opening greetings deleted to prevent indentification of participants]

[13:32] Michelle Ford: Given it is so late, shall we crack on?

[13:32] Kirsty Salvesen: Sure

[13:32] Michelle Ford: This is very kind of you Kirsty.

[13:32] Taro Harrison: Indeed.

[13:32] Michelle Ford: I'll look to Taro to lead the discussion.

[13:32] Kirsty Salvesen: It's great to think about these issues

[13:34] Taro Harrison: OK, Kirsty, maybe before we get into the discussion of teaching and learning in SL, could you give us a sense of what teaching you have been involved in prior to SL in your non-avatar life?

[13:34] Kirsty Salvesen: I've been teaching for 16 years

[13:34] Kirsty Salvesen: Spanish mainly

[13:34] Kirsty Salvesen: to undergraduates, diplomats and business people

[13:34] Kirsty Salvesen: f2f.

[13:35] Taro Harrison: Right, and any engagement in on-line gaming?

[13:35] Kirsty Salvesen: A bit, yes

[13:35] Kirsty Salvesen: When I was 18 and then again during [names a course].

[13:35] Kirsty Salvesen: Also with my kids

[13:36] Taro Harrison: OK, maybe moving then to SL itself, how long have you been involved in SL?

[13:36] Kirsty Salvesen: As a student since September 2007

[13:37] Kirsty Salvesen: As a teacher since October 2008

[13:37] Kirsty Salvesen: With groups since end of January 2009

[13:38] Taro Harrison: OK, so having different perspectives on learning and teaching in SL. As a teacher what would you say you are seeking to do in an educational context in SL?

[13:38] Kirsty Salvesen: As a teacher... bring more fun into the classroom;

[13:38] Kirsty Salvesen: create more realistic simulations;

[13:39] Kirsty Salvesen: offer an alternative medium of expression for students of Spanish.

[13:40] Taro Harrison: Right, that's clear, thanks. How do you feel it 'brings more fun'?

[13:40] Kirsty Salvesen: Well, you can laugh more at things that happen.

[13:40] Kirsty Salvesen: Many absurd things happen when you are on s/l.

[13:41] Taro Harrison: Sure. You talked there about the possibility of creating more realistic simulations, so do you feel there are ways in which SL allows you to do things in a learning dialogue that you couldn't or would find more difficult to do in rl?

[13:42] Kirsty Salvesen: Yes, for example when you teach travelling language you can actually travel

[13:43] Kirsty Salvesen: and also do the things you do when you travel - taking pictures, praising people, monuments, and so on.

[13:43] Kirsty Salvesen: You also need to organise the trip, choose a place, etc.

[13:44] Taro Harrison: So is it fair to say that there is a sense of being IN the culture and locale of the language?

[13:45] Kirsty Salvesen: For some students - yes.

[13:45] Kirsty Salvesen: This would not happen in a r/l setting.

[a winged avatar hovers into the scene]

[13:46] Michelle Ford: Hi, Amanda.

[13:46] Kirsty Salvesen: Your text comes with a lag

[13:46] Amanda Wright: Hi, sorry to disturb - not sure how I arrived over here, I was over by the fountain a moment ago :)

[13:47] Kirsty Salvesen: That's Ok.

[13:47] Taro Harrison: OK, any constraints on learning/teaching interactions in SL, (sorry about the lag)?

[13:47] Kirsty Salvesen: Yes.

[13:48] Kirsty Salvesen: Something I find very disconcerting is not being able to see when students are thinking when

[13:48] Kirsty Salvesen: I give them a task in pairs.

[13:48] Taro Harrison: OK, anything else or is that the main thing?

[13:49] Kirsty Salvesen: Well, there are other issues - what you see is not what students are doing. For example they may be sitting in a yoga posture but are in fact writing a note.

[13:49] Kirsty Salvesen: Issues.

[13:50] Kirsty Salvesen: You also get very fluent speakers who are not so fluent with technology

[13:50] Kirsty Salvesen: so when you put them in pairs you have this extra dimension to think about -

[13:50] Kirsty Salvesen: pairs.

