



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### INTERNET AS A SOURCE OF LEARNING ENGLISH IN THE ESL CONTEXT

**M. JAYARANJAN**

Asst. professor, Department of English, V.R.Siddhartha Engineering College, Vijayawada



**M. JAYARANJAN**

**Article Info:**

Article Received:04/09/2013

Revised on: 25/10/2013

Accepted on :05/11/2013

**ABSTRACT**

This paper aims at presenting the advantages of using Internet as an important source of learning English in this modern era. The use of computers have become indispensable in the world to communicate the ideas. Internet has become a powerful tool of learning in the field of education.

Today the internet has an important role and great potential in educational life especially in learning English.

Internet has changed the entire process of accessing the information. This ubiquitous source of information has revolutionized the teaching and learning process beyond all recognition. The use of internet in learning second and foreign language learning has certain advantages and disadvantages. These problems can be solved with the help of an English teacher who is ready to help.

The Internet "is a global system of interconnected computer networks that use the standard Internet protocol suite (often called TCP/IP, although not all applications use TCP) to serve billions of users worldwide. It is a *network of networks* that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, of local to global scope, that are linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless and optical networking technologies. The Internet carries an extensive range of information resources and services, such as the inter-linked hypertext documents of the World Wide Web (WWW) and the infrastructure to support email" (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet ).

As the Internet technology develops, learning English has become much easier than before. One can surf the Internet to find almost any sort of information one thinks useful for learning English. On the web we can find many English language speakers, so if one is interested in learning communication it will help them to do so. By listening to Native speakers of language one can really understand socioeconomic and cultural clues of the language. Even though in the earlier stages it is very difficult to make out what the native language speaks but it will be beneficial to the speaker if he still persists on with it. This kind of perseverance is required to attain proficiency in the target language. Listening to the speech of the native speakers continuously one can reach a stage where the target language becomes intelligible. This does not happen just by listening. It

happens only the listening becomes a meaningful activity. It also makes the learner understand various intonation patterns of the language.

Internet makes the learning easier with its multi faceted programs and information pages which make the process of learning beneficial. If the learner is ready to spend some time with it seriously, then incredible results can be reaped. Even though it is a learner oriented platform, with the help of a teacher who can guide better results can be obtained.

If one is really interested in learning Internet is a heaven for such people apart from autonomy of learning it has variety which makes learning process interesting. There are various materials and learning sources available on the NET it depends on the person to make use of them in the way that facilitates learning. Competency levels in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW) can be improved by regular practice.

Internet helps the learner in improving vocabulary. Vocabulary is considered as an important ingredient in the process of communication whether it is spoken or written. The knowledge of vocabulary can be enhanced if the learner is ready to make use the facilities that are available on the net. These facilitates which are available on the net can make the learner understand various parameters of learning vocabulary like orthographic, phonetic, semantic and syntactic parameters. Various sites on the NET help the learner understand the meaning and its applications.

Language learning is not always as easy as one thinks of it. It requires real hard work from the side of the learner if he/ she is an ESL student. It may be a bit easier for the native speaker of the language given the situation. Internet is full of up to date information which makes the learning process interesting.

Review of Literature:

Research results show that the use of internet improves the English language communication skills in the ESL context.

It was found by Kern, 1995 that the ESL learners produce more sentences when it compared to the situation in classroom environment. Sullivan and Pratt: 1996, say that "the learners have a great variety of speech discourse through the internet". According to (Peterson, 1997 & Warschauer, Turbee, and Roberts, 1996) Internet makes learning more "student-centered". For Graus: 1999, "The internet is a source of supplementary resources and authentic materials".

As mentioned by Singhal: 1997, "The internet is a platform for experiencing and presenting creative works such as essays, poetry and stories and for providing supplemental language activities in specific areas of language learning".

Internet can be a valuable source of learning because it has a wide range of materials that can cater to the various needs of people. As, pointed out by Mike, 1996 "the Internet promotes higher thinking skills". Cononelos and Olivia: 1993, pointed out that "Internet is useful medium for communication with native speakers".

According to Kasanga: 1996, "Internet use increases language use and acquisition of second language". Kitao: 1998, remarks that "interaction in language helps learners to gain input in language learning process". As LeLoup and Ponterio: 1997, points out that "the internet motivates learners to use English in their daily lives and provides functional communicative experiences".

As Warschauer: 1997, mentions that "the internet gives the opportunity to construct knowledge together by expressing themselves in print and then assessing, evaluating, comparing, and reflecting on their own views and those of others". It can also be used to retrieve the information from various sources in the context of second language learning.

