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> Dear Viewers, this is a private workspace, not a community one. You are welcome to view and browse but requests to join this space will be ignored for a time and eventually rejected (nothing personal ;-)). If you have a reason to work here you can of course request entry by contacting the owners of this wiki.

WiA FIELD TRIP

WHO

The Webheads in Action field trip is for the regular Connected Futures workshop participants and invited webhead guests.

WHERE

Synchronous teleconference on Skype

WHEN

Wednesday May 7, 2008. 17:00 GMT. [Check your local time.](#)

OUR HOST

Vance Stevens, innovative community leader and one of the family's first cat herder, is our local tour host.
Vance's blog - adVancEducation: http://advanceducation.blogspot.com

You can contact Vance via
http://www.vancestevens.com/contactv.htm

CoP BACKGROUND

IDENTITY

Who are Webheads in Action?
An international community of language teachers, coordinators and researchers (mostly ELT) at all levels. This is an open, free community with no formal membership or steering group. The level of membership depends on the engagement, level of expertise and the ability to collaborate and share. What

brings the members together is a strong desire to improve their technology skills so as to develop multi-literacies.

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HISTORY

Some historical notes on Webheads: http://webheads.info :
The Webheads began in 1998 as a means of exploring tools for language learning online among an international distributed community of language learners and interested teachers: http://prosites-vstevens.homestead.com/files/efi/webheads.htm

The Webheads in Action started in late 2001/Jan 2002 http://vancestevens.com/papers/evonline2002/webheads_evo.htm
and in our first year of cohesion we began to see ourselves as a CoP and we started to explore the concept. We gave a colloquium on this perspective entitled "Case study of a community of practice" presented March 26, 2003 at the TESOL conference in 2003:
http://vancestevens.com/papers/tesol/baltimore2003/copractice.html#colloquium

At this time there were two Webhead members who had become attracted to the community due to its credentials as a CoP who went on to produce PhD dissertations using Webheads as a case study:

- Steele, John (2002). Herding cats: A descriptive case study of a virtual language learning community: http://netdial.caribe.net/~jhsteele/cats.pdf (actually, he studied the Webheads EFL students in the framework of CoP)
- Johnson, Christopher (2005) Establishing an Online Community of Practice for Instructors of English as a Foreign Language (unpublished dissertation available through the Webheads community)

Chris Johnson is known for his 2001 Survey of Current Research on Online CoPs http://www.citeulike.org/user/pmounier/article/305825 . His dissertation involved a case study of the WiA CoP. In the spring 2006, Chris became a member of CPsquare and was celebrated with a week long Dissertation fest, where he presented and discussed his work with the community.

- As a result of this connection we asked Etienne to be a keynote speaker at our http://wiaoc.org conference in 2007: http://www.vancestevens.com/papers/evonline2002/wiaoc2007keynotes.htm
- Our conversation with Etienne was recorded here: http://streamarchives.net/node/56>
  Etienne and Susanne present for half an hour.
  At about the 30 min mark Etienne throws open the discussion and Webheads comes up at minute 33. We talk about community spaces and the value of chaos. Cristina Costa joins in and talks about her experiences with Webheads. Etienne is interested and asks her at minute 37:30 when she first felt she belonged to this community and how long it took her to achieve this feeling (he felt she had bonded with the community very quickly and Cristina explains how it happened - Mona joins at mn. 45 and asks Cristina if she felt she needed to meet Webheads f2f).

From minute 50 in this conversation Etienne said he was rethinking his views on CoPs as a result of his interactions with Webheads, especially regarding the nature of space occupied by the community. He said that we knew who we were in terms of domain and practice but that we had freed ourselves from constraints on space in spanning so many available spaces in distributing ourselves, and that this was a revelation to him in that we were clearly a CoP with very loosely defined boundaries. At the one hour mark, Chris Johnson joined us and talked about how in studying Webheads he had had to grapple with the amorphous nature of spaces we occupied. He noted that we extensively documented our experiments with various spaces and Etienne asked if there was a central repository for such documents. Carla Arena mentioned in the text chat that this would be the YahooGroup. At 1:03 minutes I mentioned that another bit of glue was our weekly meetings at http://tappedin.org (at time of the recording there had been over 400 such meetings, at time of this writing nearly 500). We spoke about what goes on in those meetings and importance of informal learning, and learning in informal spaces as opposed to 'meetings'.

At 1:10 Etienne noted that when he asked Cristina when she felt she belonged to this community, and she answered, when her practice changed. "That was so sweet," he said :-)

LOCATION

Where do the Webheads congregate? The answer is complex. As this community has a dedication for experimenting with tools, documentation happens all the time and in many different constellations. There is no such focal point of the community, as Webheads are dispersed all over the web using their own tools and devices. One example of a community portal was set up by Jeff Lebow http://webheadsinaction.org on Drupal as a contribution from http://worldbridges.net . Although it aggregates links and news from webheads and all members have access to it, it is not the focal meeting point.

Every Sunday from 12:00 to 14:00 GMT there is a ritual meeting in the reception room at Tappedin http://tappedin.org   . The agenda is flexible and informal people share links, tips and tricks, experiment with a communication or presentation tool, troubleshoot eventual obstacles, and looking out for collaboration partners in a classroom exchange project. In between, people would also socialize around personal family events, travels or new work opportunities.

It is quite common to find some webheads chatting one to one or in small groups in more places, on Yahoo Messenger, or Skype, through an email list at Yahoo groups or interacting in Second Life. Some, who have joined Twitter, have been added to Crowdsource   .

They may also plan together the 24-hour Webheads in Action Online Convergence - WiAOC where sessions would happen in many different synchronous meeting facilities and on various themes, with renowned and experienced keynote speakers, as well as some who are getting their first public performance as an online facilitator or workshop leader.
See: CONNECT   and BRIDGES ACROSS CYBERSPACE   )

Two examples of joint collaborations for a webhead's upcoming presentation: Networking on the Net   and Open Networked Learning: Architectures of Participation)

RECRUITMENT

The community pools most new members from the Becoming a Webhead   EVO (Electronic Village Online)   session which happens every year from mid-January to mid-February. Teresa Almeida d'Eça   and Dafne Gonzalez   lead it and invite a number of previous years participants to get involved and co-moderate a week or two of the session and guest speakers to demonstrate a tool or a platform. There is a balance between traditional places and spaces andsessions so this January/February period is a large friendly gathering. The f2f meetings during international conferences, during trips and hosting webheads' offspring and family are also a strong component and are duly documented in text   and photograph   .

TESTIMONIALS

Michael Coghlan   (AU) ,
Cristina Costa   (PT- UK),
Elizabeth Hanson-Smith   (USA),
Buthaina Al'Othman   (Kuwait),
Maria Jordano   (Spain),
Patricia Glogowski   (Canada)
write about their experience with the webheads and say how participating in this community of practice has brought value into their social and professional lives.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Examples:

Vance Stevens interviewed by Carla Arena, a Brazilian webhead, for a teacher/student project.

http://explorations.bloxi.jp/a/vance-stevens-talks-about-abu-dhabi/

Vance's latest project: writingmatrix http://writingmatrix.wikispaces.com

Writing Matrix** is an ongoing collaboration project where students interview teachers all over the world

Sasa Sirk collects webheads related news on Pageflakes, an aggregator

(http://ww.pageflakes.com/sasas/15550507   (note only two ww in the URL - never saw this before, but it works!)

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The presentation above is recorded: http://tinyurl.com/468qrp

💬 Add Discussion