[13:51] Taro Harrison: So an extra challenge for the teacher. Any other points of comparison and contrast that you would want to draw with other educational contexts/environments?

[13:51] Kirsty Salvesen: Well, I always request for a Learning Technologist to be with me

[13:52] Kirsty Salvesen: so that he/she can deal with any problem realated to s/l.

[13:52] Kirsty Salvesen: You also have to deal with IM's and local chat at the same time.

[13:52] Kirsty Salvesen: Dealing with late comers is also different.

[13:53] Taro Harrison: In what way is it different?

[13:53] Kirsty Salvesen: And, the most important one - some students

[13:53] Kirsty Salvesen: expect the same type of class structure.

[13:53] Kirsty Salvesen: It is different

[13:54] Kirsty Salvesen: because you cannot point and tell them where to sit,

[13:54] Kirsty Salvesen: you have to address them all by their name from day one

[13:54] Kirsty Salvesen: at all times

[13:54] Kirsty Salvesen: so that they know you are talking to them,

[13:54] Kirsty Salvesen: addressing them.

[13:54] Kirsty Salvesen: You also have to explain or ask someone to explain via IM what they have missed,

[13:55] Kirsty Salvesen: so you have to divide your tasks on the spot much more often.

[13:55] Taro Harrison: Right, that's interesting. It would be good to hear a bit more about students' expectations concerning class structure.

[13:56] Kirsty Salvesen: Well, the first day some students expected to see a board for example

[13:56] Kirsty Salvesen: which I found strange because

[13:56] Kirsty Salvesen: everything is written down.

[13:57] Kirsty Salvesen: They also expect more of a linear way of working

[13:57] Kirsty Salvesen: you do A and then B.

[13:57] Kirsty Salvesen: They also expected me to correct them on the spot more often.

[13:59] Taro Harrison: So a lot of points there. You touched there on a student expectation that you had found surprising, any other things that you have found surprising about interactions in SL?

[13:59] Kirsty Salvesen: You also have to ask them to 'leave' the class more often so that local chat does not interfere with the work of other groups.

[14:00] Kirsty Salvesen: They have to get used to be in control of their activities at times without me being around.

[14:00] Taro Harrison: So students being placed in a rather different role.

[14:01] Kirsty Salvesen: Yes, but because the simulation we are doing involves taking decisions, it is a good way of dealing with this aspect of being immersed in a role like that.

[14:02] Taro Harrison: Yes, I can see it will be. Moving to a different topic, how would you describe the relationship between your SL avatar and your real life identity?

[14:03] Kirsty Salvesen: When I am teaching, my avatar hasn't got much of a conflict with my r/l identity because I do not immerse very much

[14:03] Taro Harrison: OK, so is there a distinction then between teaching and other interactions?

[14:04] Kirsty Salvesen: Indeed

[14:04] Kirsty Salvesen: I am a teacher in r/l, when I go to s/l and on s/l

[14:04] Kirsty Salvesen: there is no conflict.

[14:05] Taro Harrison: Right, maybe moving then from yourself as a teacher in SL, what do you find that your learners find particularly engaging about interactions in SL?

[14:06] Kirsty Salvesen: Well, we haven't fully discussed the issue but they all say at the end of the session - 'that was great'

[14:06] Kirsty Salvesen: and

[14:07] Kirsty Salvesen: they say that they have not worked so hard as they have done during the session.

[14:07] Kirsty Salvesen: They are also focused much more

[14:07] Kirsty Salvesen: and none of them ever uses any English.

[14:08] Kirsty Salvesen: They laugh a lot because many absurd things happen

[14:08] Kirsty Salvesen: whilst doing some of the activities.

[14:09] Taro Harrison: That is interesting that they never use any English. Any speculations on why that might be?

[14:09] Kirsty Salvesen: I would assume that they actually feel that they are in a Spanish speaking environment and not in a classroom setting.

[14:11] Kirsty Salvesen: I would assume as well that they feel less embarrassed.

