

Internet resources for English language learners and teachers

Watch-Listen-Read

An autonomous Internet language-learning project

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The Internet can be a great resource for language learners and teachers of English with opportunities for learning listening, reading, speaking and writing. But it is a vast resource—so where to start? How can a language learner use the Internet to his or her advantage? What sites and resources are at the correct levels? How can a learner or educator adapt materials on the Internet for language learning? This paper will attempt to answer these questions and explain how an individual can use the Internet to learn English for free.

The author will present opportunities on the net to learn English that are not specifically for language learners. He will explain how an instructor can modify materials and guide students through the maze of resources on the Internet. Many sites such as National Public Radio, VOA, This I Believe and others will be explored. These are not sites specifically for students of English but respected locations that can be brought within reach of learners. Emphasis will be placed on sites that offer opportunities for listening practice that also include a transcript.

The presentation outline

Goals

1. Theme WATCH-LISTEN-READ
2. Watch-listen-read sites on the net
3. Learning to learn—learning techniques—“What do I do now?”
4. Autonomous language learning with technology project

Goals

- **Listening**
 - Reading, vocabulary ...
- **Learner interests-bottom up**
 - Enjoyable and interesting!
- **Use professionally produced web content**
 - Real English-native language use
 - BUT copyright problems
- **Life long learning**
 - Students will always be consumers of web content.
 - Training students to use and learn from what will always be available to them.
- **Autonomous**
- **Mobile learning-do it anywhere**
- **Open-ended**

1. What is WATCH-LISTEN-READ?

- **Watch-visual input**
 - Visual aid and content hint
 - Something you enjoy
- **Listen-audio input**
 - Learning techniques
 - Bit difficult
- **Read-conformation of language**
 - Confirm hypothesis
 - Check answers
 - Bit easy

2. Watch-listen-read sites Find something your enjoy!

Listed advanced to intermediate to beginning learners. Explore the net—explore the sites!! There are many more out there. When looking for any site it is best to just start with a Google search of key words.

- **Technology Education Design** TED.com Lectures on many different topics. Hint-use the subtitle menu to get subtitles in many languages
- **National Public Radio** NPR.com News and articles about America. Hint-click the transcript link and see exactly what they say.
- **Voice of America** voanews.com The news in real English as well as other articles on America and American life.
- **CNN.com** hint-find the transcript for the program you like at <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/>
- **CNN Student News** <http://edition.cnn.com/studentnews/> Many articles on all kinds of things. Click 'Archives' to get to shows with transcripts.
- **This I Believe** <http://thisibelieve.org/essays/age/18-30/> A great place to listen and read along with essays on all kinds of topics from all kind of people. Great in a writing class too.
- **Howcast** howcast.com learn how to make stuff. No transcript but good directions explained and written down. Popular!
- **Howstuffworks** <http://www.howstuffworks.com/> learn how everything works from yo-yos to volcanoes—Hint: Type 'transcript' into the search area to find many transcripts of their articles. This works for many other sites also.
- **Storyline Online** <http://www.storylineonline.net/> This is a storybook for children read by famous people. Good but limited.

Podcasts/Language Learning sites (for access to podcasts use iTunes or the makers website) Intermediate to beginner

- **VOA Special English** <http://www.voanews.com/learningenglish/home/> Easier to understand than regular VOA but about as many articles. Hint-click on words to look them up in a dictionary. Lots to this site. EXPLORE!
- **BBC Learning English** BBC news does not seem to have transcripts available so you must go to their language-learning site. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/> Also try **Keep Your English Up to Date**, **6 minute English** and **General and Business English** or some of the other links on the left of the page. This is a good site to explore!

- **ESL Podcast** eslpod.com and on iTunes. This is probably the best English language learning podcast and quite popular with students.
- **Better at English** <http://www.betteratenglish.com> A good place to go to learn English. A hybrid podcast and online learning site with lots of high quality materials. Many articles and topics discussed.
- **English with Jennifer** <http://www.youtube.com/user/JenniferESL> an interesting and well-done language-learning site published through YouTube.
- **Activities for ESL Students** <http://a4esl.org/> Lots of language games and quizzes as well as a good source for links to other sites for listening. Contributions from many teachers. Look for 30 newest ESL podcasts and ESL Videos.
- **ManyThings.org** <http://www.manythings.org/> A brother site to a4esl.org Deep!
- **Culips.com** <http://esl.culips.com/> You must sign up for 'lip service' to get access to the transcript.
- **Business English Pod** <http://www.businessenglishpod.com/> You must become a premium member for transcripts and lesson notes
- **ESL News New Zealand** <http://eslnews.org.nz/>
- **Fun Easy English** Funeasyenglish.com
- **Simple English News** Simpleenglishnews.com Short easy English news articles. Read along.

