

USING INTERNET RESOURCES IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract: This paper is intended to give a brief overview of the potential benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use in education and the ways by which different ICTs have been used in education thus far. An example of making use Internet resources for teaching English for young learners is also performed in this paper. Then this paper concludes with an expectation of future ICT-based education in Indonesia.

Keywords: Internet, teaching English, young learner

Globalization and technological change have created a new global economy. The emergence of this new global economy has serious implications for the nature and purpose of educational institutions. As the half-life of information continues to shrink and access to information continues to grow exponentially, schools cannot remain mere venues for the transmission of a prescribed set of information from teacher to student over a fixed period of time.

Therefore, Information and communication technologies (ICTs)—which include radio and television, as well as newer digital technologies such as computers and the Internet—have been touted as potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. When used appropriately, different ICTs are said to help expand access to education, strengthen the relevance of education to the increasingly digital workplace, and raise educational quality by, among others, helping make teaching and learning into an engaging, active process connected to real life.

National vision that related to the development of human resources in the ICT sector is: “Implement Longlife Learning Paradigm”. In order to increase the level of life quality, in which ICT is positioned in this context as a resource to achieve “Make Ict As The Tool To Achieve Longlife Learning Paradigm”. Rather, schools must promote “learning to learn”, i.e., the acquisition of knowledge and skills that make possible continuous learning over the lifetime.

However, the experience of introducing different ICTs in the classroom and other educational settings all over the world over the past several decades suggests that the full realization of the potential educational benefits of ICTs is not automatic. The effective integration of ICTs into the educational system is a complex, multifaceted process that involves not just technology—indeed, given enough initial capital, getting the technology is the easiest part!—but also

curriculum and pedagogy, institutional readiness, teacher competencies, and long-term financing, among others.

THE PROMISE OF ICTS IN EDUCATION

For developing countries ICTs have the potential for increasing access to and improving the relevance and quality of education. ICTs are a potentially powerful tool for extending educational opportunities, both formal and non-formal, to previously underserved constituencies—scattered and rural populations, groups traditionally excluded from education due to cultural or social reasons such as ethnic minorities, girls and women, persons with disabilities, and the elderly, as well as all others who for reasons of cost or because of time constraints are unable to enroll on campus.

Research has shown that the appropriate use of ICTs can catalyze the paradigmatic shift in both content and pedagogy that is at the heart of education reform in the 21st century. If it is designed and implemented properly, ICT-supported education can promote the acquisition of the knowledge and skills that will empower students for lifelong learning. When used appropriately, ICTs—especially computers and Internet technologies—enable new ways of teaching and learning rather than simply allow teachers and students to do what they have done before in a better way. These new ways of teaching and learning are underpinned by constructivist theories of learning and constitute a shift from a teacher-centered pedagogy—in its worst form characterized by memorization and rote learning—to one that is learner-centered. (See Table 1 for a comparison of a traditional pedagogy and an emerging pedagogy enabled by ICTs.)

Table 1. A comparison of a traditional pedagogy and an emerging pedagogy

Aspects	traditional pedagogy	emerging pedagogy
<i>Active</i>	Activities prescribed by teacher Whole class instruction Little variation in activities Pace determined by the programme	Activities determined by learners Small groups Many different activities Pace determined by learners
<i>Collaborative</i>	Individual Homogenous groups Everyone for him/herself	Working in teams Heterogeneous groups Supporting each other
<i>Creative</i>	Reproductive learning Apply known solutions to problems	Productive learning Find new solutions to problems
<i>Integrative</i>	No link between theory and practice Separate subjects Discipline-based Individual teachers	Integrating theory and practice Relations between subjects Thematic Teams of teachers
<i>Evaluatif</i>	Teacher-directed Summative	Student-directed Diagnostic

Source: Thijs, A., et al. *Learning Through the Web Available Online* <http://www.decidenet.nl/Publications/Web Based Learning.pdf> Accessed 31 May 2002.

