

Teaching English with podcasts

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Abstract

This study investigated the use of podcast to develop students' English skills, listening and speaking. This study reviewed some previous researches and designed teaching instructions using Podcast. The result found that the potential achievement in using technology affected both students and teachers. Students motivately engaged themselves to sharpen their English achievements, listening and speaking with technology experiences. Podcast provided tremendous topics and activities which make teachers and students enrich their knowledge as well as mastery their skills in educational purposes.

Keywords: Podcast, Listening and Speaking Skills, classroom activities, improve English.

Introduction

Living in the digital age has many benefits, but it's especially great when it comes to language learning. Today, students can improve their English quickly and easily with the help of phone, tablet or computer, and a good internet connection. A podcast is indeed a great tool that teachers and students can use in addition to English classes.

Research results

A podcast is a series of episodes of an audio show that can be downloaded and listened on a person's mobile device, both offline and online.



Because of its convenient format and the large variety of topics – from scientific to funny, podcasts continue to become more popular. Besides, most podcasts are available on apps free of charge. But the most important point is that listening to podcasts is an effective way to become proficient in English [1; 2; 4]. So Podcasts in English will help:

1. To develop listening skills;
2. To improve pronunciation of words;
3. To expand vocabulary with new words, phrases, and idioms;
4. To practice reading if listen to English podcast with subtitles;
5. To get to know different types of accents and local slang;

6. To increase understanding of native English speakers.

There are numerous ESL podcasts designed for different levels, from elementary to advanced: «Learn English Podcasts from the British Council», «Voice of America: Learning English», «The English We Speak», «English podcasts for advanced learners by Native English Speakers», «This American Life».

A podcast can contain different components depend on the type of podcast being accessed. Some podcasts are completely audio- based, denying the viewer of any visual stimulation. Other podcasts provide users with a mixture of audio and visual texts, while other podcasts are a mixture of audio and still images. Depending on the type of podcast being utilized, different components of the technology may be more useful to individuals based on literacy preferences or predominant intelligences. As stated previously, participants viewed two types of podcasts. One podcast appealed to one's audio sense and the others were more visually stimulating. In some studies, participants seemed to be engaged while listening to podcast. Although both students seemed to prefer the podcast because of the visual elements, it is possible that the students who are more auditory learners may have more benefits from the audio-based podcast as presented by reference. Knowing that students learn in many different ways, podcasting offers a way for teachers to deliver instructions that appeal to the auditory and visual learners [1; 2; 3].

From the study it is believed that the influences of using podcast in English language skills such as listening and speaking contribute a lot to give some improvements both for the teachers and the students. Teacher can bring ICT into the classroom, in the same time teacher is able to improve their technology skills in other to create the teaching atmosphere in the 21st century. For students, podcast provides students' learning styles, they might change their ways to practice listening, increase vocabulary level, grammatical sentence, intonation, and imitate pronunciation. Those activities directly raise their motivation and willingness to apply their learning styles because it is more interesting and flexible to study. While students improve their language competences, they can also focus on the input. The more students listen various topics from podcast based on their interest, the more they store rich ideas and information that might be very important sources in performing speaking and even in writing [1; 2; 3].

By having repertoires of classroom's activities using podcast, it showed that the use of podcast in listening practices integrated with speaking can engage or involve the students to be active in some activities. It proves that podcasts can be used most effectively. Podcast has also been argued to lead to passive learning with students focusing on the audio facility rather than actively engaging with the lecture's contents. The use of podcast depends on how this technology is put to use including goals and appropriate learning activities. Podcast does not contain any inherent value. It is only valuable in as much as it helps the teachers and the students reach their educational goals, by facilitating thoughtful, engaging learning activities that are designed to work in support in those goals.

Conclusion

To sum up, listening to podcasts for just a few minutes per day can make a huge positive difference to students' English level. To enhance language skills by using podcasts students need follow these simple steps to make listening to podcasts as effective as possible: listen to podcasts every day, on a daily basis, find a podcast that is interesting to students, listen to an English podcast with text (transcript or subtitles), after listening to a podcast with the transcript, try to listen to it without.

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