Others sites of note

- **Free Language** <http://freelanguage.org/> This is a good source for links and ideas for learning many different languages on the Net including listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- **YouTube** Pronunciation training and many other aspects of English. Search for "English pronunciation", "English language learning" or just "English" and get all kinds of English language training videos. Look for those with transcripts or imbedded subtitles.
- **Dave's ESL café** <http://www.eslcafe.com>
- **ESL Blues** <http://ww2.college-em.qc.ca/prof/epritchard/> Lots of word games, grammar and quizzes.
- **English through stories**-look for it on iTunes and at <http://www.englishthroughstories.com/scripts/scripts.html> but something wrong with this site

Pay sites

- Many-see a New York Times article "Learning a Language From an Expert", on the Web By PETER WAYNER Published: July 28, 2010
- Babalon
- Many more!

3. "What do I do now?" Learning to learn—Learning Techniques

Student and teacher ideas—How will you confirm what you have done/learned independently? Everything depends on the conformation of listening by being able to read what has been said.

- Students search out individual interests

- Listen again and again and again so it must be interesting to students
- Conformation of ideas/content—predict & confirm
 - Dictation
 - Take notes and read to confirm these ideas
- Gather new words
 - Number of new word goals
 - Vocabulary lists
- Translation
 - Find the same or similar article at a native language site and compare
- Listening goals
 - Verbs
 - Simply count common words like and, the, it, he
 - Gather word types like verbs, transitions, adjectives etc.
 - 50? New words
- Imitate pronunciation-repeat, shadowing
 - Sing to music videos
- Use content question available at some sites
- Practicing and finding a technique that suits the learner was given as homework in the form of worksheets.

4. Autonomous language learning with technology project

- Empowering students to learn on there own with the aid of the Internet
- Why this autonomous project and not in-class language learning
 - Copy write problems with in class use of quality Internet materials
 - Each site has different rules
 - K-12 generally OK just need to fill in a form
 - College you need special permission and usually money
 - Students like to use technology
 - Students are familiar with technology
 - Students will do most of their leaning on there own outside of class
 - Class time is interaction time—The best combination of technology and language learning is not in the classroom. Computers are not meant to be the center of class—class time can be used to explain the use of technology but in a classroom computer/technology should not be the center of the language learning experience. **Technology empowers the autonomous language learner.** Need more hybrid classrooms.
 - Here I can teach them some ways to do this and not infringe on copy writes.
 - I can learn from students
 - Technology as an aid to a teacher-centered traditional class
- Student benefits
 - Foster an independence in learning
 - Knowledge of what is available on the net
 - Understanding of leaning techniques

- Sharing of what you learn and ways of learning so others can benefit
- Enjoy English
- Improved English
-

Autonomous language learning with technology project Outline

Watch-listen-read guidelines/ground rules

- Any topic we did in class and your own ideas
 - News site, information site, ESL site, movie
- Do what you are interested in, enjoy
 - Maybe individuals want something that is a bit below their level or above
 - Reading a little bit easy
 - Listening a little bit difficult
- Push yourselves a bit—extend your goal
- Journal and notebook, 3-7 times a week
- 8 weeks in length
- Free sites
- Have a plan and you stick with it
- Proposal
- Goal
- Autonomous
- Write and hand in a summary
- Oral presentation
- Informal progress report
- Approved by instructor

The students

- Advanced English B
- Third year students
- Teaching Course but can opt in to the class
- Faculty of Intercultural Communication—English, French, Korean, Chinese as well as cultural, economics and area studies classes
- Students level if from lower intermediate to upper intermediate

Motivation levels—ESL and technology

- **English language learning-positive**
- **Use of technology-positive**
- Motivation survey and survey results at the end of this document
 - There are good question and bad-will be changed the next time
- What do you want to do with English in the future?
- Do you use technology (computers, iPods, phones etc.) to learn English? How?

The class

First half—technology focus

Second half—traditional text focus

In the first half of the semester each week a different watch-listen-read type of site explored

- What is technology and language learning
- Your role as an autonomous language learner
- Watch-listen-read Internet sites

- Podcasts
- Movies on DVD
- ESL sites
- Free sites
- Text book
 - Discussion of topic understudy
- Comparison of traditional and tech approach to language learning

Project Ideas—Brainstorming with students after an initial orientation of what the autonomous language learning with technology project is.