Active Learning

ICT-enhanced learning mobilizes tools for examination, calculation and analysis of information, thus providing a platform for student inquiry, analysis and construction of new information. Learners therefore learn as they do and, whenever appropriate work on real-life problems in-depth making learning less abstract and more relevant to the learner's life situation. In this way, and in contrast to memorization-based or rote learning, ICT-enhanced learning promotes increased learner engagement. ICT-enhanced learning is also "just-in-time" learning in which learners can choose what to learn when they need to learn it.

Collaborative Learning

ICT-supported learning encourages interaction and cooperation among students, teachers, and experts regardless of where they are. Apart from modeling real-world interactions, ICT-supported learning provides learners the opportunity to work with people from different cultures, thereby helping to enhance learners' teaming and communicative skills as well as their global awareness. It models learning done throughout the learner's lifetime by expanding the learning space to include not just peers but also mentors and experts from different fields.

Creative Learning

ICT-supported learning promotes the manipulation of existing information and the creation of real-world products rather than the regurgitation of received information.

Integrative Learning

ICT-enhanced learning promotes a thematic, integrative approach to teaching and learning. This approach eliminates the artificial separation between the different disciplines and between theory and practice that characterizes the traditional classroom approach.

Evaluative Learning

ICT-enhanced learning is student-directed and diagnostic. Unlike static, text- or print-based educational technologies, ICT-enhanced learning recognizes that there are many different learning pathways and many different articulations of knowledge. ICTs allow learners to explore and discover rather than merely listen and remember.

CASE STUDY OF ICT IN SCHOOLS

Indonesia is one of the countries that has expressed a great concern in putting forth serious effort to reduce the digital divide through extensive use of ICT in various sectors and aspects of life. The government of Indonesia released

a policy on the use of ICT for every line of work, such as in government, business and including education, as stated in the Presidential Instruction No. 6 year 2001. The policy that governs the use of ICT for education was stated in article 18 as follows:

The introduction of telematics technologies and their application are crucial, and have to be started at the earliest age possible, without discrimination and should be done at all levels and kinds of education, so that telematics become an important part of the educational system. School curriculum and curriculum at higher education will be gradually adjusted beginning from higher education and high school.

However, Indonesia is still facing problems related to the implementation of this policy. The main problem is the lack of awareness of the decision/policy makers regarding the importance and the benefit of ICT for education. They are still reluctant to fully adopt ICT as a mean to improve the quality of education. Secondly, there is no working team assigned to implement ICT policy, especially the policy for ICT education. For these reasons, the policy is not properly instigated and remains a recommendation on paper. So far, there has been no systemic and systematic effort to adopt ICT for education.

It is important to notice here that not all schools have implemented ICT. ICT for education is commonly implemented only in schools located in the big cities in Indonesia. The implementation of ICT for education still faces hindrances. Among these are:

There are no evident guidelines available to be used as a proposition to develop and implement ICT in schools, so the implementation of ICT varies from school to school. Moreover, schools do not consider the implementation of ICT as an obligation.

The existing financial resources are not sufficient for the proper implementation and development of ICT in schools, so schools find it difficult to procure hardware and software, and to develop human resources. Since teachers lack ICT skills, they are unwilling to adopt ICT into the learning activities.

Hence, some recommendations such as developing and implementing a comprehensive program for building the capacity of schools (teachers and administrators) in implementing the use of ICT for education is offered. This would include ICT literacy skills, the use of ICT for instructional and/or non-instructional purposes; ICT-based learning materials and development of skills by enhancing the ability of teachers in ICT literacy through training workshops or courses. The national budget for education need to be expanded, as consequent the amount allocated for the implementation of ICT in education also increased. The school should be released from paying the cost of Internet. The Government should make availability for schools to have free access to the Internet.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ICT IN TEACHING ENGLISH

The use of ICT in education has become an important tool in teaching and learning process. Various types of ICT have been created and introduced to foster the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The role of ICT as a means of

presenting learning materials cannot be taken lightly since the use of ICT is likely to make learning more interesting and make it more successful.

