

**DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS VIA CREATING AND
USING LEARNER PODCASTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
CLASSES**

**İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİMİNDE ÖĞRENCİ PODCASTLERİNİN
OLUŞTURULUP KULLANILARAK KONUŞMA
BECERİLERİNİN GELİŞTİRİLMESİ**

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KABUL VE ONAY

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ONAY

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- atıfta bulunduğum eserlerin tümünü kaynak olarak gösterdiğimi,
- kullanılan verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadığımı,
- ve bu tezin herhangi bir bölümünü bu üniversitede veya başka bir üniversitede başka bir tez çalışması olarak sunmadığımı

beyan ederim.



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İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİMİNDE ÖĞRENCİ PODCASTLERİNİN OLUŞTURULUP KULANILARAK KONUŞMA BECERİLERİNİN GELİŞTİRİLMESİ

Arzu KOÇAK

ÖZ

Bu doktora tez çalışması yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmede teknoloji temelli yeni bir eğitimsel araç olarak öğrenci podcastleri kullanımının etkinliğini değerlendirmiştir. Bu çalışma öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma becerilerini geliştirmede öğrenci podcastleri oluşturup kullanma hakkındaki görüşlerini araştırmıştır. İlgili çalışma ayrıca, öğrencilerin öğrenci podcastleri kullanma hakkındaki görüşlerinin, öğrencilerin demografik özelliklerine göre (cinsiyet ve İngilizce öğrenme süresi) değişip değişmediğini incelemiştir. Buna ek olarak, bu araştırma öğrenci podcastleri oluşturup kullanmanın öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmeye ne derecede olumlu katkı sağladığını sorgulamıştır. Çalışma için gerekli olan bilgi, Hacettepe Üniversitesi'ndeki 90 öğrenciye dağıtılan anketler, 33 öğrenciyle yapılan mülakatlar ve ön test ve eğitim sonrası konuşma testinin uygulanması ile toplanmıştır.

Toplanan veri nitel ve nicel yöntemlerle analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmede öğrenci podcastleri oluşturma ve kullanma konusunda olumlu bir bakış açısına sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Öğrenciler, öğrenci podcastlerinin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmeye oldukça fayda sağladığına inanmaktadırlar. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin, öğrenci podcastleri oluşturma ile ilgili düşüncelerinin demografik özelliklere göre (cinsiyet ve İngilizce öğrenme süresi) istatistiksel olarak önemli ölçüde değişiklik gösterdiği bulunmuştur. Bununla beraber, öğrenci podcastlerinin yardımcı eğitimsel bir araç olarak etkililiği konusunda, ön ve eğitim sonrası konuşma testleri, öğrenci podcastleri oluşturup kullanmanın öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmeye önemli bir katkı sağladığını göstermiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Podcast, podcast oluşturma, öğrenci podcastleri, görüş, konuşma becerileri.

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Nuray ALAGÖZLÜ, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bilim Dalı, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS VIA CREATING AND USING LEARNER PODCASTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to assess the effectiveness of the use of learner podcasts in English language classes as an innovative technology-based instructional tool to develop EFL learners' speaking skills. This study investigated the viewpoints of EFL students on using and creating learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills. The study also examined whether there are any significant differences among participants' views with respect to their demographic features (gender and learning period) in creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. Furthermore, the study explored to what extent learner-produced podcasts help EFL students to develop their speaking skills. The data were collected through a student questionnaire distributed to 90 students, interviews conducted with 33 students and a pre-and post-speaking tests administered to students studying in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University.

The data gathered from all instruments were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Findings revealed that EFL students have positive viewpoints on using and creating learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. In addition, the students believe that learner podcasts are highly beneficial to improving their speaking skills. Moreover, statistically significant differences in students' viewpoints about the use of learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills based on gender and their previous learning experience were found. As regards the effectiveness of learner podcasts as a supplementary instructional tool, the data gathered from pre-and posttests showed that creating learner podcasts had a significant effect on learners' speaking skill improvement.