- Personal interest-sports
- English language learning Podcasts
- Learn a skill on the web in eng. Cooking, guitar,
- Podcasts of classes
- Use an e-dictionary to learn words found in a book, use the vocabulary test mode
- Chat with friends and record your interactions
- Skype and record your interactions
- Eng TV show on the web
- Eng web site- read listen watch
- Radio on the web
- Podcast news
- Facebook-make eng. Page and friends
- DVD movies-listen, read
- Youtube video-pronunciation training
- Tweet in eng
- Blog in eng
- Use an e-book to read and learn vocabulary
- Books on tape-read and listen
- Use an iPod to learn English songs
- J-movies in English-Ex. Kurosawa
- Share email address, correspondence in eng
- Voice journal
- Make movie in English
- Make an English play
- Make an English picture book
- Make a documentary in English with pictures
- Make a podcast
- Use a pay site for language learning
- Vocabulary, word of the day services,
- Read the news
- Get free books on line-wikibooks,
- Language exchange on the web-Babbel
- Social language learner resources
- Dictionary on line, reverso.com
- Language forums
- Translate online-google translate
- Grammar online sites
- Vocabulary via Google Images

Projects selected by students

		Example	Subtotals
Translate Music	111	YouTube 11 Carpenters 1	3
Watch-listen-read			

DVD TV on DVD	1111111 111	Eng-EngSub-JSub-E Watch in J first Harry Potter 1 Full House 1 Gossip Girl 1 Twilight 1 Sex in the City 1	10
Online site	1111111	How to-cooking 11 Storyline 1 Gossipnews.com 1 Shukan ST 111	7
Podcasts	111	ESL podcast 11 Station81 1	3
Video game learning	1	DS TOEIC learning 1	1
LL site	1	Manythings.org	1
Make a picture book story	1	Old Japanese story	1
Total			26

Student ideas and comments from worksheets for learning with technology—techniques and materials

1. Listen carefully, **Look up word you don't know**, good Listening practice
2. Newsonjapan.com, **Compare English version to Japanese version**,
3. **Use subtitles in J and English, learn about conjunctions and id grammar points=grammar goal**,
4. Simpleenglishnews.com, free English, simple English news, language learner news,
5. **Watch and sing in English with animation**, good for beginners to start study English, we can enjoy and study English on the Internet
6. **Collect English video and add them to your blog** or web page, sports in the US,
7. **Want to learn pronunciation**, just watch and listen, pronunciation site, poor quality pronunciation on site,
8. Radio new Zealand, listening only,
9. **Pronunciation**, repeat, **watch many times**, want to learn idiom and grammar too,
10. BBC news on YouTube, **listen and watch again and again**, very effective,
11. TED.com, pig parts, I watched, **listened and read the subtitles, listed new words**,
12. Tube365.net, music video and see lyrics, **listen and read the lyrics**,
13. Abcnews.com, **watch many times then wrote words and guess** what is said,
14. Abcnews.com, tornadoes, **improve listening and revise grammar and vocabulary**, good way to study English we should continue to do that,
15. NPR.com, learn listening and comprehension, **listen and repeating, list vocabulary**,

