

Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Foreign Language Share Fair -Fall 2007

## Hot off the Press: Bringing the World to Your Language Classroom

**“Digital Immigrant”:** Giovanna Urdangarain (Spanish & Portuguese, [gurdanga@indiana.edu](mailto:gurdanga@indiana.edu))

The awareness of being what is now known as a 'digital immigrant' turned out to be for me from 2004, a search of ways to become what my students already were, that is, a 21st century learner. I am deeply interested in exploring the educational possibilities that Massively Multiplayer Virtual Worlds (MMVW) such as Second Life offer to the field of foreign language pedagogy. Since the impact of technology on this generation of students is unprecedented, it is imperative for educators at all levels to keep themselves updated about how technology affects students' acquisition of a new language and their students' openness to creating and learning in novel ways. Technological developments highlight the importance of constantly exploring ways to stimulate students' learning and the need to bridge the gap between how we learn, socialize, and communicate, and how our students do these things.

This presentation aims at giving a glimpse at a pioneering experiment in teaching a foreign language in a 100% virtual context. In Second Life, Kip Boahn, an American ESL teacher living in Germany, teaches English. This educational enterprise reaches people from all over the world in what may very well be the first truly global live language classroom. Today, he will show us two different ways in which the virtual realm can help instructors in teaching vocabulary to both, beginners and intermediate language learners. This constitutes just one example of the fascinating ideas that could be pursued by educators in this realm.

### Resources & people related to this project

1. If you are not familiar with Second Life check out this link:

<http://secondlife.com/whatis/>

2. The language-teaching project considered for today's presentation:

<http://www.SecondLifeEnglish.com>

3. Websites related to this project:

<http://www.esl-secondlife.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.blogyourenglish.com/>

4. Second Life Educators gathered for the second time at the Second Life Community Convention, that took place in Chicago, August 24-26, 2007. Following the link below you could access a downloadable document containing the proceedings of this event.

<http://slcc2007.wordpress.com/education-track/>

5. Second Life Grid Education links:

<http://secondlifegrid.net/programs/education>

6. Education Mailing List (SLED)

<https://lists.secondlife.com/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/educators>

7. List of universities, colleges, schools, libraries & museums present in SL

[http://simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Institutions\\_and\\_Organizations\\_in\\_SL](http://simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Institutions_and_Organizations_in_SL)

8. Second Life Graduate Student Colony

[http://www.simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Second\\_Life\\_Grad\\_Student\\_Colony](http://www.simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Second_Life_Grad_Student_Colony)

9. If you have questions or would be interested in learning more about teaching English as a Second

Language in Second Life, feel free to contact:

Kip Boahn

#### Short Bio:

I am originally from the US but have been living in Germany for the past 7 years. My love for foreign languages started at the age of 15 when I decided to spend an academic year abroad in France. This experience was later followed up by the hosting of several exchange students from various countries and another academic year abroad in Germany while at the University of Greensboro, North Carolina. In addition to my experience abroad, I spent approximately a year in Americorps (focus on ESL, literacy and community). My wife and I currently own a language school in Göppingen, Germany -- [www.oxfordschool.de](http://www.oxfordschool.de). We are involved in several e-learning projects and are excited about the continuous emerging of online tools and platforms which can be deemed useful for language instruction.

The web is literally teeming with websites and tools which emphasize the idea of community. Most web communities consist of people from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It would be an understatement to say that the ability to communicate in English is important for participants in these communities. It is absolutely paramount to have at least a basic command of English in order to really be absorbed into the overall community. Multilingual 'citizens' of such communities enjoy the luxury and responsibility of acting as bridges between the various nationalities.

I began experimenting with teaching in Second Life approximately one year ago. At that time, my wife and I were working on a 2D platform called Virlantis - - [www.virlantis.com](http://www.virlantis.com). I became highly intrigued by the immersiveness of SL and other 3D worlds. The richness and multitude of environments seemed to offer wondrous opportunities for exposure to language. I initially gave private lessons but soon found myself offering 'learning events' to larger groups of eager learners. These events gave learners a three-dimensional exposure to the English

language and provided teachers an opportunity to explore and develop various instructional methodologies.

I now find myself working with a core team of educators who sincerely desire to make progress with this new instructional medium. At present, we are putting the 'finishing touches' on an initial course concept. This concept will surely be revised along the way. It was simply necessary to settle on an initial approach in order to deal with the increasing demand for language instruction in SL. After announcing the pending start of the Second Life English Courses, we experienced an increase of about 2,300 visitors to our website - - [www.SecondLifeEnglish.com](http://www.SecondLifeEnglish.com).

There are numerous ways to find out more about teaching English in Second Life. Feel free to use the below links to learn more about SL and Second Life English. I can also be reached via e-mail at the above-mentioned address. Thank you for your time and attention.

Kip Boahn

SLE Website

[www.SecondLifeEnglish.com](http://www.SecondLifeEnglish.com)

SLE Forum ( Facebook.com)

[www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2444861923&ref=mf](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2444861923&ref=mf)

Official Second Life Website

[www.SecondLife.com](http://www.SecondLife.com)

In-world Info (located in Second Life - accessible after installing free software)

<http://slurl.com/secondlife/Greenbush%20Education%20Island/189/36/24/>