

Learning Languages

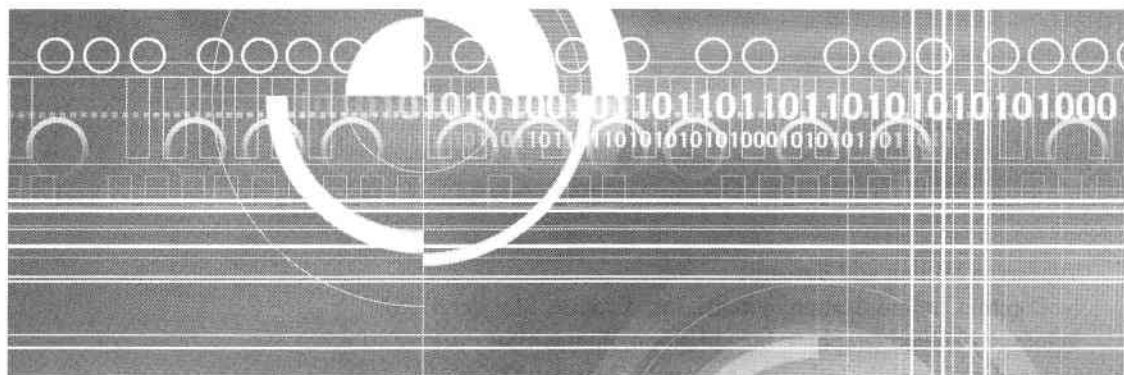
through Technology



Edited by
Elizabeth Hanson-Smith and Sarah Rilling



Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.



Learning Languages through Technology

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Figure 14.1. Screenshot of Bee Online reprinted with permission.

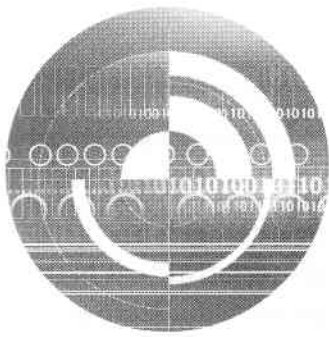
Figure 14.2. Screenshot of Bloglines reprinted with permission.

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Chapter 19

Issue: *Tools for Online Teacher Communities of Practice*

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Preview

Stevens is the founder of Webheads in Action, a teachers' community of practice (CoP) existing almost entirely online, which explores technology collaboratively through the extensive use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools. In this chapter, Stevens documents the birth and development of this community. He explores how teachers learn to use CMC tools in a constructivist setting, such as that offered by the Webheads. Teachers' hands-on professional development, in turn, informs their interactions and approaches to language pedagogy with their own students. Stevens describes several Webhead classrooms and argues that if teachers pursue ongoing professional development in the context of CoPs, they will work within a constructivist paradigm, where scaffolding occurs in a shared zone of proximal development.

Before you read:

- What professional interactions have you engaged in while developing your pedagogical skills? Were any of these online?
- How do the ways in which teachers learn throughout their schooling affect how they teach their students? What are some examples?
- What constructivist techniques do you feel are appropriate for your students, either online or face to face?

Writing for Webheads: Growth of an Online Community

Language teachers have often shown themselves to be on the leading edge of computer-based technologies because of their involvement in communication. The Internet is an excellent means of putting people in touch with one another, and this characteristic has been exploited by language teaching professionals. The tools with the most potential for learner interaction can also be used by teachers to learn about these tools and how to use them with students. In fact, to use CMC tools successfully with students, teachers must gain experience with these tools themselves. One significant solution to the problem of incorporating rapidly developing CMC and other technologies into ongoing teacher training has been the formation of CoPs online, where teachers share and learn how to use techniques that benefit their students in online or blended settings.