Keywords: Podcast, podcasting, learner podcast, viewpoint, speaking skills

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- EFL** : English as a Foreign Language
- RSS** : Really Simple Syndication
- CALL** : Computer Assisted Language Learning
- MALL** : Mobile Assisted Language Learning

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Today technology is an inseparable part of learners' lives as they are brought up in a technology-driven culture. They cannot imagine being able to communicate or exchange information without using technological devices such as computers, smart phones and tablets. In addition, digital media, visual culture, and youth culture are connected in such a way that each of them has an effect on others. Therefore, it is essential that technology be incorporated into the classes where traditional teaching methods are used (Khawlah and Omaima, 2015).

Learning a foreign language is difficult and complicated for many students. Thus, it is necessary for institutions to use time and resources effectively to provide learners with language instruction designed for students with different learning styles (Mahrooqi & Troudi, 2014). At that point, it is imperative to merge various methodologies with instructional technologies as institutions which do not use technology and move beyond traditional teaching methods "will be unable to meet the needs of knowledge based societies and as a result will not survive the change in paradigm of education" (O'Neill, Singh & O'Donoghue, 2004, p. 320).

Today technology is undoubtedly an inseparable part of foreign language instruction. Maybe, accepting the blackboard as a technology-based tool will be a topic of discussion for decades. Language laboratories, videos, and tape recorders were integrated into classes in the 1960's and 1970's and these instructional technology products have been serving to teach and learn a foreign language as educational materials all over the world since then (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007).

One of the most significant improvements in foreign language instruction is the emergence of "Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)" at the start of 1980's. CALL provided language learners with a variety of computer-based materials which enabled students to do some activities such as answering multiple-choice questions, completing the blanks in a text and matching the halves of the sentences. While completing these tasks, learners reacted to the driving force provided by the computer program. After learners did the activities, they were given feedback on their performance by the computer. In this way, learners got information

about whether their answers correct or not. Furthermore, through sophisticated feedbacks, they were also shown the reasons why they made a mistake and provided with remedial tasks (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

With the effects of Information and Communication Technology development, CALL has gone further to include the Internet and web-based materials usage. Through a range of facilities offered by communication technologies and the Internet, in the 1990's, Technology Enhanced Language Learning appeared as a new approach focusing on the influence of technology on teaching and learning a second language (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

In the late 20th century, it was much easier to reach language materials by means of netbooks, laptops, and web-based applications. The use of portable computer supported tools led to "Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)" which has examined the utilization of various mobile tools: "pocket electronic dictionaries, personal digital assistants (PDAs), mobile phones, MP3 players, and most recently ultra-portable tablet PCs" (Buston, 2013, 157). Mobile learning provides learners with an interactive environment offering many contexts which use various types of applications available in the mobile devices (Bachore, 2015).

Kukulska-Hulme and Shields (2008) state that "MALL differs from CALL with its use of personal, portable devices that enables new ways of learning emphasizing continuity or spontaneity of access across different contexts of use" (p.273). The emergence of other mobile devices (OMDs) like smart phones and eBook readers gave rise to the MALL and many studies have emphasized that these mobile devices, which also contains podcasting, support language learning (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; M'hammed et al., 2009).

Nowadays teachers are trying to incorporate what they have learnt about future trends and tools in teaching with technology into their teaching and professional development. For instance, social software computer tools such as blogs, wikis and podcasts are integrated into classrooms today and these ICT tools enable teachers to keep classroom environment stimulating (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

With the recent developments in technology, podcasts have been increasingly used in a variety of fields such as amusement, tourism and education (Lakhal, Khechine and Pascot, 2007). Podcasts can include audio, video and image items. In recent

years, the most commonly used form of podcasts in education contexts are audio podcasts (Rossell-Aguilar, 2007). The frequency and content of podcasts can range from hourly 3-min newscasts to one-hour detailed discussions which are held once a week (Bell, Cockburn, Wingkvist and Green, 2007).