How Indonesian English teacher copes with the developing technology? Ayres (2003) asserted some important points to be taken into consideration when a teacher likely to prepare an effective integration of CALL technology into EFL classroom, such as:

1. Identifying the course pedagogic philosophies and learning outcomes clearly because it will influence the choice of method, material, and drill;
2. Identifying available CALL or ICT resources including the websites, both for students and staff. I think the consideration about the maintenance, setting, and ratio between the computers and the users should also be included;
3. Match the learning outcome with appropriate resources; create a clear content profile so there is no overlapping or repetition;
4. Create an explicit objective and it should be written down both for teachers and students.

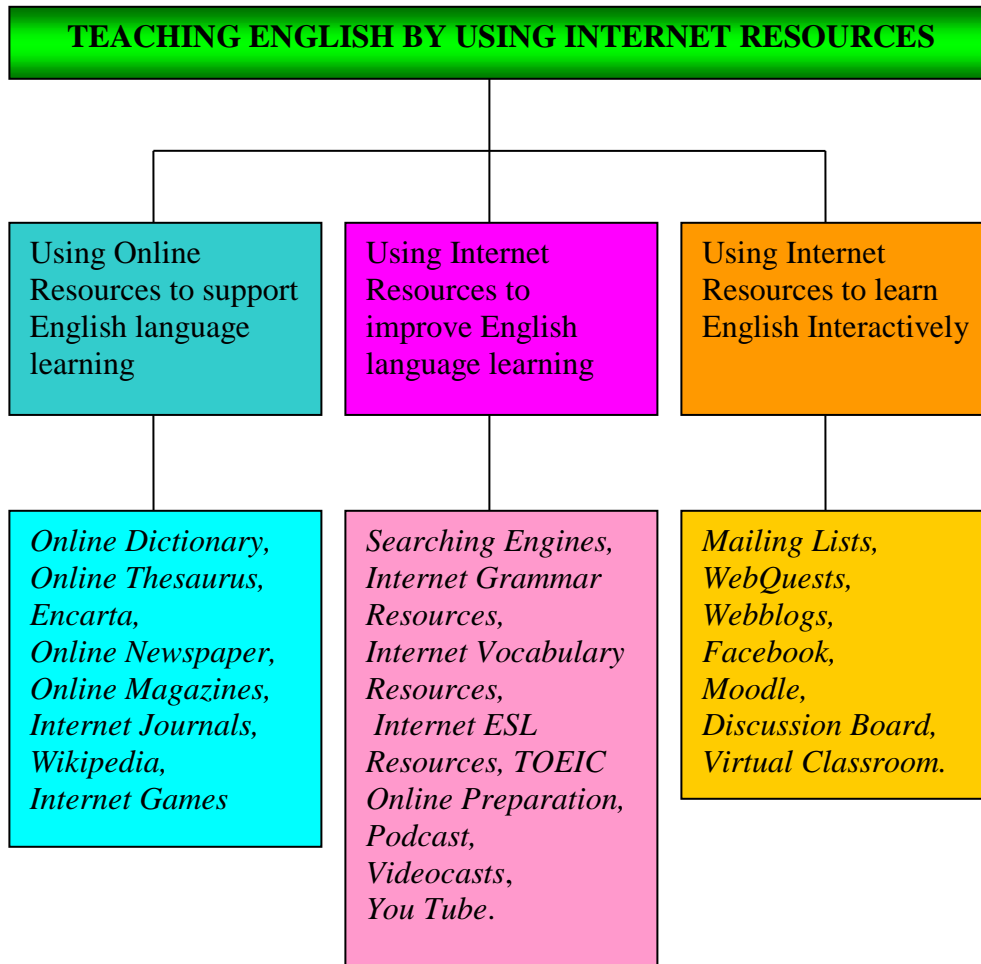
However, there are some issues needed to be considered for this integration: First, it is important to consider the pedagogical aspects which underpin the software creation so it will match with the course objectives. Second, learner language level and computer competences, and how accessible the resources for the students. Third, teacher training and competences on computer and technology. Fourth, on top of all those consideration, financial matters will influence almost every aspect of that integration.

