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Richard Tetek

The Use of the Internet for Student Development

There are many ways in which students can improve their English. All of them require some effort but they use different tools to achieve various goals. The contact with the foreign language is essential. The more we are exposed to the language the better we understand it and use it. It is not always easy to motivate students to do something on their own but when learning is connected with something they like, it is more likely that they will try it.

It is generally known that the young generation is familiar with the Internet and computers. Young people spend a lot of time surfing it, chatting with their friends, watching films and videos or writing e-mails. It would be a shame not to use for educational purposes too. There are many ways in which the Internet can be used in that sense. Language learning, however, is specific for many reasons. Firstly, when we speak specifically about studying English, we should be aware of the fact that English is the language of computers. Everyone familiar with computers is bound to master this language to some extend. Secondly, Internet does not know boundaries and can provide an endless amount of information about culture, literature or historical background of almost any country in the world.

Another advantage of the Internet is that it is relatively cheap when compared to other things like language courses or books and it is easily accessible from home at any time convenient to the student. It is therefore ideal for self study and it also provides an interesting change from normal school lessons. It is an excellent source of materials which can suit the needs and interests of the particular student (Teeler, Gray 2004: 36). Additionally, it using the Internet can help students to use and work with a big amount of information. So it learns them that they should not depend only on one source of information.

What is equally important is the fact that the Internet shows the language in context, often with connection with the culture of native speakers. "In a world where the

use of the Internet becomes more and more widespread, an English Language teacher's duty is to facilitate students' access to the web and make them feel like citizens of a global classroom, practicing communication on a global level." (The Internet for English Language Teaching)

There are many skills that students can practice via the Internet. It can be used for example for grammar practice. Many web pages with online tests can be found on the internet. The advantage is that they usually provide the correct answers for students to check and are often done in user friendly way. Reading practice is also which can be done over the Internet. Students can read indefinite number of articles according to their level and interests or use some popular websites like for example *Wikipedia* as a source of information for their further studies or for doing various projects. Other pages provide on-line documentaries or listening samples so that it is also possible to practice listening. Possibilities are endless when it comes to the Internet. There is always something new and interesting which is worth trying.

Here are some web pages which students can use to improve their language skills:

- http://www.bbc.co.uk –an extensive website providing authentic articles, news etc. but also learning English section with tests, quizzes, vocabulary and listening exercises. It has also many links to TV and radio programmes. This page is definitely worth exploring.
- http://a4esl.org/ -another website with games, exercise for various levels. Some links to videos which can be used for ESL students. There are even some Czech-English materials.
- [http://www.radio.cz/en -](http://www.radio.cz/en) a lot of information connected with the Czech Republic. Suitable for more advanced and adult students.
- http://www.englishlistening.com – a very good website for listening
- http://www.esl-lab.com – another site for listening
- www.examenglish.com – suitable for those who want to get ready for a certain exam like PET, FCE etc.
- http://www.anglictinacz.com – A Czech website for students of English. Many games and crosswords

- http://www.bridge-online.cz – on-line pages of a Czech magazine. Many tests and activities. Useful for those who are going to take Maturita exams.
- http://www.freerice.com - this interesting page connects learning English with charity. Suitable for all levels, so teachers can try it as well.

Works cited

Lee, Johnny. "The Internet for English Language Teaching" 23 March 2009.
<http://www.readingmatrix.com/reading_projects/lee/>

Teeler, Dede and Peta Gray. *How to Use the Internet in ELT*. Harlow: Longman, 2004.