Wenger is perhaps the best-known proponent of the concept of *communities of practice* (1998). He defines CoPs as simply “groups of people who share a passion for something that they know how to do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better” (2002, 1). Wenger (1998, n.d.) distinguishes CoPs from other communities (e.g., a neighborhood) because they share three crucial elements:

1. A common domain of interest (a specialty, sometimes recognized as such only within the CoP)
2. Cohesion and interaction within the community (as opposed to simply shared membership in an organization)
3. A practice or expertise (as opposed to a common passive interest, for example, in books or movies)

I came to realize the importance of online community in language learning during the 1990s, when I began teaching a writing course at Winet’s (n.d.) project, StudyCom English for Internet, for students from around the world. StudyCom matched volunteer teachers with volunteer students in free online courses. However, I soon saw that sending composition assignments via e-mail did not engage the students beyond the initial correspondence. When one of my students made a Web page for our course, I was so impressed that I took it upon myself to learn the Web-authoring language HTML. This was an awakening for me, a realization that what was missing in the fleet of e-mail messages passing in the night was an anchor. This student had demonstrated the importance of having such an anchor—a portal that would focus the course on its objectives and expand its purview infinitely through hyperlinks to other relevant documents on the Internet.

Another significant leap came in the late 1990s, when Winet introduced what he called *3D classes* in English and encouraged his teachers to explore virtual chat rooms in The Palace (2001–2006), a free online space where participants were represented by avatars (characters that could be created from personal photos or graphics). The illusion of three-dimensionality was created by endowing each Palace (a graphical chat space unique to a given server) with objects such as doors and windows hyperlinked to other graphical spaces, so visitors had the impression of moving from room to room. My writing classes used a Palace chat room called

the Virtual Schoolhouse. The interface gave visitors great leeway in expressing themselves not only in text but also with emoticons (small images that represent feelings) and tools that allowed them to control the environment in imaginative ways. For example, visitors could share graphical objects by dropping them, virtually, and letting others capture them. (Other multi-user, object-oriented domains [MOOs], such as schMOOze University [n.d.], are similar in concept.) My students, now known as *Webheads*, liked the graphical Palace environment and saw it as an enjoyable way of improving their language skills.

Members of this early Writing for Webheads (WfW) group (see Stevens 2006c) tended to range in age mainly from secondary school students to young working professionals, although we had a septuagenarian grandfather in the group (a former minister of culture from Argentina) as well as a young schoolboy from Saudi Arabia. The students shared a desire to improve their English, often for career enhancement; an attraction to the Internet; self-motivation as volunteer learners; and sufficient English ability to cope with unfiltered interaction with native speakers. They also tended to be empathetic with each other and appreciative of the opportunity to learn on the Internet. A small subset of the group consisted of nonnative-English-speaking language teachers practicing in their respective countries. These teachers, as well as the native-English-speaking teachers in the group, benefited from having the opportunity to try online techniques with genuine students, and all parties appeared to have sufficient self-interest in the arrangement to develop and sustain it over a period of several years. (The teachers in our WfW group would eventually become the Webheads in Action.)

In addition to e-mail and the MOO for chat, I found the following tools to be beneficial to sustaining the emerging community:

- ICQ (2006), Internet chat software, introduced a revolutionary means of seeing when friends are online, and we used this tool as a *back channel* to get in touch with each other, help each other download and install needed software, and meet in whatever other chat tool we were experimenting with that week.
- I used my new HTML skills to help students and teachers get to know one another by posting their writings on the Internet. (In the current Internet world, this can be readily accomplished through Weblogs [blogs].)
- I requested that students send me photos, and I eventually mounted a gallery of portraits with links to individual student Web pages. These efforts served to create a far better sense of community than simple e-mail exchanges.
- Eventually students and teachers started e-mailing audio files to each other, using Pure Voice and Real Audio (now called RealPlayer [2005]). The voices added another dimension to what we were learning about one another, and audio had pedagogical value as well. One student uploaded recordings of her reading aloud and asked for feedback on pronunciation. We often heard from students that aural training was something they felt was lacking in an online environment, so they were happy when they had a means of practicing with other group members, some of whom were native speakers.

- A *Eureka!* moment came when we first tried an early version of HearMe (no longer available), a synchronous, audio-enabled chat service that worked as a plug-in through our Internet browsers. The makers of HearMe sent us code that we simply copied into our own Web pages. By visiting these pages, we could speak to each other.

WfW participants could now find each other in ICQ, drop by The Palace for text chat, and then speak to one another in HearMe. We were well on our way to becoming a group who, despite having never met personally, knew a great deal about one another: what we looked like, what we sounded like, and through our writing, how we perceived the world and one another. We had, in short, become a CoP, despite being divided by great physical distances.