Now, how to apply those theoretical bases into Indonesian classroom context? One of the most features of ICT used is in the form of Internet resources. In the context of EFL teaching and learning process, there are some features offered by Internet that can be taken into account for teaching English in classroom. There are at least three main domains of using internet resources in teaching English. The first is using Online Resources to support English Language Learning. In this features, teachers are able to use the resources that are available in the Internet for instructional purposes. This part does not require teachers to adapt the available materials from the resources. This part deals with *Online Dictionary*, *Online Thesaurus*, *Encarta*, *Online Newspaper*, *Online Magazines*, *Internet Journals*, *Wikipedia*, and *Internet Games*.

The second feature is using Internet resources to improve English language learning. These types of Internet features need the teachers' creativity in using them. These features can be used to make the learning of English language skills and English language components better. This part includes *Searching Engines*, *Internet Grammar Resources*, *Internet vocabulary Resources*, *Internet ESL Resources*, *TOEIC Online Preparation*, *Podcast*, *Videocasts*, and *You Tube*.

The third feature is using Internet resources to learn English interactively. These types of features highlight the importance of interaction in using internet resources. These features require the students to respond to the Internet in a certain way so that they could learn English better. The Internet resources within this category include *Mailing Lists*, *WebQuests*, *Webblogs*, *Facebook*, *Moodle*, *Discussion Board*, and *Virtual Classroom*.

The following figure is the summary of the internet resources used in teaching English.



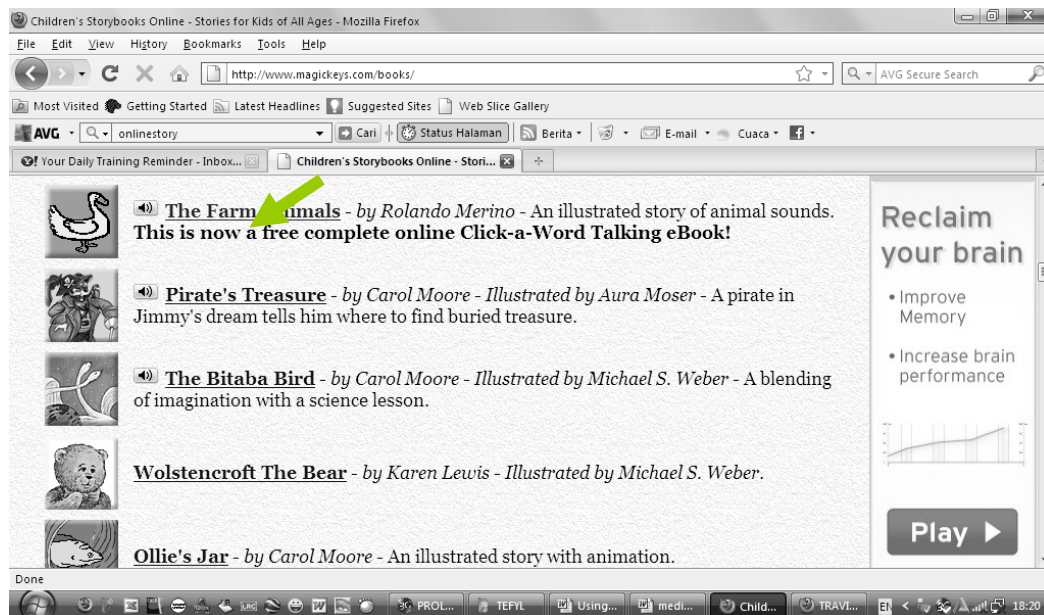
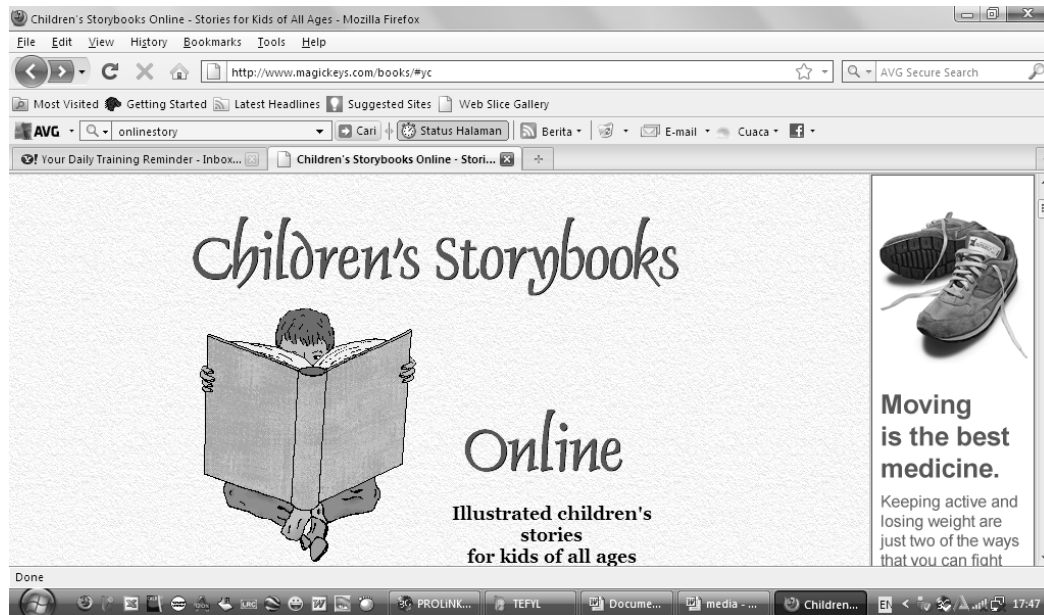
EXAMPLES OF INTERNET RESOURCES

