



Webwords 44

Life online

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Revisiting the world of information and communication technology (ICT) and the speech-language pathologist (Bowen, 1999; 2003) in 2012, three main themes emerge. First, most of the useful personal, recreational, business, and professional web applications can be sourced for no cost or at a very low cost and conquering their use is easy but potentially time-consuming.

Second, despite fears that the language of the Internet (Crystal, 2001) would destroy English and other languages, the language that appears in our browsers is essentially the same as it was in pre-Internet days with just a few changes relating to an increase in stylistic range, flexibility in the use of punctuation and capitals, and a grammatical informality not found in written English since the Middle Ages (Crystal, 2008). There are new written forms and novel word usages associated with blogging, emailing, chatting, and texting, and new expectations of how words might be interpreted. How ever did Webwords anticipate that an image search for "Middle Ages" might yield pictures of vibrant Threshold Generation party animals living well, exercising regularly, and getting a good chuckle out of scrapping their retirement plans?



The Internet has boosted the lexicon by some 200–300 words. There are CamelCase words: eBay, PayPal, and WikiLeaks; portmanteau words (Carroll, 1871): bit (binary digit), malware (malicious software), modem (modulate demodulate), and pixel (picture element); acronyms: FCOL;

abbreviations: GIF, meg, net; memes; and computerese – the Tech Speak of computer geeks: "You'll love this! At the end of '88 I was *still* running the old IBM OS/2 SE 1.0 on an AT/099 with an ST251-1. Hilarious or what?"

Third, online social networking – connecting with others and sharing information via the Internet – in our field is increasing. At the same time, WC3's **semantic web**¹, currently in development and frequently called Web 3.0, is already changing life online. But it is not quite time for a Web 2.0 ("social web") retrospective.

The purpose of this feature-length Webwords is to suggest ways that modestly net-savvy and computer literate speech-language pathologists can utilise, enjoy, and reap the benefits of web technologies without spending a fortune. It includes an explanation of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 and a tour of the so-called Web 2.0 technologies with links to more detailed information; the interesting ways our SLP/SLT professional associations and colleagues use these tools; and the lowdown on creating professionally oriented blogs, wikis, Internet forums, and electronic mailing lists, or websites.

Read/write web

The date 6 August 1991 marked the debut of the world wide web as a publicly available service on the Internet. "Web 1.0" or "Web", refers to its first stage, in which html pages were connected with revolutionary hypertext links (hyperlinks) and web-based email came into its own, impacting the dissemination of knowledge within and across settings. **Tim Berners-Lee**², who invented it, is serious about accessibility (Berners-Lee, 2002; Bowen, 2012), and it is timely, in the **National Year of Reading**³, to be reminded that he wanted it to be the "Read/Write Web" where anyone, anywhere could meet and read and write.

Connecting people

Digital doyenne Darcy DiNucci coined the term "Web 2.0" in 1999. It persists despite Berners-Lee's criticism that, "nobody even knows what it means". When asked in 2006 if he agreed that "Web 1.0 is about connecting computers, while Web 2.0 is about connecting people", Berners-Lee replied, "Totally not. Web 1.0 was all about connecting people ... If Web 2.0 for you is blogs and wikis, then that is people to people. But that was what the Web was supposed to be all along".

Years later, there remain two difficulties with the notion of the Web 2.0 websites being qualitatively different from the Web 1.0 websites. One, Web 2.0 is still not different from Web 1.0, but rather continues as an extension of the original plan, and two, the Web 2.0 websites are so dissimilar from each other in terms of content that it is odd to classify them as belonging in a single category.



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Web content classification

Folksonomy is one webword you probably don't like, and you definitely don't want to say it with a blocked nose. A portmanteau of folks and taxonomy, it refers to a web content classification process called collaborative tagging or social bookmarking. In it, producers-and-consumers or professionals-and-consumers ("prosumers", either way) cooperate in the creation and management of tags in order to annotate, group, and find web content. Folksonomies have been popular since 2004 on social websites like **43 Things**⁴ where over 3 million people "list their goals, share their progress, and cheer each other on". Folksonomies, tagging, blogging, and social networking (e.g., via Facebook, LinkedIn, RSS feeds, Twitter, and YouTube) are among the defining characteristics of **Web 2.0**⁵ and its toolkit.

