL Electronic Online Session in 2002, it was supposed to end in 8 weeks but we never left our Yahoo Group

DafneG: this is an interactive map http://dygonza.bravepages.com/index.html

DafneG: you can see we are from all over the world

ElizabethH: Scroll down on Dafne's page and click on the globe: "check it out here"

ElizabethH: If you roll over a figure on the map, you will see a little quote.

ElizabethH: Did anyone try it?

RenataS: and the survey monkey was fun

RustyS: Nicely done.

DafneG: we meet every Sunday here in Tapped In at noon GMT

ElizabethH: So one thing needed for community is presence, a sense of who we are and what we do.

DafneG: to discuss serious and non-serious topics

RitaZ: good resource to foster sense of belonging

ElizabethH: The internet is perfect for keeping track of each other.

ElizabethH: Yes--my next topic was some of the tools we use to make our community happen.

AmieF: Love the map

ElizabethH: We meet at TI every Sunday--and you are all welcome to come and chat with us.

ElizabethH: We usually don't have a set topic.

ElizabethH: So anything goes!

ElizabethH: And often, we Webcam at the same time.

ElizabethH: We use Yahoo! Messenger as a back channel, in case someone gets lost.

DafneG: and explore web tools

RitaZ: the experience of sharing an hour or two is always worthwhile and enlightening

ElizabethH: But we like the features of TI otherwise--except it doesn't have Webcam ability.

AmieF: What have been some of your hot topics

JeanMC: neither audio

ElizabethH: Check out this page for a picture of a Sunday at YM and TI:

ElizabethH: http://www.geocities.com/ehansonsmi/Webcamming.html

ElizabethH: We also like to use voice chat.

DafneG: we discuss about the best use of different tools in our contexts

ElizabethH: And probably the best location is Elluminate's vClass: http://www.elluminate.com/index.jsp

RustyS: Dafne, can you be a little more specific?

AmieF: When you say tools Dafne, are you referring to technology tools

ElizabethH: Elluminate is both Mac and Win/PC capable.

ElizabethH: Rusty--I think she means we discuss how to use tech tools,

ElizabethH: and also which suit our teaching contexts

JeanMC: and generally free tools

ElizabethH: and how best to make them effective for language learning.

AmieF: How you use the technology tools with students?

ElizabethH: Yes, we really focus on free a lot!

LucyW: any examples

DafneG: yes, Amie, different OLEs, webcams, video, etc

ElizabethH: Yes Amie--

LucyW: what is students' reaction?

AmieF: Who would like to share a success story. We love success stories

JeanMC: we participate in projects between students of different webheads

ElizabethH: Lucy--our students get experimented on all the time.

ElizabethH: If you click on some of the links from the Portal Page

ElizabethH:
http://www.geocities.com/vance_stevens//papers/evonline2002/webheads.htm

ElizabethH: or on our Index:

WendyAn: I think we have to have some interesting sites to visit

DafneG: since we are so many, we have students of different ages, levels, but we can say that our experience with students is almost always a positive one

RitaZ: motivating stds is our task, as they need to enjoy the experience and be aware of its advantages for Lang learning

ElizabethH: http://www.malhatlantica.pt/teresadeca/webheads/wia-index.htm

ElizabethH: You will find many descriptions of projects undertaken with students.

ElizabethH: Often done collaboratively with other Webheads.

ElizabethH: Daf--you might want to put up some of your pages on collaborations with various Webheads?

ElizabethH: let me mention one more tool

ElizabethH: http://www.alado.net/webheads

JeanMC: excellent tool

ElizabethH: Alado is also a voice chat room, but just for PC currently.

ElizabethH: Which one Jean?

JeanMC: Alado

ElizabethH: Yes, but I am waiting for the Mac OS X version.

ElizabethH: Alado has been very generous about giving us time and space to hold our meetings and presentations.

LucyW: many people left here because we are attending a CALL course and just had a look here! professor asked us to log out for a while, thank you all

ElizabethH: thanks, Lucy for explaining.

DianneA nods thanks to Lucy

DafneG: this is a video-chat unit with students in Caracas, Venezuela and webheads teachers http://**DafneG**on.tripod.com/videochat/videochat-unit.htm

ElizabethH: OK, we have cleared out the riff-raff (LOL)--let's look at some events and things we do together.

JeffC: Thanks Lucy... please tell your prof that full transcripts will be available online soon.

ElizabethH: That's a good one, Daf.

ElizabethH: One nice thing about a community of practice is that you always have a bunch of willing participants.

RitaZ: willing and very generous people

ElizabethH: Another collaboration that started in Webheads is taking on a life of its own.

ElizabethH: This is an Academic Writing site I started, and this fall I am hoping to have some real student-to-student contact.

DafneG: this is a project with students in Taiwan, and a teacher in Holland http://home.planet.nl/~mhren000/tpr/index.html

ElizabethH: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/academic_writing

ElizabethH: The Academic Writing has teachers and students in Kuwait, Brazil, France, and Taiwan.