Community Building 101: Webheads in Action

By the early 2000s, WfW had branched out from simply meeting online regularly to participating in online events. For example, the WfW teachers gave a presentation at the April 2000 Teaching in the Community Colleges online conference, and we invited our students to participate. We realized that having students meet and interact with language teachers exposed the students to authentic language, and their confidence and motivation grew when they found that they could communicate successfully in a live presentation (see Coghlan and Stevens 2000).

Our use of voice chat at that time was innovative and, combined with our foray into online conferencing, gave us the opportunity to invite newcomers to our online gatherings. We began to submit proposals for online events at land-based conferences, and when they were accepted, we posted to electronic lists frequented by language teachers to announce our live online voice events. In this way, we engaged live conference audiences on land in impromptu interactions with remotely participating WfW members. We were pleased to find not only that these events worked, but also that we could count on members within the group to make and keep appointments online. Another important aspect in online community development was having confidence that reputations could be staked on unseen colleagues who were responsible enough to one another to keep their promises.

Our use of voice technology had a different kind of impact on WfW, one that changed the character of our community. Voice chatting, and its potential to reach learners and peers online, brought attention to our work and enabled us to become more involved with teachers who wanted to learn about CMC and how to use it with their students. Unfortunately, the increasing involvement of teaching professionals ultimately had a dilatory effect on student participation. Students who popped by our regular Sunday synchronous chats found that their voices were being drowned out by native-speaker banter, and the discussion on the mailing list was tending toward teacher talk.

As a result of this divergence in purpose and audience, I took advantage of an opportunity at the end of 2001 to deliver an online workshop (Stevens 2006a) in the second annual TESOL CALL Interest Section–sponsored Electronic Village Online (EVO; for a description of this volunteer effort, see Hanson-Smith and Bauer-Ramazani 2004). The workshop was

meant to show teachers how an online community could be formed by involving the participants in an actual community formation experience, and then relating this experience to the context of language learning. Many teachers in WfW joined the workshop, which came to be known as Webheads in Action (WiA) to distinguish it from WfW. (See the group site at Stevens 2006b). Although many of the teachers tried to keep a foot in both communities, it soon became clear that the most stimulating contributors were focusing on WiA. Consequently, WiA has flourished and expanded, and as of this writing four years later, it continues to generate many e-mails each day and produce frequent collaborations among members (Figure 19.1 shows the portal page [Stevens 2006b]). While the student WfW group still exists at around four hundred members (about the same number as WiA) and continues to enjoy sporadic interaction, the dynamic of the group has diminished, and its members hardly know each other as well as in the early days.



Figure 19.1. Webheads Portal Page with Community Member Images

Source: <http://www.vancestevens.com/papers/evonline2002/webheads.htm>.

Webheads Workshop Outcomes

The content of the EVO WiA workshop was both skills (instruction in the use of the free text, voice, and video synchronous and asynchronous CMC tools in learning environments) and pedagogy (a discussion of how these tools could be used to help bind a group of diverse online participants into a cohesive community). By using these tools, WiA members met online as a CoP and got to know each other while sharing experiences and expertise. There is no doubt that the participants enthusiastically embraced the global community that emerged, as shown by evidence left throughout our Web archives (see, e.g., Almeida d'Eça 2005b; Stevens 2006b).

In addition to the split from WfW, there were two particularly important outcomes of the EVO WiA session. First, many of the group members applied to their teaching what they had learned from participation in this online community. WiA members regularly document their teaching experiences with online CMC tools, and several have specifically documented changes in their teaching by comparing their work before their encounter with WiA to more recent work influenced by the CoP (e.g., al-Othman 2001–2004; D. González 2003a; Yeh 2003a).