After the first Really Simple Syndication (RSS) audio feeds emerged in July 2003 (Doyle, 2005), podcasting has appeared as a new phenomenon. In addition, by mid-2005, the number of different podcasts on various topics was nearly 10,000 (Bell, Cockburn, Wingkvist & Green, 2007). The word “podcasting” was selected as “the word of the year” by “The New Oxford American Dictionary” in 2005, then in 2006, it was present in the dictionary (Bell, Cockburn, Wingkvist & Green, 2007; Lane, 2006).

With regard to the use of podcasting in education, it is believed that podcasting can provide learners with educational benefits (Hew, 2009). The use of podcasts can be classified into two distinct categories: (a) producing personal podcasts (teacher-created or student-created) and (b) using existing podcasts (Rossell-Aguilar, 2007). Teacher created podcasts include recordings of past lectures or podcasts designed as complementary instructional materials. Supplementary podcasts are audiotaping that helps learners to enhance their learning by providing support. The podcasts made by students, alternatively, require students to present their own projects via podcasts. In this respect, considering the various uses of podcasts in teaching, this study aims to investigate whether it is possible to develop speaking skills via creating and using learner podcasts in English language classes.

In recent years, it is notable that technology augmented and the Internet enriched learning have a leading part in English Language Education. Especially, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools such as wikis, blogs and podcasts have been increasingly used in the ELT classroom. The use of ICT tools can foster learners’ motivation (Harmer, 2007). Therefore, using and creating learner podcasts, one of the important examples of social software, can be integrated into English language instruction as a new way of helping students to develop their English speaking.

1.2. Background of the Study

One of the social software tools used in foreign language teaching is podcasts. Harmer (2007) states that “a podcast is an audio and/or video file that is ‘broadcast’ via the Internet and can be downloaded to a computer or a mobile device such as an MP3 player for listening/viewing” (p.86).

Podcasts can be made about any topics and they can include both music and video. Video podcasts are also called as Vodcasts or PodClips. A podcast can include a bunch of audio files which take from a few minutes to an hour or more. Podcasts can be either authentic (e.g. BBC radio shows) or they can be created by students (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

Podcasts can mainly be integrated into teaching in two ways. The first way refers to listening to podcasts created by other people. The second way addresses to make their own podcasts. Creating podcasts is being commonly used in tertiary education. For instance, the lectures are recorded by professors as podcasts and they can be downloaded on computers or mobile devices by students who miss the class. In addition, in teacher training, audio and video podcasts can be produced to teach trainees methodology (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

The learners can use the podcasts available on the Internet (authentic podcasts or the ones found at the English caster directory) to study on their own or these podcasts can be used in class for listening by means of a computer. There are a wide range of EFL /ESL podcasts for all level of learners. Moreover, they are made on a variety of topics (discussions, songs, jokes etc.) (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

Students can be encouraged to subscribe authentic podcasts such as the BBC news and to listen to the podcasts regularly. Alternatively, students can be required to create their own podcasts and make them available on the Internet (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

Podcasting enables instructors to present instructional content and to support learning out of language classrooms (Hasan & Hoon, 2013). Research on podcasting pedagogy indicates that students can improve a variety of English language skills by using podcasts. It helps students to enhance their learning not only in listening but also in speaking (Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011; O’Byran & Hegelheimer, 2007). In addition, it enables students to improve their language

knowledge in some areas like vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar (Chan et al.2011; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005).

The studies conducted on the use of podcasts in foreign language teaching and learning investigated the influence of podcasts on learners' language skills and learners' attitudes and perceptions towards podcasts (Hasan & Hoon, 2013). These studies indicated that integrating podcasts into the curriculum offers an opportunity to facilitate language teaching (Lee & Chan, 2007). Podcasts serve to improve students' proficiency in English when they are employed as supplementary materials accompanied by course materials (Islanto, 2011; Lee & Chan, 2007).