ElizabethH: We have also done a big Pre-Conference Workshop at the international TESOL Convention in Long Beach, CA, USA, this spring.

DafneG: the project in Taiwan was for student teachers in their methods class, the topic was TPR

ElizabethH: And we will be doing presentations at online conferences for Reading Matrix in August, and in Minsk, Belarus, in November, and so on.

ElizabethH: See Vance's site for a calendar of events:

ElizabethH: http://www.geocities.com/vance_stevens/online_events.htm

ElizabethH: And that's just the half of it--we really need Central Planning for the many events we do.

JeanMC: and we give time for our colleagues' presentations!.... (for example Dafne in this moment: it's 4h30 in the morning in Spain)

KarenGar checks the calendar to plan her life....

KarenGar . o O (hummm)

ElizabethH: Oh, yes, it's nice to have those willing workers who spend their lives online!

DafneG: at the moment, one webhead in Venezuela, Doris is giving a 20-hour teacher training, and webheads have been invited to participate

RitaZ: and then Webheads meet every Sunday, to socialize and share findings and evaluations

ElizabethH: Obviously, there is a big professional development in being part of a real community.

ElizabethH: professional benefit I mean--we learn by doing and sharing with our colleagues.

DafneG: I am planning a research methods course and I will invite some webheads to be guest speakers in different sessions of the course

BryanM: All members have a stake

ElizabethH: I remember working with a colleague in Mongolia to help a teacher in NYC plan a presentation with voice chat.

MariaRen: That's true about big professional development Elizabeth... I'm just starting my career and Webheads have been of real help

ElizabethH: I got all of us on Webcams as well, so we could see her lab as we discussed what to do.

JeanMC: merci, thank you, gracias Maria

ElizabethH: And how about the personal benefits?

DafneG: I started designing online courses and teaching online due to webheads

KarenGar . o O (yes, tomorrow is an important day......)

ElizabethH: I feel that I have friends all over the world.

DorisM: Me too

MariaRen: je t'en prie Jean

MariaRen: I feel that too

ElizabethH: And when Webheads finally meet each other face-to-face we celebrate by making Webpages about the visit.

KarenGar . o O (webhead sightings are FUN)

ElizabethH: In fact we all tried to see Jean receive a medal of honor from the French Academy recently!

ElizabethH: And he is in Colombia.

ElizabethH: So what can we learn from all this about language teaching/learning?

ElizabethH: How does this community building apply to students learning a language?

RitaZ: I remember one occasion when I was asked to sing Argentinian tangos to Taiwanese sts, a Sunday evening here, a Monday morn in Taiwan !!

RustyS: Sorry to interrupt, but.... what does oO mean?

MariaRen: oh yes... and some of us couldn't see it... but we know it was a wonderful and memorable moment for Webheads and for Colombia

BryanM: thought bubbles

ElizabethH: What might or might not be relevant in our community to students??

DafneG: this was the last meeting, for my doctoral dissertation: http://www.malhatlantica.pt/teresadeca/webheads/meetings/teresa-daf1.htm

RitaZ: it means "think"; Rusty

RustyS: Thanks.

ElizabethH: That's a good one, Daf.

KarenGar . o O (thought, thought....)

ElizabethH: To start to answer that BIG question, I think there are some significant differences for students.

RitaZ: their awareness of the importance of having authentic communication in English

DafneG: I taught Taiwanese students about Spanish regional dances, songs and festivities

ElizabethH: Good Rita--it's our job to make them aware of that too.

ElizabethH: Daf--that could be considered excellent motivation, but is it community-forming?

BryanM: Could it also be a support system?

BryanM: sort of strength in numbers

ElizabethH: I'd agree with that Bryan--like a study group, which can become a mini-community.

ElizabethH: One big difference:

DafneG: of course, we are teaching other webheads about the others' cultures, that is a way to get closer

ElizabethH: #1--they are in a somewhat "coerced" situation--they have to be there and they may not want to be in a community.

BryanM: but that in itself could help to form the community

RitaZ: same as in a classroom?

BryanM: common bond of "I don't really want to do this"

ElizabethH: Can a community be formed in one semester?

DafneG: when we meet in Tapped In we talk about our families, our eating habits, our hobbies
KarenGar: can a community be formed on-line?
BryanM: YES
DianneCM: yes...
ElizabethH: I think Webheads definitely formed online long before we started meeting each other on the ground.
KarenGar: yes?
RitaZ: definitely; Karen
KarenGar: or emulated?
ElizabethH: I'd say yes.
KarenGar: or emulated?
ElizabethH: I'd say yes.

[Ed. Note: Connection conflicts brought this discussion to an abrupt end 10 minutes before the scheduled time. To continue the Webheads discussion, join the Webheads every Sunday at 12 noon GMT in Tapped In.]