Toolkit

Podcasts

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) was the first speech pathology professional association to launch a website and lead the charge in embracing Web 2.0 (Fisher, 2009). Its use of a blog, RSS feeds, and informational **podcasts**⁶ to promote and publicise its activities, publications, and services is extensive. Podcasting is a convenient means of automatically downloading audio or video files to a computer. The files can be played on the same computer or transferred to a portable MP3 or video player. Podcasts can be expensive and technically challenging for non-experts but can be **monetized**⁷ by advertisers or sponsors.

RSS feeds

A subscription to an RSS (really simple syndication) web feed, such as the **ASHA journals RSS**⁸ feeds, the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) **RSS**⁹ feeds, or the **MedWorm Speech Therapy RSS**¹⁰ feeds takes moments. Web content is delivered or "pushed" to the subscriber's free reader (e.g., Google Reader, Yahoo, Microsoft Outlook, or Live Bookmarks). It costs nothing for an organisation or individual to generate the feed and if prominent news aggregators (e.g., DecaPost, Drudge Report, Google News, or the Huffington Post) pick it up, the message reaches an extended readership.

Video sharing

YouTube is a video-sharing website where users can upload, view, and share clips. Unregistered users are able to watch the videos, while registered users can upload an unlimited number of videos. CASLPA has its own CASLPA YouTube Channel, a low-budget, less technically demanding alternative to podcasting that has been active since March 2010. YouTube competes with many other free or low-cost video hosting sites such as Animoto, Flickr, Screencast, Slideshare, and Vimeo, and videos can also be uploaded to personal and work websites. Speechwoman smiled on **Firm Foundations**¹¹, also in Canada, for an excellent example of videos made by teachers and uploaded to a section of a school district website, to demonstrate phonological awareness training and other early literacy skills.

Facebook

Facebook is a free social networking service. Facebook users can join networks organised by location, workplace,

or school, to connect with family, friends, colleagues, and people with compatible interests. Many organisations have a public presence on Facebook to connect all of their employees or members, while some have found advantages in using an internal, secure version of Facebook for private collaboration. Five mutual recognition agreement (MRA) signatories are on Facebook: ASHA, CASLPA, the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA), the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), and Speech Pathology Australia (SPA); but at last count, not the Irish Association of Speech & Language Therapists (IASLT).

Twitter

All six MRA signatories tweet. Twitter is a free social networking micro-blogging service in which users send and read updates or "tweets" of no more than 140 characters. Guidance (Twetiquette and more) is provided in Tanya Coyle's **Twitter for SLPs**¹² series and Jessica Hische's **mom, this is how twitter works**¹³ is, as she says, not just for moms. Potential professional uses include brainstorming and efficient provision of updates and announcements to an "in" group. For example, Shareka Bentham and Tanya Cole at **SLPChat**¹⁴ cleverly unite the blogging tool WordPress with Twitter for the purposes of SLP/SLT discussion within a small (so far) following.

Blogs

A blog (web log) is a personal journal published on the web, typically composed by a blogger working alone or with one or a very small band of collaborators. Blog entries usually appear in reverse chronological order so that the blogger, blog visitor, or follower sees the most recent post first and has to scroll down for earlier entries. The better blogs, like **ASHAsphere**¹⁵, are interactive and allow comments and messages using graphical user interface (GUI) controls (also called widgets) such as windows or text boxes. Bloggers of interest to SLPs/SLTs, judging by their followings, are **Martin J Ball and Nicole Müller**¹⁶ and Judith Stone-Goldman on WordPress, and Dorothy Bishop, Madalena Cruz-Ferreira, David Crystal, **Sharynne McLeod**¹⁷, and John Wells on Blogger. Their respective blog rolls provide many leads to other professionally stimulating journals.

