

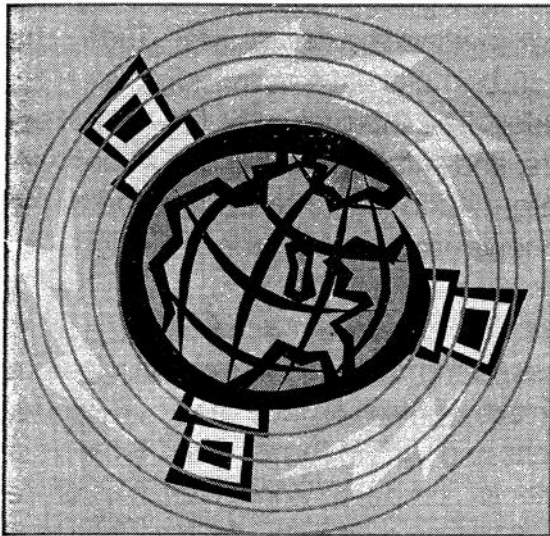
INTERNET

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***"Wherever you are, whatever you want
it is there on Internet, you just go and get it"***

(Mario Guerrero R.)



Nowadays, when we are at the beginning of the 21st Century, we have seen many changes in all fields, and in some way those changes affect the way we live and where we live in, some for good some for bad, but life goes on and so must we. For that reason, in this short report, I want to talk about something that I consider very.

important, not only for the common people but for us, the teachers, in other words, the non-native English teachers. But why the non-native English teachers? Because now it is easier to teach and to learn English by using the different, innovative, and available resources than the ones that we used in the past. There are for example, English magazines, radio, newspapers, videos, etc, and the latest source in our surroundings, the satellite TV, in which the language we listen to be changed according to the needs of the user, and the region where we live in. (In this case, English and Spanish can be switched according to the user's like).

But in addition to this, the most important factor now, is the appearance of the computer as an aid for teaching and with it the creation or invention of the Internet. That's why, in these few lines, I want to talk and emphasize the importance and relevance of these two discoveries. Because of the Internet, we have the whole world in our hands, just by having a computer and the Internet service. But the only obstacle (if we can call it like that) is that we have to know how to use the computer. (Hardware), and the programs (software) that come with it.

The Internet is an important tool that we have to know how to use it. Below I am going to talk about the most important aspects of this instrument, as well as, the specialized vocabulary related to Internet.

Today it is difficult to find a person who has not heard about the Internet, but not all people know exactly what it is, nor what it is used for. Today the Internet can be understood in many and simple ways because of its utility, without having great technical knowledge. The Internet is the biggest collection of information, people, computers, and software working in a cooperative way, publishing and organizing information, and interacting around the world. Internet is also Electronic mail, news groups, chat rooms, file libraries, programs, entertainment, etc.

Internet is a huge collection of networks, computer networks and equipment connected physically by cables that link computers around the entire world. These cables are presented in different and varied forms: from **local area Networks**, which are known as **LAN** that is, computers connected in an office or in a campus, to conventional phone cables, digital and optical fiber that

constitute the principal highways of information. This big network is sometimes stumped because the information can be transmitted via satellite, or through mobile or cellular phones, or maybe because we don't know where the network is. In some ways there is no big difference between Internet and the telephone exchange that we all know, because their bases are almost the same.

How does Internet work?

On the Internet, the concrete communications are established between two points: One point is the personal computer from which you or any person can have access to the Internet, and the other point is the large quantity of servers that exist on the network and which facilitate the information.

The basis of Internet, without any doubt, is the **TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol)**, the wide-area-networking protocol that makes the Internet work. The TCP/IP is a transmission protocol, which assigns to each connecting machine a specific number called **IP number** (this number is like a "unique phone number")¹. For instance, 200.25.79.3, which is an address on Internet (In this case, this address corresponds to a company called InterRed, which is an Internet Colombian supplying firm).

The TCP/IP protocol is used to establish communications between two distant points by means of sending data in packets or chunks. Data is sent along the paths with other packets. The information goes or travels using many different computers until it reaches the end, there it is rejoined, reordered, and finally it is converted to the original information, arriving to the user.

The TCP/IP number is very intelligent. Each data exchange is marked with IP numbers, so in that way the communications are never crossed.

There is an automatic service called **DNS (Domain Name System)**, which is in charge of converting the IP numbers into words or names, such as, www.sony.com. The DNS allows the Internet users use Internet without memo-

¹. Taken from «Diccionario de Internet Bilingue» Christian Crumlish.

izing large quantities of numbers.