16. NPR.com, learn what Americans think, **First I listened to the news and then I checked the transcript and listened again**, *You can also find a similar article at a Japanese site*,
17. Youtube.com, the story of stuff w/subtitles, **English and intonation**,
18. Youtube.com, the story of stuff, **listen-read-repeat**, can get information on anything you are interested in,
19. Youtube.com, comedy, parody on BP oil spill, **learn irony**,
20. Transworldmotocross.com, explain **how to do things in English**, listen to natural fast English, **"It is very enjoyable to learn English through what I am very interested in"**, *learn new skills in English-cooking, cleaning*,
21. Smart.fm, learning English site, taking quiz,
22. Englishbaby.com, **learn the meaning of word-'see eye to eye' in video, learn body language, watch with out reading dialogue first**,
23. BBC.com, toxic spill- **interested in content-good**, listen and read and used electronic dictionary,
24. Npr.com, listen to and read article, vocabulary, good for listening skills, and vocabulary, and news, **"I rarely had used this technology, Internet language learning. However, I noticed that this way of learning English is very convenient to use and effective. I want to use this technology more frequently. In order to make my speaking skills improve, I have to think another way"**.
25. Asahi.com, to read English through cooking and try it, read and translate and cook-took one hour, **level of English is good**,
26. **Listen and Transcribe then check your work** in the transcription
27. Listen and **ask what is next, guess** what is said next, then find out,
28. **Pause and note vocabulary**,
29. **Set a goal, listen for** conjunctions, list verbs, nouns, proper names or adjectives and write them down
30. **Use a 'How to' site and actually do what is explained**, ex. Cooking, cleaning, hobbies—listen-take notes-do,
31. Read book and watch movie-do background check of author and characters, **read other's comments maybe write my own**
32. Watch **movie in Japanese first then in English** and work backwards to understand all the English.
33. **Music videos with lyrics-** watch **without lyrics**, write them down and **check** with the lyrics-two per week.
34. Write in Journal what I've learned
35. Watch and listen to podcast **in free time on train** coming and going to school until I can understand 80%
36. **ShukanST is suitable to me**, I can also get some knowledge
37. From this site I will write down Vocabulary in my notebook
- 38.Goal of 100 new words per movie**
39. Watch new-read art on same topic-note words I did not understand
40. **ESL podcast is an appropriate level for me**, I will import the dialogues into my iPod then listen many times, if there are word I cannot get I will look at the dialogue and make a list with Japanese.
41. Watch and make a plot of the episode of 10 or more sentences and check it on the website which has the plot summary also.

42. Goals: improve my colloquial English and writing. Get new vocabulary and expressions. Improve my listening. Improve listening skill, gain vocabulary, useful phrases, idioms, and so on. Learn natural pronunciation.
43. Write down the song and check it with the lyrics at the site.
44. Watch movie trailers to see what movie I like and the summary. Watch 4 different kinds of movies.
45. TED is good for learning English
46. Make an English picture book story from an old Japanese story
47. Shadowing (repeating) of the dialogue then record and check myself.
48. The **difference in the translation and what is said in English is interesting.**
49. It was **interesting how some English was translated.**
50. I could **relax and enjoy the movie.**
51. I could understand the story so I did not try to understand all the phrases.
52. I realized it had become easier to watch than the first time. (after this process)
53. The screen **image really helped me to understand** the words.
54. I **practiced the timing** of the lines.
55. Without subtitles it was scary because I thought I was missing something.
56. **Why can't I watch it with subtitles for first time?** "If you understand it the first time you watch while using subtitles you may not want to watch it again and may get dependent on the subtitles and not bother listening."

Reflections

Disappointments and Mistakes—What I will do different next time.

- No one used TED or NPR.
- Too many used movies but this show they are popular so a class devoted to learning to learn from movies would be good.
- Would focus on web sites more.
- Would give students more chance to explore in class.
- Would do a weekly schedule of certain sites and how to use them.
- Not enough time spent explaining different sites and techniques to use them.
- More limits

End

Extras

Project guidelines

Important project information

- **Project proposal due November 5**
- **Start mid-November**
- **Finish mid-December**
- **Oral presentation last two classes**
- **Project report due last class**
- **Project journal due last class**

- You must write a **proposal** and have it approved by your instructor before you start. We have gone over many possibilities in class and all of them are okay. There is a list of possibilities in the class folder.
- You must **have a plan and you must stick with**. You cannot jump around the Internet at a different site each day or use various podcasts. You must make a plan that involves one provider and continue for the full eight weeks. These can be any level—language learner targeted or for general consumption—but you must use one for the entire eight week project period.
- You must have a **goal**. It cannot be too easy or difficult. It can be as simple as improving your vocabulary or listening. You must write it down and strive for it. It should be challenging but not out of reach.
- **Time frame** is mid-November to mid-January—**eight weeks**. You must start and complete your project in these two months with a specific beginning date and ending date.
- This is **an autonomous** language-learning project. You are not studying in a formal classroom setting. We will be doing other things in class but also seeing how you are progressing on your project is one of them. Basically you are studying by yourself. You may involve a friend for example as a texting partner or recording partner etc. but each participant must keep a separate journal and submit separate reports. Of course if you are texting each other or doing a play some content will be the same.
- You must **keep a journal and notebook** of your language learning experience. You can write about language learning techniques used, what sites you visited, title of the page, what you did with them, what you learned. You should write in your journal 3-7 times a week. The more the better. You can also use information written in your journal to help you write your project report.
- You must **write and hand in a summary** about your learning experience and list all things that you did. You should explain what you did, how you did it and what you learned. You must include a self-evaluation and what you will do in the future to continue your language learning.
- You must give an **oral presentation** of 2-5 minutes about what you did, what you used, how you did it and what you learned.
- You may be asked to give an **informal oral project/progress** report; methods used, what learned, what technology you use in class about midway through the eight-week project period.