Hawke (2010) designed a separate pilot course through using podcasts to improve graduate science students' academic English listening skills. In this study, the participants were given portable MP3 players and required to listen to the podcasts in their spare time. A pre-test and post-test was used to see whether podcasts help students to improve their listening skills. The post-test results, which were significantly higher than the pre-test results, indicated that podcasts help learners to enhance their listening skills.

As regards the effect of podcasts on learners' listening skills, Ashraf, Noroozi and Salami (2011) carried out a study with Iranian EFL sophomores. In the study, the students in the experimental group used podcasts during their listening activities. They were required to download and listen to English podcasts. On the other hand, the students in the control group were required to listen to radio programs. The data which were gathered from pre- and post-tests, interviews and students' reflective diaries showed that the learners in the experimental group outpaced the ones in the control group. In addition, the results indicated that the learners employing podcasts for their listening activities have positive attitudes towards using podcasts to enhance their listening skills. It was also emphasized by the researcher that ESL learners can use podcasts to develop their listening skills.

Istanto (2011) evaluated listening skills and grammar knowledge of 20 undergraduate students learning Indonesian as a foreign language. In the study, five podcast units were used as accompanying materials to enhance students' grammar knowledge and listening skills. The data gathered from the questionnaire distributed to participants at the end of the semester showed that podcasts enabled learners to improve their both listening skills and grammar knowledge. In addition, the results

indicated that podcasts helped learners to get information about the culture of the target society. Therefore, podcasts as a new technology can greatly help learners to enhance their listening skills (Artyushina et al., 2011). The podcasts which can be downloaded from the Internet provide learners with a lot of listening practice (Artyushina et al., 2011).

Ducate and Lomicka (2009) investigated the efficiency of using podcasts as an instructional tool to improve learners' pronunciation. The study was conducted with 22 students attending intermediate French and German courses. The students were required to develop five podcasts during the semester and their attitudes towards using podcasts to improve their pronunciation were examined through "Pre- and Post-Pronunciation Attitude Inventory (PAI) surveys". The results of the study showed that podcasts had a noteworthy effect on increasing students' positive attitudes towards learning English although the participants' pronunciation did not develop significantly because of the time limit. Likewise, in another study conducted by Knight (2010), 11 podcasts which were designed for phonetic exercises were used by 36 participants. The participants thought that the exercises of podcasts were beneficial to developing their phonetics. The podcasts enabled them to repeat the recordings many times. Learners liked this future of podcasts and believed that using podcasts increased their test scores and confidence in their transcription.

Podcasts can also be used as an educational tool to reinforce vocabulary learning. The development of vocabulary has a significant role in second language acquisition (Krashen, 1985; Putman & Kingsley, 2009). Podcasts as a novel instructional tool can help learners to develop their vocabulary (Borgia, 2010; Putman and Kingsley, 2009). Borgia (2010) investigated the effects of technology-based vocabulary instruction which includes "enhanced podcasts" made for vocabulary activities. The podcasts produced by pre-service teachers were used in two fifth grade classrooms. Sixteen pre-service teachers teaching literacy took part in the study. They were required to design an integrated novel unit and prepare a lesson plan which comprised several "reading strategies" and the use of technology to develop "reading instruction". The data were gathered through the observations of classrooms during instruction and the interviews conducted with both teachers and students. The survey findings revealed that podcast instruction developed language learners' vocabulary to a great extent. In the same way, the results of Putman and

Kingsley's (2009) research indicated that podcasts could significantly develop science vocabulary learning.