[14:11] Taro Harrison: That clearly makes sense. You talked earlier about the expectations that they might come along with which could be unhelpful in SL, any other points to add on what learners appear to find particularly difficult or problematic about working in SL?

[14:12] Kirsty Salvesen: I think that they expect me to be in control of the class at all times;

[14:12] Kirsty Salvesen: and giving them tasks around a swimming pool without a teacher may feel strange for some.

[14:12] Kirsty Salvesen: Yet, I guess they must feel my presence more than in a normal classroom setting

[14:13] Kirsty Salvesen: I don't know.

[14:13] Kirsty Salvesen: As a teacher I prepare much more.

[14:13] Taro Harrison: Right, is the preparation different from rl?

[14:14] Kirsty Salvesen: Yes,

[14:14] Kirsty Salvesen: I have to know exactly what tasks I want them to perform

[14:14] Kirsty Salvesen: how, where, with whom

[14:14] Taro Harrison: Right.

[14:14] Kirsty Salvesen: and who is going to write what and in what format.

[14:15] Kirsty Salvesen: Also, I have to be ready to change the tasks at all times.

[14:15] Kirsty Salvesen: The pilot class is set up as a club

[14:15] Kirsty Salvesen: so anyone can turn up who hasn't got a clue of the simulation we are conducting.

[14:16] Taro Harrison: OK, so more uncertainty, less predictability calling for instant responsiveness, is that right?

[14:17] Kirsty Salvesen: Yes.

[14:17] Kirsty Salvesen: Something I am very pleased with is attendance

[14:17] Kirsty Salvesen: It has been 100% and we are getting more students.

[14:18] Taro Harrison: That must be encouraging. From your own experiences, what do you think makes for a good SL educational session?

[14:18] Kirsty Salvesen: It's difficult to say.

[14:20] Kirsty Salvesen: You need to be extremely well prepared, know exactly what you are going to do, love multitasking,

[14:20] Kirsty Salvesen: love the environment

[14:20] Kirsty Salvesen: and be ready to be focused 100%.

[14:21] Kirsty Salvesen: But I am still new,

[14:21] Kirsty Salvesen: I still don't know what is a good pedagogy for this environment.

[14:21] Kirsty Salvesen: I would like to take more risks.

[14:22] Kirsty Salvesen: You need to be doing a simulation

[14:22] Kirsty Salvesen: I guess

[14:22] Kirsty Salvesen: that works well.

[14:22] Kirsty Salvesen: But students will tell me

[14:22] Kirsty Salvesen: at the end of this course.

[14:23] Taro Harrison: You have given me a clear sense of what you view as making for a good SL educational session, what might make for a less satisfactory session?

[14:24] Kirsty Salvesen: For me, not using what the environment has to offer,

[14:24] Kirsty Salvesen: not giving clear instructions,

[14:24] Kirsty Salvesen: getting students confused,

[14:25] Kirsty Salvesen: forgetting who is who,

[14:25] Kirsty Salvesen: just doing what you would be able to do in a f2f class.

[14:27] Taro Harrison: OK, that is also clear. I have asked you a lot of questions about SL and learning and teaching, but are there matters you feel that I've not touched on that you would yourself like to explore?

[14:27] Kirsty Salvesen: Yes,

[14:28] Kirsty Salvesen: I find it very difficult to talk about s/l with those around me outside of an educational context.

[14:28] Kirsty Salvesen: It frustrates me that this world does not interact with the r/l world at the same level.

[14:29] Taro Harrison: That is interesting, in what ways does it frustrate you?

[14:30] Kirsty Salvesen: Well, as soon as the word 'educational' is added to s/l, everybody seems to enter into a context that they think they understand and take seriously.

[14:30] Taro Harrison: I follow.

[14:31] Kirsty Salvesen: They seem to separate 'learning' from other contexts.

[14:31] Taro Harrison: Any other matters you would want to raise or topics that you would like to return to?

[closing thanks and goodbyes have been removed to protect participants' identities]