Some SLPs/SLTs have developed blogs as resource sites. Heidi Hanks is Mommy (of four) Speech Therapy, Paul Morris issues The Language Fix, Jenna Rayburn shares her Speech Room creations, Mirla Raz reviews apps for speech therapy, Sean Sweeny "looks at technology through a language lens" and provides a collaborative document at Google Docs called The SLP Apps List which anyone can edit (note also the October 2011 ASHA Leader's Apps: An Emerging Tool for SLPs by Jessica Gosnell and the Speaking of Apps message board on the Speaking of Speech site), Rhiannon Walton has therapy ideas and videos, and Pat Mervine uses Blog.com for her blog on the Speaking of Speech site. All the sites mentioned in the two preceding paragraphs, and those that follow are hyperlinked in the web version of Webwords 44 at **www.speech-language-therapy.com**¹⁸.

Wikis

The word "wiki" comes from the Hawaiian word for "quick", so Wikipedia is a portmanteau of quick/wiki and encyclopaedia. A wiki is a website whose content is easily editable within the wiki-editor's browser. Usually there is an "edit" button on every page of a wiki and it is configured to

let anyone with or without a password (as in the case of Wikipedia), or only people with passwords, to edit any page, including other people's posts, as in Wikispaces, Wikidot and Tiki Wiki CMS Groupware.

The Wikispaces service from Tangient LLC houses the resource rich **Universal Design Technology Toolkit**¹⁹ maintained by Joyce Valenza and Karen Janowski. Michał Frąckowiak's Wikidot is the third largest wiki host, or wiki farm to date. On Wikidot, all education sites, such as The Special Ed Wiki, are provided at no cost, **modestly priced**²⁰ paid-for sites are available, and there is a no-obligation sandbox where people can try their hand. Tiki Wiki is a community-managed, open development project, with an official Tiki Software Community Association as the legal steward. A nice feature of Tiki Wiki is its beginners' guide called, "Tiki for **Dummies Smarties**" by Rick Sapir, featuring – last time Webwords looked – 468 pages, from 168 contributors, read by 7,965,240 smarties, in 6 languages!

Internet forums, message boards, and electronic mailing lists

An Internet forum, or message board, like the open source **phpBB**²¹, and the paid-for or free Boardhost and free Zeta Boards (no learning curve, no boundaries, no stress, and no languages other than English!), is a website that allows people to engage in discussion in the form of posted messages ("posts"). Unlike chat rooms, messages are at least temporarily archived, and depending on the setup messages may need to be approved by a moderator before becoming visible to forum members and visitors.

The primary difference between forums and mailing lists, such as **LISTSERV**[®], is that mailing lists automatically deliver new messages to subscribers, while forums require subscribers to visit the forum's website to view new posts. **LISTSERV Lite Free Edition**²² is a freeware version of **LISTSERV** Lite, limited to a maximum of 10 mailing lists with up to 500 subscribers each. It is available for users who want to run hobby or interest-based email lists and do not derive a profit, directly or indirectly, from using the software. Software is available that conveniently combines forum and mailing list features allowing participants to post and read by email or in a browser, depending which they prefer. Both Google Groups used by Info-CHILDES and Stutt-L, and Yahoo! Groups, home of a-p-d and phonological therapy use this formula.

Cloud computing

Like the progression from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 to Web 3.0, the advent of cloud computing has been more of an evolution than a revolution and users of Amazon, Facebook, G-mail, Google docs, iTunes, and Twitter, for example, have already experienced it.

Crikey²³ explains that cloud computing is the provision of computing (using and improving computer hardware and software) as a service rather than as a product. Shared resources, software, and information are provided to computers and other devices as a utility over a network, typically the Internet. Utility computing is the packaging of computational resources, such as computation, storage, and services, as a low-cost



metered ("rented") service. Microsoft offers a cloud-based collaboration and communication suite, Office 365 for cents per day, competing with Google Apps for Business and IBM Lotus. Most of the suite vendors offer free trials, and some users opt for and stay with free secure suites such as free Google Apps and R360. Cloud computing is often presented as a form of green computing, but to date there is no empirical support for this claim.

Bookmarking and sharing

Cloud-powered online bookmarking and sharing tools like Diigo and Firefox Sync enable subscribers to organise, annotate, and group bookmarks with ease. A toolbar is used to seamlessly add and annotate a link, then return to the site of interest; tag sites with multiple category names rather than the single category folders for favourites or bookmarks provided by browsers (e.g., Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Opera, and Chrome). Users can view their bookmarks in a web-based account from any browser or computer; and find more sites by searching within the network or by tag.