The previous research on the effect of podcasting on learners' speaking skills has showed that podcasts can be used to enhance learners speaking skills in foreign language instruction (Facer et al., 2009; Fitria et al., 2015; Farangi et.al. 2016). Farangi et. al. (2016) examined the influence of the use of podcasts as a main or supplementary teaching tool on EFL learners' speaking skills. The study was conducted with 60 Iranian EFL learners who were at upper-intermediate level. In the study, a pre-test-pos-test experimental design was used through two experimental groups and a control group. During the study while one of the experimental groups created learner podcast, the other one used web-based podcasts. The participants in the first experimental group were required to take part in pair and group discussion activities designed according to the textbook "American English File" and record their speech as podcasts. The students in the other experimental group listened to particular educational podcasts on the web. The topics of the web-based podcasts were parallel to the topics of the course book. The students were also asked to discuss about these topics in the class and record their conclusions as podcasts. The learners in the control group did not use podcasts. The results of the study indicated that the integration of podcasts into the curriculum enabled learners to develop their speaking skills. The results also showed that students who made learner podcasts over performed the students who used web-based podcasts in their speaking skills.

In a similar endeavor, Fitria et al. (2015) assessed the development of English listening and speaking skills by using podcasts as instructional tools in the courses. The study was carried out with sixty students who were divided into two groups: "an experimental and a control group". The students in the experimental group were given treatment through using podcasts. During the teaching process which included three stages (pre, while and post activities), the materials obtained from the Internet were used. The data gathered from the pre-test and post-tests (listening & speaking tests) showed that students' both listening and speaking skills developed significantly after integrating podcasts into the instruction. Moreover, the results of the questionnaire concerning students' opinions on the use of podcasts to enhance their English listening and speaking skills indicated that podcasts provide

“meaningful, appropriate, interesting tasks, activities and authentic materials which could attract the students’ attention, increase their motivation and improve their comprehension” (Fitria et al., 2015, p.55). These studies are parallel with Facer et al.’s study which also pointed out that podcasts can develop learners’ speaking skills.

With regard to the attitudes towards using podcasts in language learning, it is seen that the use of podcasts as an instructional tool motivate students to learn both intrinsically and extrinsically (O-Bryan and Hegelheimer, 2007). The results of the study which was carried out in Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania by Kavaliauskiene and Anusiene (2009) investigated students’ perceptions of using podcasts to improve their listening skills. The results of the study indicated that a vast majority of students (76%) had positive attitudes towards the techniques of enhancing listening skills through using podcasts. In a similar vein, Chan et al. (2011) developed two podcasts projects with a specific purpose of supporting “classroom instruction” to teach Chinese and Korean as a foreign language. The study was carried out at a university in Singapore. The data gathered from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews carried out with 120 Chinese and 60 Korean students showed that learners had positive perceptions of using podcasts in language courses and they thought that podcast-based learning was interesting.

The use of podcasts in language instruction has also an important effect in decreasing learners’ “anxiety” level and establishing “a sense of belonging” in the learning environment (Chan & Lee, 2005). Lord (2008) assessed a collaborative pod-casting project in an undergraduate Spanish phonetics class to evaluate learners’ attitudes and pronunciation abilities. Questionnaires and “a pre-test and a post-test” were used to collect data for the study. The results of the study indicated that most of the learners liked the project and their positive perceptions about the podcasting projects increased significantly during the semester.

A number of studies have investigated the use of podcasts in language instruction. Students may adopt positive or negative attitudes towards using podcasts to improve their English language skills. EFL students’ viewpoints on podcasting as an instructional tool can provide relevant information concerning the pros and cons of using podcasts to improve their language skills. Accordingly, learners’ positive and negative perceptions and the findings of the studies examining the influence of

podcasting on learners' language skills development play a vital role in determining whether podcasts as innovative technology-based learning tools should be incorporated into school curricula.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Recently, there has been growing interest in integrating podcasts into the foreign language instruction as an educational material. Many researchers have investigated learners' attitudes and perceptions towards using podcasts as a technology-based educational material (Chan et al., 2011; Li, 2012; Lord, 2008; Kim and King, 2011). In addition, a number of studies have examined the effect of podcasts on improving foreign language learners' language skills (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Li, 2012) and their achievements in such language areas as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (Chan et.al., 2011; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005). However, few studies have concentrated on assessing the influence of podcasts on developing learners' speaking skills in foreign language instruction (Facer et. al., 2009; Farangi et.al. 2016; Fitria et al., 2015).