Second, unlike other EVO sessions that met during this eight-week period, the Webheads did not disband. Throughout the year, we continued to meet at our regular Sunday chat at Tapped In (SRI International 1995–2004). Group members continued to participate in special online events as well as face-to-face (f2f) and online conferences, and even launched their own traditions, such as an annual HalloWebhead party at the end of each October. WiA attracted new members, in particular those who became interested in the group through their research into CoPs (e.g., C. M. Johnson 2003; Steele 2002) and those who participated in what have since become annual EVO sessions, *Becoming a Webhead* (see D. González and Almeida d'Eça 2006) and its many sequels run by “graduates” of the original group, to inculcate in others the Webhead model of community formation. Through interaction with new members, the community-of-practice paradigm has been embraced as a model for the learning that takes place through a loose yet strengthening association (Lave and Wenger 1991).

Since the 2002 EVO WiA workshop, the CoP model has been replicated with consistent success in the formation of similar communities, for example, Real English Online for teachers and students who use video (Marzio and Hanson-Smith 2006), and the bloggers of Dekita.org's (Ammann, Campbell, and Dieu n.d.a) EFL/ESL Exchange (Ammann, Campbell, and Dieu n.d.b), who meet in weekly chats, present at online conferences together, and publish a communal blog and interlinked blogs with the work of students from around the world. As Brown and Gray (1995) say about CoPs, “what holds them together is a common sense of purpose and a real need to know what each other knows” (§3 under *Communities of Practice Emerge*). The *Communities of Practice* group, com-prac (J. Smith 2006), is one of many CoPs that have come together out of an interest in CoPs themselves; these are often excellent sources of material on the topic.

An examination of long-term CoPs suggests that the following components are integral to their formation and maintenance in a distributed online environment:

- *engaged coordination*—To retain vitality, CoPs need intensive nurturing by a committed and skilled coordinator (or coordinators). The coordinator ensures that all the other components are managed, and that members of the group feel personally welcome, appreciated, and involved.
- *pictures*—Posting community member pictures on the Internet is a trademark of our CoPs and helps members get to know one another.
- *voices*—Voice over Internet Protocols (VoIPs) are common CMC tools these days, and voice recordings can be stored at community portals and made available through Web sites and blogs. Some members of our community feel that voice is more powerful than photo images in forming impressions and leading to bonding, but certainly, in tandem, these two help CoP members get to know and relate to one another.
- *community Web pages*—Webheads develop Web pages where member details, such as place of residence, workplace, professional and even sometimes personal links and vignettes are recorded, again for the purpose of helping others in the CoP form impressions of personality and professional background.
- *asynchronous interaction*—WiA members utilize free electronic lists and community portals, such as Yahoo! Groups (2006), and set up wikis (Web pages that can be edited collaboratively online), blogs, Moodle sites, discussion boards, and so on to establish asynchronous contact among members.
- *synchronous interaction*—Webheads establish regular weekly online meeting times using freely accessible Web portals, and we encourage use of instant messaging in our groups.
- *archives*—Members post transcripts of conversations with each other on the Internet; archive collaborative presentations, publications, and other accomplishments; compile syllabi developed during collaborative online sessions; and link these to pictures and biographical details to enable the community to recognize and get to know the contributors and the classes they teach.
- *informality*—We recognize that we are essentially human, and we front the phatic (social and emotive) elements of our interpersonal relationships. This style of interaction has resulted in collaborations of the highest professional quality.
- *tolerance*—A member once remarked that among our strengths is downplay of any personal agenda among members. Acceptance of boundary members (sometimes called *lurkers*) is also a Webhead characteristic; members are welcome to make contributions whenever they feel comfortable doing so.

The Importance of Chat in Community Cohesion

What is usually called *chat* is discouraged in many language learning settings because of its association with telegraphic discourse and paucity of content. Some see chat as a frivolous waste of time—anathema to learning and a panacea for lonely hearts. Many regard it as potentially dangerous because people can misrepresent interactions or reveal too much of

their identity and expose themselves to abuse. Tudini (2003), for example, notes a problem with “interlocutors seeking virtual sex” (p. 154; see also Privacy Rights Clearinghouse 2005; Rao 2003). However, the telephone is also susceptible to these pitfalls: people can waste time on the phone or use their mobiles to arrange trysts. Yet the telephone is perceived as a remarkable tool that facilitates communication and helps people accomplish tasks that would be impossible or difficult if left to other means of communication. Nonetheless, the telephone suffers severe limitations as a pedagogical tool. It is expensive over long distances and impractical for use by more than two people without special equipment or venues. If only people could pick up the phone and call anyone (or a group of people) anywhere in the world at any time for as little as they spend on their Internet connection. Chat tools allow people to do this and more, in combinations of text, voice, and video image.