Internet gives the opportunity to communicate with the native speakers this in turn will help the learner clarify his doubts and get better understanding of the language. This type of communication with the native speaker helps learners to practice some specific skills will be useful in the process of negotiating, persuading, requesting, and engaging in authentic discussion.

Through the research conducted by many researchers on language learning through Internet it can be stated that it is a vital source of learning English in the ESL context.

A case study:

A qualitative study has been conducted to understand the views of students on Internet as a source of learning English language. The respondents were the students studying second year B.Tech in V.R.Siddhartha Engineering College. All the students were affirmative and they affirm that using Internet for academic purpose can improve their understanding of English language.

Student's opinions on Internet as a source of learning English language.

As xxx put it:

- It is one of the fastest sources of information where learning is made easy with a vast stuff just a click away. It provides information from alpha to omega.
- Surfing the net is the best thing to gain good knowledge.
- It is useful to refer the meanings of the unknown words.
- It is like a big library where information can be mustered within no time.

As xxx 1 puts it:

- Vocabulary and technical terminology can be improved
- Communication skills can be improved while chatting
- Chance for the students to attend online lecture classes and PPTs presented by educational institutes which will be helpful in improving their knowledge.

As xxx 2 puts it:

- To gain the grip over the subject
- To find the meanings of the unfamiliar words in the subject

As xxx 3 puts it:

- Internet is advantageous in aspects like communication, inventions, sharing of information and technology etc.
- It plays a vital role in acquiring knowledge on English language.
- Useful to learn meanings of the words and synonyms
- It helps in improving pronunciation.
- It provides more information about English language and communication skills.

## CONCLUSION

Teachers and learners should have the chance of internet accessibility, experience and familiarity with its functions in order that they can have autonomy of learning. Internet is only one of the tools for learning English Language. Even though there are some problems in having access to Internet, using, applying the sources of information to meet the needs of the learners, still it can be a great source of knowledge in learning and improving English in general.

## REFERENCES

- Chafe, A. (1999). Effective use of the Internet in Second Language Education: Benefits, Challenges and Guidelines for Teachers. <http://www.cdli.ca/~achafe/Internetinclassroom.html>
- Cononelos, T. & Oliva, M. (1993). Using computer networks to enhance foreign language culture education. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25(3), 527-534.
- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet)
- Graus, J. (1999). An Evaluation of the Internet in the EFL Classroom. <http://home.plex.nl/~jgraus/>  
<http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/aSGuest62-88293-globalization-foreign-language-education-lang-ed-ppt-powerpoint>
- <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jan07/sart02.htm>  
<http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jan07/sart02.htm>  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19096509>
- Kasanga, L. A. (1996). Peer interaction and second language learning. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 52 (4), 611-639.
- Kern, R. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with networked computers: Effects on quantity and quality of language production. *Modern Language Journal*, 79(4), 457-476.

- Kitao, S. K. (1998). Interaction and on-line synchronous communication in English language learning, CALL-EJ, <http://www.lerc.ritsumei.ac.jp/caliej/3-1/kkitao.html>
- LeLoup, J. & Ponterio, R. (1997). Internet technologies for authentic language learning experiences. Washington, DC. ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.
- Means, B., & Olson, K. (Ed.). (1997). Technology and Education Reform. Document prepared by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. U.S. Department of Education.
- Mike, D. (1996). Internet in the schools: A literacy perspective. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 40(1), 1-13.
- Muehleisen, V. (1997) Projects Using the Internet In College English Class. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 3(6), [Online]. URL <http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Lessons/Muehleisen-Projects.html> June 1997
- Peterson, M. (1997). Language teaching and networking. *System*, 25(1), 29-37.
- Singhal, M. (1997).The internet and foreign language education: Benefits and challenges, the *Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. III, No. 6. <http://iteslj.org/>
- Sullivan, N., and Pratt, E. (1996). A comparative study of two ESL writing environments: A computer-assisted classroom and a traditional oral classroom. *System*, 24(4), 491-501.
- Warschauer, M. (1996). Comparing face-to-face and electronic discussion in the second language classroom. *CALICO Journal*, 13(2), 7-26.
- Warschauer, M. (1997). Computer-Mediated Collaborative Learning: Theory and Practice. *Modern Language Journal*, 81(3), 470-481.
- Warschauer, M., & Healey, D. (1998). Computers and language learning: An overview. *Language Teaching*, 31, 57 - 71.
- Warschauer, M., Turbee, L., & Roberts, B. (1996). Computer learning networks and student empowerment. *System*, 24(1), 1-14.
- Wiburg, K., & Butler-Pascoe, M.E. (2002). *Technology and teaching English language learners*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.
-