INTERNET SERVICES

Internet offers information and possibilities of communication through what is generally called "**Internet Services**". These services are available worldwide, and they are from different sources. Some of them convey messages, some others transmit files and multimedia data (which is called "resources"). Some of these Internet services are the following:

- **ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Electronic mail automatically passes through computer networks and/ or via **modems** (acronym for **modulator/demodulator**). A modem is a device that connects a computer to a phone socket and transmits data through telephone lines to another modem and another computer, by converting the digital sign of the computer into a telephone analog carrier sign and vice versa.

A modem is a system of worldwide electronic communication in which a computer user can compose a message at one terminal that is generated at the recipient's terminal when he logs in.

Electronic mail or e-mail permits private communication between two people, just like it occurs in common mail services we know today. Each user has an e-mail address, which can receive written letters with especial computer programs.

Maybe the e-mail is the principal service on Internet. Each user who is connected has his/her own personal electronic box. A user can have many different e-mails.

The e-mail is particularly recognized by the symbol @ ("at" in English), for instance: mario@pasto.cetcol.net.co . The first part identifies the user's name (mario@), the second part is the enterprise (pasto.Cetcol.net.co), company or

organization to which he or she works or it belongs to the company that offers the Internet service.

The e-mail service lets people send and receive messages to any person in the world, and through e-mail you can receive editable information or special files*. Messages can be sent to many people at the same time, and that can be answered immediately. E-mail is very fast and reliable because it is something global and as important as the fax or the telephone.

- **IRC (INTERNET RELAY CHAT)**

IRC (Internet Relay Chat)²: A worldwide "party line" network that allows one to converse with others in real time. IRC is structured as a network of Internet servers, each of which accepts connections from client programs, one per user. (Chat means to talk. Just like it occurs on a phone conversation but using the computer keyboard or the computer camera and microphone). The Internet relay Chat is like the communications among radio hams. The chats inside the servers are organized according to topics or themes, which are called chatrooms. The habitual language is English. Many people use the IRC to talk about different topics at determined hours in real time.

- **SEARCH ENGINES**

A search engine is a World Wide Web tool. It is a remotely accessible program that lets you do keyword searches for information on the Internet. There are several types of search engines; the search may cover titles of documents, URL's, headers, or the full text. The most common search engines are the following: **ALTAVISTA, LYCOS, INFOSEEK, WEBCRAWLER, YAHOO, UMBRAL, YUPI, AOL, GOOGLE, etc.**

A list of search engines can be found in this address: <http://cuiwww.unige.ch/meta-index.html#MISC>, Centre Universitaire d'informatique at the University

* (Written text images, sound)

². Taken from «Diccionario de Internet Bilingue» Christian Crumlish

of Geneva.

The search engines organize all the information on Internet in categories (entertainment, computing, countries, music, literature, culture, music, and all the topics you can imagine) so the users can access to it in an easy and fast way. In addition, a search engine is a good start point to begin exploring the net, especially when you are a beginner network user.

Something very important that we can find on the Internet is the **FAQ's**. The **FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)** documents or **FAQ** lists refer to the questions posed frequently by beginners about any unimaginable topic or theme. The FAQ documents are endless reliable source of information. They are a compendium of accumulated knowledge or lore, posted periodically to high-volume newsgroups in an attempt to forestall or anticipate such questions.

- **WWW (World Wide Web)**

World Wide Web is a collection of Internet sites that offer text and graphics and sound and animation resources through the **Hypertext Transfer Protocol**. WWW or World Wide Web is also called the web, and it is an interconnected collection of **hypertext** documents. A hypertext is a text, which contains **links**, to other text documents; they permit readers to move around and read the documents in several different directions. (These links appear in a web page like colored and underlined words and permit the user to go to another web page that contains more links)

The web is the pretty friendly face of Internet. The web is documents which are seen on the computer screen thanks to a special program called **browser** (a browser is a program that helps to "navigate" or "travel" on Internet and it is used to see the web documents. The most common known browsers are **INTERNET EXPLORER** and **NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR**). Web documents are documents formed by multimedia pages, where we can see texts, images, graphics, music, sounds, and video. There are static and dynamic pages, there are pages that use **VR (Virtual Reality**, which is a very common term referring to three-dimensional environments simulated by computer, and in which the user can interact or be part of thad reality).