There are many activities can be applied in teaching English for young learners, including games, song, and stories. Using stories in teaching English for young learners is very powerful tool since children are captivated by stories and can internalize vocabulary and the structure of language while listening to them. One of the reasons why stories work so well for teaching young learners has to do with intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the theory that people are motivated by internal factors. Children do not understand the external factors that might motivate an adult to decide to learn a foreign language, so the teachers need to create a classroom that internally motivates them to participate in the activities and, ultimately, learn the language. On the other words, the teachers need to make sure that their students enjoy the process of teaching and learning or they will not be motivated to participate and learn.


When the children already love in listening to stories, it means that there is already a half way to intrinsically motivating them. The rest depends on how good the story is, how interesting and colorful the illustrations are, and how the

way it is being told. However, by using Internet all of those requirements can be fulfilled easily. Here is the example of internet website can be visited.

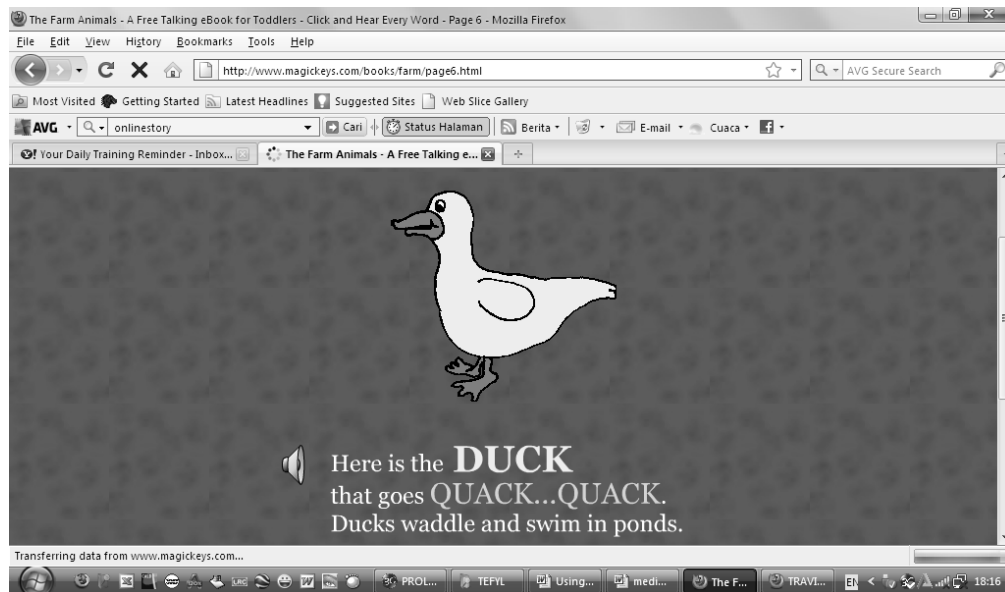
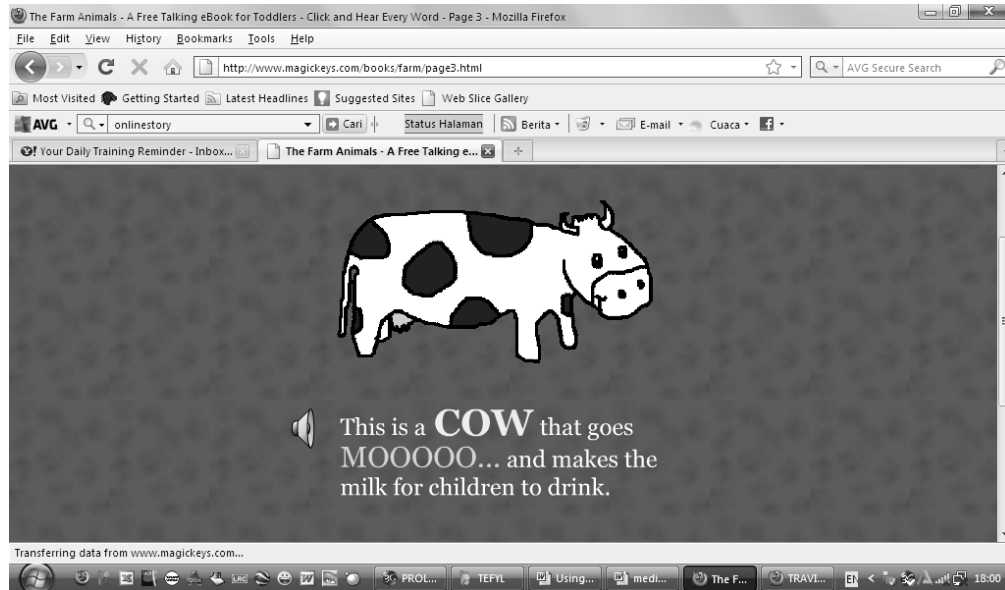
Go to the web page: <http://www.magickeys.com/books/#yc>




On the screen there will be many stories that we can choose. We choose the stories by click on the story we want.

 - Indicates audio is included with the story.

On the example above, I choose story of 'the farm animals'. Some of the stories will appear as the following.