For teachers to gain more realistic perspectives on the benefits of chat with students, they must use it themselves in their own professional development. The activity most pertinent to this outcome is teachers joining a chat to find out from each other how to use CMC tools and best apply them in teaching. Setting conditions whereby teachers are able to interact in CoPs exposes them to synchronous communication in safe and healthy environments and helps them realize that such environments can be created for their own students as well. (See examples in Almeida d’Eça 2003c, chapter 12 in this volume; D. González 2003b; Trites, chapter 15 in this volume.) For commonly used software or Internet tools to be used effectively in professional learning environments, they must be freely available to all concerned, that is, both low cost and cross-platform, in order to encourage participation from all group members. Because of our activities as innovators and pedagogically cutting-edge users of CMC, Webheads have been fortunate over the past few years to have been granted free use of various voice-enabled presentation tools whose costs are born by the host services, such as LearningTimes (2006), Alado (n.d.), and WorldBridges (n.d.). See CMC Tools Used by WiA on the next page.

Community Building 201: Constructivism in Blended Communities

Reflection on WiA suggests that teachers must experience participation in a CoP to understand the range of CMC tools available to them, to gain some expertise in orchestrating their use, and to practice the pedagogical principles appropriate to them. A CoP provides a *zone of proximal development* (Vygotsky 1978) and *scaffolding* in training techniques to offer an authentic and rewarding experience for teachers, who learn at their own pace with the support of other language teaching professionals. After such experiences, members can put expertise back into the community, extending the scaffolding to others. An online CoP is unique in that it necessitates communication through the tools that are being learned.

Techniques for scaffolding in CoPs introduce teachers firsthand to learning through constructivist models. Much has been written about constructivism in learning (for a comprehensive list of Web resources on the topic, see Ryder 2006). Hsiao (n.d.) provides a succinct definition:

CMC Tools Used by WiA

Tools available free to the public

- Yahoo! Groups (Yahoo! 2006) to manage group membership, set up an electronic list, and enable file sharing
- instant messaging tools, such as ICQ (2006), Yahoo! Messenger (2005), and Windows Live (formerly MSN) Messenger (2006), to locate group members online, communicate synchronously, and facilitate meetings
- voice- and video-enabled communication tools such as Yahoo! Messenger, NetMeeting (2000), iVisit (2006), and Paltalk (2006)
- learning environments such as Nicenet (2003), Global Educators' Network (n.d.), Tapped In (1995–2004), and Moodle (2005)
- Web enhancements such as blogs and Web authoring tools or HTML to develop Web pages with photos, other graphics, and embedded media files

Tools granted especially to Webheads

- Elluminate (2001–2006) voice- and Webcam-enabled presentation software at LearningTimes (n.d.)
- Talking Communities (n.d.) Webcam-enabled presentation software granted to us by Alado (n.d.)
- webcast facilities and server space for podcasting made available by Worldbridges (n.d.)
- server space and many server applications (such as Moodle) made available by OpenSource for Educators (n.d.)

Constructivist approach to learning emphasizes authentic, challenging projects that include students, teachers and experts in the learning community. Its goal is to create learning communities that are more closely related to the collaborative practice of the real world. In an authentic environment, learners assume the responsibilities of their own learning, they have to develop metacognitive abilities to monitor and direct their own learning and performance. When people work collaboratively in an authentic activity, they bring their own framework and perspectives to the activity. They can see a problem from different perspectives, and are able to negotiate and generate meanings and solution through shared understanding. The constructivist paradigm has led us to understand how learning can be facilitated through certain types of engaging, constructive activities. (II.2)

“Engaging, constructive activities” are precisely those that Webheads encourage (for examples of activities, see Stevens 2004; for a continuously updated index of WiA work, see Almeida d’Eça 2005b). One of the interesting results of WiA has been the conscious transfer of community-building strategies from the online experience, where overt strategies are required, to f2f or blended environments, which might not seem at first blush to require such strategies.

