

Guest Editor's Introduction

PROCEEDS OF WEBHEADS IN ACTION ONLINE CONVERGENCE: VOLUME 2

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My colleagues and I are grateful to the editor of Teaching English with Technology both for this opportunity to publish a proceeds of our recent Webheads in Action Online Convergence and also for his interest in the project brought about by his conviction that presentations at that convergence made such significant contributions to the field of educational technology brought to bear on language learning that it would be worthwhile for these proceeds to fill not one but two issues of TEWT.

The current issue follows on the recent Vol. 6, Issue 2 (May/June 2006). This Special Issue of July/August completes our representation of this conference through its written proceeds. The completed proceeds in these two volumes comprises written renditions of 13 of the 46 presentations made over the three days of the WiAOC, November 18-20, 2005.

There is a complete record of all 46 presentations linked from the conference schedule at <http://schedule.wiaoc.org>. Many of these presentations were recorded and the recordings are in many cases available online at links provided on the portal. This is therefore one great advantage of an online conference presented digitally: its digitalized artifacts can be easily and faithfully preserved and proceeds from it generated in formats other than print media, such as the audio and video recordings you find linked from the portal. The full-length text proceeds in this present volume are a follow-on to the artifacts created at the time of each original presentation, and in many cases you will find recordings of some sessions linked at the bottom of its corresponding article in these proceeds.

These articles run a gamut of issues which will likely remain pertinent to the development of educational technology in language learning for some time to come. To start us thinking on the topic, we had in the last issue a 'keynote' article by Joy Egbert on "The end of CALL and how to achieve it" to put the current state of practice in perspective with its larger context which was once most widely known as CALL (*computer-assisted* language learning) but which has more recently moved through permutations such as TELL (*technology-enhanced*, not just computers, although computers are a component of most modern technologies, but not always *the* salient component) and is now widely subsumed under 'ed tech' or IT (*instructional technology*).

What forms these technologies include has been addressed in several of these articles. In the last issue, Elizabeth Hanson-Smith and Michael Marzio wrote an excellent examination of online video resources for language learning in their article "Video online". In the present issue, Ton Koenraad describes how current technologies are utilized in adapting the Webquest concept and refining it for language learning, in "LanguageQuest design and telecollaboration" and Tom Leverett has produced an article on blogging in an ESL context: "This is your class on

Weblogs”. In an interesting twist on blogging and how language learning can be optimized through authentic communication, Barbara Dieu, Aaron Campbell, and Rudolf Ammann draw on metaphors from biology to suggest the efficacy of configuring learning networks on the peer-to-peer model, in their article “P2P and learning ecologies in EFL/ESL”.

This collection of papers includes several case studies of successful applications of learning networks including many of the elements noted above. In the last issue Anne Fox described a project she was involved in where interaction in an online environment was used to prepare face-to-face interaction in a host country, in “Teaching culture! A multi-national blended course for teachers of adults across Europe”. Peggy Patterson and Susana Trabeldo noted many cross-cultural outcomes as well as the target linguistic ones in their article “Negotiating for meaning across borders with CMC”. Dafne González and Leticia Esteves presented research to identify discourse patterns likely to produce desired target language outcomes in “Enhancing collaboration through chat in ESP: A conversation analysis” and Christina Jones explained specific techniques for accomplishing these outcomes in “Live interviews in voice chat with intermediate ESL students”.

In the present issue we have two more case studies. Ismail Fayed describes a remarkable global collaboration effort designed to identify in various cultures their common denominator altruism through the “good deeds” of participants, in “Using online facilitation to encourage students’ participation in collaborative projects online”. Rubena St. Louis elaborates on technology-based techniques she uses to develop autonomy in students, in “Student autonomy and the Internet”.

Finally, there are two articles in the present issue focusing on communities of practice and how they work in teacher professional development. Both cite the example of Webheads in Action (<http://webheads.info>), the CoP which organized the conference which in turn produced these proceeds. In this vein, Moira Hunter reflects generally on the rationale behind the efficacy of CoPs in teacher professional development, in “Are you on the PD Cybertrain or still hesitating?” Teresa Almeida d'Eca on the other hand documents how participation in Webheads in Action has impacted her in particular, and extrapolates to how others might benefit from participation in such online communities, in “Going global with the Webheads in Action”.

We hope you enjoy these articles and invite you to visit <http://schedule.wiaoc.org> to in effect ‘replay’ the conference (or as we called it, convergence, to signify how it brought together several events taking place at the time). We also invite you to ‘stay tuned’ to <http://wiaoc.org> for news of the next one slated for May 2007. We hope to meet you then and that the present proceeds stimulates your contribution as a presenter and/or online participant at this free and open source online event.