Open source

Many of the software programs, including content management systems like Drupal, Joomla, WordPress, and Tiki Wiki, that people use to create blogs, wikis and websites are classified as "open source", as defined by the **Open Source Initiative**²⁴, and are published under creative commons²⁵ licences.

Australians who are new to online publishing will find helpful information about legal sharing, remixing and reusing content, and on protecting and disseminating their own intellectual property, on the Creative Commons Australia site and the **Copyright Agency Limited**²⁶ site. Constructing any category of Creative Commons License is as simple as filling out an online form. It lets the licensee retain copyright *and* allows people to copy and distribute the work as specified by the copyright holder. Once the form has been completed the licensee is given the HTML needed in order to add the license information to the relevant website site and information on how to select a license on one of several free hosting services that have incorporated Creative Commons.

Websites

Small, professionally managed sites

For SLPs/SLTs who want a web presence in the form of a small website there are advantages in hiring and briefing a designer to get the job done professionally. The main recurring costs are for DNS registration and re-registration, hosting, and the designers' fees. A well-chosen web designer is able to offer a range of services that may include an inexpensive, attractive, navigable, secure, custom-made site uniquely designed and built to the client's specifications, website hosting including arranging DNS registration (e.g., with TPP Internet who provide pricing information for Australian .au, New Zealand .nz, and Global.com, .net, .org, .biz, and .info domain names), eCommerce tools, database development, custom and web promotions. Examples of such paid-for sites, some by professional developers and others by experienced



amateurs, in Australia include Speech Moves made in Drupal by Bea Pate, and Melvin Speech Pathology made in Joomla by Meehan Design.

Free, self-managed sites

Rather than a fully paid-for small site, SLPs/SLTs can build a web presence with a free editor such as Weebly (e.g., Voice Energetics by Sarah Wilmot), PageBreeze (e.g., Corella Speech Pathology by Benjamin Jardine and Sally Hodson), WordPress (e.g., Jigsaw Speech, Language and Literacy by Bethany Stapleton), or Google Sites (e.g., Belinda Neimann Speech Pathologist by Belinda Neimann). They can be enhanced with royalty-free images from sources that include Wikimedia Commons **Pictures and Media**²⁷ and Microsoft Office Images. An account with **Jumpstart**²⁸ provides an opportunity to plan the architecture of a website and practice browser-based project website construction, alone or with one other collaborator. The natty thing about Jumpstart is that once you have everything looking just right, the whole site can be exported straight into a free editor such as WordPress. The owner can choose whether to locate their site on a free hosting site, with or without advertising, or to buy a plan with a web hosting provider such as Digital Pacific, iiNet, or Melbourne IT in Australia, just as long as the bandwidth that comes with the plan is adequate.

Larger sites

Bandwidth is a significant determinant of hosting plan prices, and most hosting plans have bandwidth requirements measured in months. The high price of bandwidth in Australia drives many site owners overseas. For example, Lycos provides 300GB per month for under US\$9.00 (\$108.00 per annum) and 500GB per month for under US\$12.00 (\$144.00 per annum) to anyone worldwide. Compare this with a “reasonably priced” Australian host charging an annual fee of A\$286.00 for 1GB data traffic per month (plus an establishment fee in the first year), A\$815.00 for 30GB per month and A\$1,000.00 for 70GB per month. Add to these charges design and development, setting up a content management system (CMS) such **Drupal**²⁹, **Joomla!**³⁰ or **Mambo**³¹, CMS training, technical support, search engine optimisation, social marketing, and additional applications such as tracking, messaging, and making a site mobile friendly, and the costs are substantial.

By sharing the load with the host, developer, and designer a site owner who wants to keep their business in Australia can establish a site with a budget of A\$3,500 to A\$4,000 for the first year and expect to pay about A\$1,000.00 in subsequent years provided that monthly bandwidth does not exceed 70KB. The host would design the site and the owner would populate it, saving him or herself some A\$4,000.00 in copy writing for a site of about 100 HTML pages. Potentially, costs can be defrayed by accepting paid advertising, seeking donations, or charging for downloads.

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Links

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