In constructivist thought, learning is considered a social phenomenon, and the presence of a community (others within one’s zone of proximal development as well as experts

leading the way) is a strong influence on learning. Teachers have long sought to make use of the notion that learning is aided by the social interaction that results from putting students into small groups and having them provide feedback to one another. However, I now find that the community-building techniques that I apply to my online classes, by which students get to know each other through their Web presence, work equally well in my f2f classes when they are blended with online experiences. The feeling of community within the class develops when student work is made available online for scrutiny by an audience of appreciative peers. The students work to project the right presence, and others in the class come to appreciate the personality quirks that show through (especially when students are encouraged to illustrate their work with digital art).

The following are techniques for community building that are mirrored in WiA and that I use in my blended but largely f2f language classes:

- Have students create Web presences through blogging and/or creating Web sites.
- Create community Web pages where member introductions and links to personal and professional Web sites, voice mail, and blogs can be accessed.
- Post these community member pages, with pictures, on the Internet.
- Encourage interchange between the local student community and others around the world.

Blogging gives a voice on the Internet to students who do not have direct knowledge of HTML, and it can be an important element in building community online (A. P. Campbell 2003; Galloway n.d.; see also Stanley, chapter 14 in this volume). The advantage of blogs is that students can get themselves online instantly (see Stevens 2005a). They do not have to bother with creating Web pages or deal with any of the normal aspects of Web hosting and file transfer. Furthermore, students can personalize their blogs with photos and links to other Web spaces. I think of blogging as a message in a bottle because it also grants students access to an audience of readers and interactants beyond their immediate school confines. Many Webheads are doing significant work with blogging (e.g., Dieu n.d.; G. Stanley 2005, chapter 14 in this volume; Suzuki 2004).

Other Webheads have found unique ways to utilize the Webheads community in their f2f or, more usually, blended language teaching situations. González (2003b), for example, notes parallels between lessons learned in a community of peers and their applications in the classroom with regard to chat, which she considers “an unexploited tool for language learning and teacher development” (§1 under Conclusion). González used her experience with Webheads to create a blended, chat-supported, video-enhanced English course for architecture students in Spain and Venezuela (González, chapter 2 in this volume; D. González and St. Louis 2002).

Al-Othman (2003–2004) applied some Webhead-inspired insights to her teaching when she announced that her Kuwait University end-of-term student presentations would be delivered live online through the Webheads’ Alado (n.d.) voice chat room. She invited community members to participate by listening and then helping to evaluate the presentations. Yeh (2003a) also applies CMC techniques to her blended classes in Taiwan; she has created a

graphically appealing set of Web pages documenting her students' work with other Webhead community members. One example of her ongoing work is her online sessions with Webhead songwriter Michael Coghlan. Yeh's students listened to recordings of Coghlan's songs and then met the composer online to discuss the lyrics with him (Yeh 2003b, 2004a). Yeh also has her students record and critique each other's speeches in an audioblog (or *podcast*) on the Internet (Yeh 2006). An example of her work with total physical response features a charming online video of her students talking their way through a Tai Chi demonstration (Yeh 2004b).

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite evidence of the benefits cited in this volume, teachers typically are not taking advantage of available technologies to put their students in optimally communicative, interactive, constructivist, student-centered learning environments. There are many reasons for this situation. Foremost may be that these technologies are emerging and evolving faster than teachers are able to keep up with them. Teachers are typically overworked with their day-to-day tasks, and it is the exceptional teacher indeed who takes the time necessary to stay current with technology. Many teachers are simply not interested in the technology for its own sake, and only consider using it in situations where it can marginally enhance what they have always done with students. This is a laudable first step, but the most appropriate applications of technology in education require both skill and art. Technology as a tool most resembles a paintbrush—using the brush to refresh a surface the way sailors apply paint to ships involves a much lower level of skill and familiarity than manipulating it like an artist. Producing truly stimulating material requires finesse in applying technology so that students will not only benefit from the immediate implementation but also be able to manipulate the tools themselves in an imaginative manner in pursuit of their lifelong learning objectives. Therefore, the most successful uses of technology in education tend to be innovative, and for innovation to occur, it is necessary to have both an interest in technology for its own sake and a means of efficiently pursuing that interest and applying it to one's particular situation.