In addition, the web is not like a paper book, it is like a big spider's web in which the pages are interconnected. Each page is related to others, and it is the user (reader) who decides where to go. This is what is called the **hypertext**. The web hypertext is distributed worldwide.

The web can be defined basically by three aspects: First, **hypertext**, which is a link system that permits to "jump" from one place to others. Second, **multimedia** that makes reference to the type of contents that can be worked on (text, video, sound, etc.). And third, **Internet**, the base over which all the information is transmitted.

The outward appearance of the web is the "Web pages". A window shows the user the required information, text and graphics-shaped, with the links marked in a different color and underlined. By clicking with the mouse on that link, you can "jump" to another page, which may be located in another server on the other side of the world. The user can also browse or navigate by clicking on the images or buttons that are part of the design of the page.

A browser works based on a protocol called **HTTP (Hypertext Transport Protocol)**, which is an Internet protocol that defines how a web server has to answer to the file requests done by **anchors** and **URL's**). In other words, the HTTP transfers hypertext requests and information between servers and browsers. An **Anchor** is a mark or flag **HTML** that indicates a hypertext link or its destination. (Crumlish Christian)

Each Web page has a unique address on Internet called **URL (Uniform Resource Locator)**. Uniform Resource Locator, an address widget or gadget that identifies a document or resource on the World Wide Web.

A **URL** refers to a Web address formed by a protocol, a **host name**, a **port** (optional), a **directory** (optional), and a file name (optional). In the URL <http://enterzone.berkeley.edu/enterzone.html>, the **protocol** is [http](http://), the **host name** is enterzone.berkeley.edu, and the **file name** is [enterzone.html](http://enterzone.berkeley.edu/enterzone.html). (Crumlish Christian)

A **host name or hostname** refers to the outside-left part of the **domain's**

complete name. The hostname is translated into an Internet address either via the hosts' file, NIS or by the Domain Name System (DNS). It is possible for one computer to have several hostnames (aliases) though one is designated as its canonical name. (Crumlish Christian)

On Internet the hostname is an ASCII string, e.g. "wombat.doc.ic.ac.uk" which, consists of a local part (wombat) and a domain name (doc.ic.ac.uk).

A **directory** is an alphabetical list of names and addresses. In Computer Science it is a listing of the files stored in memory usually on a floppy disk or hard disk.

A **port** is a socket located in the rear part of the CPU to connect cables. From this point, modems, printers, etc. can be connected. On the Internet, a port is a channel dedicated to a specific program.

HTML is a set of tags and rules for using them in developing hypertext documents.

Domain Name System (DNS) is a general-purpose, distributed, replicated, data query service chiefly used on Internet for translating hostnames into Internet addresses. Also, the style of hostname used on the Internet, though such a name is properly called fully qualified domain name. DNS can be configured to use a sequence of name servers, based on the domains in the name being looked for, until a match is found. (Crumlish Christian)

- **FTP (FILE TRANSFER PROTOCOL)**

An FTP is a protocol that allows users to copy files between their local system and any system they can reach on the network. The FTP is used to transfer data from one computer to another. It is used for transmitting files between systems on the Internet.

So far, we can see how important Internet is, because of its utility and easiness to use. Connecting to Internet is just like getting into a big city. Inside of it, many things can be found such as shopping centers, cinemas, people,

libraries, etc. There, it is possible to talk or chat, read, buy, sell, see, etc. But the only difference is that all those activities are done in our homes. All of us will see our computer monitors, and we will access those places just using the keyboard and the mouse. Unlike television, on the Internet you are the person who decides what to do on the screen. In this case the user becomes an active onlooker who participates individually and actively in almost all services and activities available on Internet.

With Internet you can keep the lines of communication open all day, everyday, also weekends and holidays.

Finally, I would like to say that English, computers, and Internet are all linked. And all the people but especially non-native English teachers need and must know how to use it. These three components are an open window to the world not a fancy activity but a needful thing because with them we will be in touch with the world any time we want, any day, anywhere. Besides, it is important to remember that we live in the **GLOBAL VILLAGE**, and all that because of English, computers, and Internet!

Internet is a vast store of information, a big library that can be used by any person who is connected to the net. On Internet, there are thousands and thousands of documents, database, compilations of information about unimaginable themes: medical, historical, journalistic, and economic. It is also possible to see all the most important world daily newspapers, to see the latest information of the stock exchange, etc. Moreover, Internet is a good motive and an important tool to learn, and improve our English.