If we click the sign , there will be a voice that read the text in the story slide. It is really interesting for the young learners to hear a nice voice from a native speaker who retelling the stories. It is fun, isn't it? Why does not have it a try?

If you want to employ such Internet resources in your teaching-learning process in class, here are some example steps in applying those strategies.

Pre-teaching

- The teacher opens the web page: <http://www.magickeys.com/books/#yc>
- Choose one story provided, for example “The farm animals”
- Make sure the LCD is on and get the right focus so that the students can see it clearly
- Made a worksheet as follow-up activity for the students after watching the story

Whilst-teaching

- Ask the students to watch and listen to the story plays
- Make sure that you (the teacher) click the sign , so that the students not only can see the story but also listen to it
- Replay the story twice or three times
- Distribute the worksheet to the students
- Ask the students to do the task based on the instruction

Post-teaching

- Play the story once again in order the students can check their works
- Ask the students to submit their worksheet

CONCLUSION

The use of ICT are inspiring remarkable transformations in education around the world. These transformations hold promise for the improvement of human lives. However, in Indonesia it seems that we are still in the stage of 'learning to use ICT' rather than 'using ICT to learn'. We do hope that in the future the development of ICT in education will reach the level of using ICT to learn. Furthermore, when nowadays the use of ICT tends to be sporadic, in the next-not long time before now--it will be improved and coordinated well and touched all children all of Indonesia's area. Then, every child in this country can take a benefit of having such wonderful and enjoyable experience in English class.

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