Innovation and application are far from impossible goals. This chapter supports the assertion that if teachers pursue professional development in the context of a CoP, they can achieve these goals by working within constructivist learning environments, where scaffolding occurs among those in a shared zone of proximal development. To apply community-building techniques to online or blended teaching practices, teachers need to experience participation in a CoP in which these techniques are used for their own learning. Then teachers are in a position to apply these principles to their own classrooms with confidence. To begin the process of becoming Internet-literate, teachers are urged to join online courses such as the EVO or the Principles and Practices of Online Teaching Certificate sponsored by TESOL, and to join a CoP such as Webheads in Action, or for newcomers to technology, its spin-off group, Learning with Computers (Baya 2005–2006). This invaluable experience will lead to a lifetime of satisfactory teaching and learning in the global network. (To join any of the communities discussed in this chapter, visit the site addresses listed in the appendix.)

Appendix—Chapter 19 Online Communities and Tools for Community Building

Online Communities for Teachers and Students	
Australian Flexible Learning Framework	http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/
Communities of Practice <i>com-prac home page</i>	http://groups.yahoo.com/group/com-prac/
EFL/ESL Exchange	http://www.dekita.org/exchange/
Global Educators' Network	http://vu.cs.sfu.ca/GEN/welcome/welcome.html
Learning with Computers	http://groups.yahoo.com/group/learningwithcomputers/
LearningTimes <i>community home pages</i>	http://www.learningtimes.net/
Merlot: Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching	http://www.merlot.org/
MiddleWeb: Exploring Middle School Reform: Some Teacher Mentoring Resources	http://www.middleweb.com/mentoring.html
Novice Teacher Support Project	http://ntsp.ed.uiuc.edu/
OpenSource for Educators	http://www.opensource.idv.tw/moodle/
The Palace	http://www.thepalace.com/
Teacher Support Network	http://www.teachersupport.info/
Teaching.com	http://www.teaching.com/
Real English Online	http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Real_English_Online/
schMOOze University	http://schmooze.hunter.cuny.edu/
StudyCom English for Internet	http://www.study.com/
EVOnline2002—Webheads Community Event <i>WiA home page</i>	http://groups.yahoo.com/group/evonline2002_webheads/
Webheads in Action: Communities of Practice Online <i>WiA portal page</i>	http://www.vancestevens.com/papers/evonline2002/webheads.htm
Worldbridges	http://worldbridges.net/
Writing for Webheads: An Experiment in World Friendship through Online Language Learning <i>WfW portal page</i>	http://www.homestead.com/prosites-vstevens/files/efi/webheads.htm

Tools for Community Building

Alado Webcasts <i>voice chat platform</i>	http://www.alado.net/
Dekita.org <i>blog host</i>	http://www.dekita.org/
Elluminate <i>voice and video chat platform</i>	http://www.illuminate.com/
ICQ <i>instant message and chat software</i>	http://www.icq.com/
iVisit <i>instant message software</i>	http://www.ivisit.com/
LearningTimes.org <i>online community host</i>	http://www.learningtimes.org/
Moodle <i>CMS software</i>	http://www.moodle.org/
NetMeeting 3 <i>chat software</i>	http://www.microsoft.com/windows/netmeeting/
Nicenet <i>chat host</i>	http://www.nicenet.net/
The Palace <i>chat host</i>	http://www.thepalace.com/
Paltalk.com <i>chat software</i>	http://www.paltalk.com/
Pure Voice <i>voice mail</i>	http://www.pure-voice.net/
RealPlayer <i>media player</i>	http://www.real.com/
Talking Communities <i>voice chat host</i>	http://talkingcommunities.com/
Tapped In <i>online community host</i>	http://www.tappedin.org/
Windows Live (formerly MSN) Messenger <i>instant message and chat software</i>	http://get.live.com/messenger/overview/
Yahoo! Groups <i>online community host</i>	http://groups.yahoo.com/
Yahoo! Messenger <i>instant message and chat software</i>	http://messenger.yahoo.com/