After this briefly report about Internet, it is important to see the relationship between computers, Internet and English. In recent years the interest in computer science and computer-related fields has increased dramatically. With the appearance of Internet, computers have become more and more important in people's life. Nowadays, it is important for any person to know how to use a computer and how to use Internet therefore. I am really convinced that these two new practical tools would help anybody to learn or to improve a language, especially **ENGLISH**, because most part of the language used on the net is English, either in a written or spoken way.

I think that people learn things when they are interested in them. With a computer and Internet you can easily learn about many important subjects but especially English, computers, and Internet, the only requisite is that you have to know **ENGLISH**, which is the most common language used on Internet.

We know that learning a language is not like learning geography or history. A language is something you have to use in a practical manner. The net will give thousands of activities to practice it. We can find many activities related to the four skills on Internet (reading, writing speaking, and listening). You will decide which skills to practice; the order of practicing them is up to you.

Reading in a foreign language is easier than speaking it; and on Internet you will have lots of readings, and there you can get readings about many different topics. Remember that Internet is the world's richest information and entertainment resource. You will learn new vocabulary according to the kind of reading you are interested in.

Writing is also an important aspect on Internet because it is the simplest method to communicate with another user. In this way, you have to use the keyboard of your computer to share your ideas, comments, e-mail, suggestions, questions, letters, etc. With these activities Writing becomes very fun, instructive, and full of great experiences, because it is developed in a real field of communication. Internet brings you scores of electronic sites, and delivers millions of sound, image, text, and video files on almost any topic. You can also exchange e-mail with millions of online and Internet users all around the world; write and send letters; attach, send and receive multimedia sound and files.

Speaking is another skill you can find on Internet, but this activity requires the use of more sophisticated software and hardware, which sometimes increases the cost of a computer. Internet offers great and varied activities in Speaking because you can talk or chat with any user around the world. You decide what topics to talk about. This is the best way to practice your English and at the same time you will make a lot of foreign friends. Internet puts you in touch with millions of people worldwide.

Listening is also found on Internet. The quality of sound depends on the kind of sound you choose to listen to. The use of Real audio on Internet is not very good because it is always busy and with this system you will not get the complete idea of what you are listening to. There are English activities that provide Listening exercises on Internet. It will be very helpful in your English practice.

Now before finishing this article about Internet, I would like to give you some addresses on Internet that you can visit and use to practice your English. These URL's (Internet addresses) have links that you can consult easily, whenever you want, and as I said before you only need a computer, a modem, internet service, and the wish to learn or improve your English. Of course if you have time you can navigate and find new more new URLs. One last tip, all these URLs have to be written in small letters. Enjoy them!

1. www.lingolex.com (a place to learn English through Internet)
2. www.edunet.com (English language practice pages)
3. www.studint.net (TOEFL practice activities and simulation test)
4. www1.oup.co.uk (A Oxford University Press website)
5. www.ubl.com (lyrics of your favorite groups, bands, singers, etc.)
6. www.tesol.edu (resources for teachers)
7. www.freeyellow.com (Ernie's EFL song activities)
8. www.eslgames.com (ESL and EFL games, songs, lessons, and resources)
9. www.tucows.com (Software for free)
10. www.thepotters.com (English word puzzles)
11. www.icq.com (software to chat on Internet)
12. www.work.ucsd.edu:5141 (Hypertext Webster Gateway at UCSD. A useful and powerful dictionary on-line)
13. www.quiz.es (English pastimes)
14. www.edgamesandart.com (English word games and art)
15. www.cogix.com (English crossword games)
16. www.webaccess.net (lyrics of your favorite groups, bands, singers, etc.)
17. www.jokewallpaper.com (Free funny desktop wallpapers plus assorted humor)

18. www.facstaff.bucknell.edu (A web of on-line dictionaries)
19. www.kyamk.fi (A page of The Beatles' lyrics)
20. www.giglmon.com/chats/index.htm (Chat rooms)
21. www.altavista.com (powerful search engine)
22. www.yahoo.com (powerful search engine)
23. www.lycos.com (powerful search engine)
24. www.webcrawler.com (powerful search engine)
25. www.infoseek.com (powerful search engine)
26. www.magellan.com (powerful search engine)
27. www.planetenglish.com (a place to chat, share ideas, etc. with English teachers all over the world)
28. www.babylon.con (a powerful on-line dictionary which can give you the meaning of a word in different languages)
29. WWW.google.com (a powerful search engine)
30. www.englishpractice.com (A practical web site, where anyone can practice English anytime)

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