1.4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate whether it is possible to improve speaking skills via creating and using learner podcasts in English language classes. This study was designed to evaluate the effects of the use of podcasts as an innovative instructional tool on students' English speaking skills. In addition, this study examines EFL students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. The study also explored how some demographic features, including gender and previous language learning experience have played a role in EFL learners' viewpoints on the use of learner podcast for their speaking skill improvement. The primary objective in this dissertation is to provide EFL teachers and curriculum planners with preliminary information about whether learner podcasts can be integrated into foreign language instruction as a novel educational tool to improve learners' English speaking skills.

1.5. Research Questions

The main research question of the study is "Is it possible to develop speaking skills via creating and using learner podcasts in English language classes? Based on this main research question the sub-research questions can be stated as follows:

1. What are the EFL students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills?
2. To what extent does creating and using learner podcasts help EFL students to develop their speaking skills?
3. Are there any significant differences among participants' views with respect to their demographic features in creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills?
 - a) Gender
 - b) Learning period (how long the participants have been learning English).

1.6. Significance of the Study

All around the world, people learn to speak English for different purposes. Some people need to learn “English for a Specific Purpose (ESP)”. For instance, business English is a very popular part of ESP. Most of the students prefer to learn English for Academic Purposes (EAP) to attend an English-speaking university or collage. In addition, these students need English in order to study English-language academic texts (Harmer, 2007). Although the reasons for learning English can differ greatly, the main aim of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate successfully in the target language and in that target-language community.

Teachers try to have students speak in the classroom for three main reasons. First, speaking activities enable students “to practice real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom” (Harmer, 2007, p.123). Secondly, speaking tasks used in the class give feedback to both teachers and students about students' learning. These speaking activities enable teachers to see students' strengths and weaknesses in speaking (e.g. the level of their success, the language problems they encounter etc.). Finally, the more students have chances to practice speaking in class, the more autonomous language users they become (Harmer, 2007). Thus, teachers should pay much more attention to develop students' speaking skills in foreign language instruction. They should use good speaking activities that provide rehearsal opportunities for students and enable them to produce language automatically. In the ELT class, a variety of activities are used to enable students to practice real-life conversation in English (discussions, information-gap activities, student presentations, moral dilemmas, etc.). However, speaking English is regarded as a

big problem by many language learners. Therefore, new engaging speaking activities should be integrated into foreign language curriculum.

In foreign language education, it is obvious that the level of speaking skills in the target language is regarded as the measure of learning that language by both teachers and students. Unfortunately, many language learners have difficulty in speaking fluently in the target language. It is difficult for these learners to express themselves well during a conversation. Thus, they need to improve their ability to speak clearly and effectively. In this sense, creating learner podcasts can be integrated into ELT classroom as a new technology-based instructional tool to improve students' speaking skills. Getting information about EFL students' viewpoints about using and creating learner podcasts and the effect of the podcasts developed by EFL students on their speaking skills can provide EFL teachers with information about whether learner podcasts can be used as a practical instructional device to help students improve their speaking skills.

1.7. Assumptions

It is assumed that this study will contribute to research on podcasting pedagogy in language teaching and learning. It is also expected to assist EFL teachers with necessary information to use and adapt to this innovative instructional technology to enhance learners' speaking skills.

1.8. Limitations of the Study

This research study was carried out for just two months. In School of Foreign Languages at Hacettepe University, during the 2015-2016 academic year, the educational process included four different quarters and each quarter consisted of eight weeks. In addition, the students' classes and teachers were changed for each quarter. Therefore, the podcast tasks designed to develop students' speaking skills had to be completed in eight weeks. If the duration of each quarter had been longer, the variety of podcast activities could have been increased. Another limitation of this research study is that during the study, students attended their English courses at the Preparatory School and received formal instruction in English to improve their language skills; therefore, apart from the role of learner podcasts in improving EFL learners' speaking skills, there are also other factors behind students' speaking skill development resulting from the instruction given students at school.