Motivation Questions for ESL Students with results

Name:

Student Number:

Class:

Date:

Do you agree or disagree with the statements. Circle 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5

1 is strongly disagree, very negative, no or very bad <1—2—3—4—5> 5 is strongly agree, very positive, yes or very good. 3 is neutral, no opinion or no answer.

1. I love English.
4.1 <1—2—3—4—5>
 2. My parents make me learn English.
2.6 <1—2—3—4—5>
 3. I enjoy English class more than other classes.
3.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
 4. I like to speak to native English speakers in Japanese.
3.0 <1—2—3—4—5>
 5. I am confident when speaking English in class.
2.5 <1—2—3—4—5>
 6. My English class is often boring.
2.4 <1—2—3—4—5>
 7. I would like to have many native English-speaking friends.
4.3 <1—2—3—4—5>
 8. If I meet a native English speaker, I will try to speak to them in English.
4.0 <1—2—3—4—5>
 9. If I see a foreigner who needs help, I will try to help them in English.
3.9 <1—2—3—4—5>
 10. I hate English.
1.4 <1—2—3—4—5>
 11. I try to speak English to classmates outside of class.
1.9 <1—2—3—4—5>
 12. Being able to speak and use English is important for getting a job.
4.2 <1—2—3—4—5>
 13. I get nervous if I have to speak to a native English speaking person.
3.2 <1—2—3—4—5>
 14. I really like the culture of people who speak English.
4.0 <1—2—3—4—5>
 15. I raise my hand and volunteer to speak and ask questions in my English class.
2.4 <1—2—3—4—5>
 16. I study English in my free time even if I do not have to.
3.0 <1—2—3—4—5>
 17. Native English speakers are nicer than speakers of my language.
3.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
 18. I study English because I will be able to talk to more people around the world.
4.4 <1—2—3—4—5>
 19. I study English because I need the credits to graduate.
3.2 <1—2—3—4—5>
 20. I study English because other people will think I am smart.
2.5 <1—2—3—4—5>
- What do you want to do with English in the future?

Learning English with technology

Do you agree or disagree with the statements. Circle 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5

1 is strongly disagree, negative, no or bad <1—2—3—4—5> 5 is strongly agree, positive, yes or good. 3 is neutral, no opinion or no answer.

1. I like to use computers and electronic media and devices.
3.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
2. I like to use computers and electronic media and devices to study English.
3.3 <1—2—3—4—5>
3. I like to listen to music on my mp3 player.
4.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
4. Using electronic devices has encouraged me to study more English.
3.6 <1—2—3—4—5>
5. I would rather write and study vocabulary on a piece of paper.
2.9 <1—2—3—4—5>
6. I would rather study vocabulary on my electronic dictionary or iPod.
3.2 <1—2—3—4—5>
7. I write letters on paper and mail them to my friends.
2.9 <1—2—3—4—5>
8. I would rather talk to my friends on the phone.
3.4 <1—2—3—4—5>
9. I would rather text or email my friends.
3.9 <1—2—3—4—5>
10. I would rather email my teacher about a question.
2.9 <1—2—3—4—5>
11. I would rather ask my teacher a question after class.
3.1 <1—2—3—4—5>
12. I would rather hand my report in on a computer—email etc.
3.4 <1—2—3—4—5>
13. I would rather hand my report in on paper in class.
3.2 <1—2—3—4—5>
14. I would like to take a class totally on the Internet—virtual learning.
2.6 <1—2—3—4—5>
15. I would rather take a test on a computer than take one on paper.
2.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
16. I would rather get assignments on a computer or mobile device than on paper in class.
2.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
17. I would rather give a presentation without using PowerPoint.
2.6 <1—2—3—4—5>
18. I would rather write a report on a computer than write it by hand.
4.0 <1—2—3—4—5>
19. Computers and electronic media and devices have made studying English easier.
3.7 <1—2—3—4—5>
20. The idea of learning English with technology is new to me.
3.4 <1—2—3—4—5>

Do you use technology (computers, mp3 players, phones etc) to learn English? How?

32 respondents