1.9. Definition of Key Terms

Podcast: “A digital audio file made available on the Internet for downloading to a computer or mobile device, typically available as a series, new instalments of which can be received by subscribers automatically” (English Oxford Dictionary, 2016)

Podcasting: “An audio/ video file that can be broadcast via the Internet with sound files that are ‘pushed’ to subscribers, often at regular intervals” (Levy, 2009, p.75).

Attitude: “a feeling or opinion about something, or someone, or a way of behaving that is caused by this” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2016).

Social Software: “ICT tools which encourage users to collaborate and communicate online. Typically they allow multiple authorship, and content is generated by the users” (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007, p.168).

PodOmatic: “A user-friendly site where one can easily create and record a podcasts” (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007, p.168).

Really Simple Syndication (RSS): “a method of providing website content such as news stories or software updates in a standard XML format. RSS content can be accessed with an RSS-enabled Web browser or other programs designed for retrieving RSS feeds” (The Tech Terms Computer Dictionary, 2016).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

A new period has begun for education and learning with the use of innovative technologies, fast access to the Internet and a variety of low-cost technological tools (Burston, 2013). The integration of technology into language classrooms has led to student-centered classrooms and improved the level of learning through giving attention to autonomous learning (Lee, 2011). Since autonomous learners are actively engaged in learning, they do the tasks and assess their performance (Dam, 1995 & Little, 1996). Autonomous learning requires teachers to act as a facilitator through motivating students to take a central role in problem-solving and decision-making processes (Little, 1996).

With regard to ways of developing autonomous language learners, “Computer-Assisted Language Learning” and its subset “Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)” are regarded as significant tools which promote autonomous language learning (Benson, 2004; Lee, 2005; Murphy, 2006). One of the latest trends in MALL is podcasting. Podcasting enables learners to enhance their language learning not only in classrooms but also out of the classrooms (Rosell-Augilar, 2013). As this study focuses on creating and using learner podcasts in English language teaching, the following section will give information about the use of podcasts in language learning and the research studies on podcasting in foreign language education.

2.2. Podcasts in Language Teaching

2.2.1. What is a podcast?

A podcast can be defined as

a series of regularly-updated audio or video files that can be played on a number of devices (either portable, such as mp3 players or mobile phones, but also static, such as desktop computers) and are distributed over the internet via a subscription service” (DOTS, 2016, p.2).

The term ‘podcast’ is the combination of the words ‘iPod’ and ‘broadcast’. iPod is a well-known “brand name” used for “the Apple portable MP3 player” (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007). Podcasts mainly differ from other audio or video file distribution formats in that podcasts constitute the component of “a series” that are automatically distributed to “subscribers” by “RSS” (Really Simple Syndication) subscription. In

addition, it is possible to access to podcasts in any place and anytime when they are downloaded. Nevertheless, the term ‘podcast’ is generally thought to refer to any media file which is delivered online without considering whether it is an element of a series or whether it allows to be subscribed to via “RSS” feeds. It should be emphasized that there is no difference between podcasts and downloadable audio without RSS syndication and their effects greatly change (DOTS, 2016).

Dudeney and Hockly (2007) states that podcasts are regarded as a sample of social software like wikis and blogs. These three technology-based instructional tools have different features; however, as regards integrating them into the classrooms, they share certain characteristics:

- Teachers and learners can design and use these computer tools
- These tools can enable learners to make contact with other groups of learners such as a class in a different country
- The learners can plan the content and develop some ideas individually or as a group

Podcasting enables teachers to reach the latest and engaging resources for their students and motivate them to listen to audio materials whose topics appeal to their interest. It is also possible for both teachers and students to create their own podcasts. For example, the website “<http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>” offers a variety of podcasts on different topics. Besides, the page can be subscribed to (DOTS, 2016).

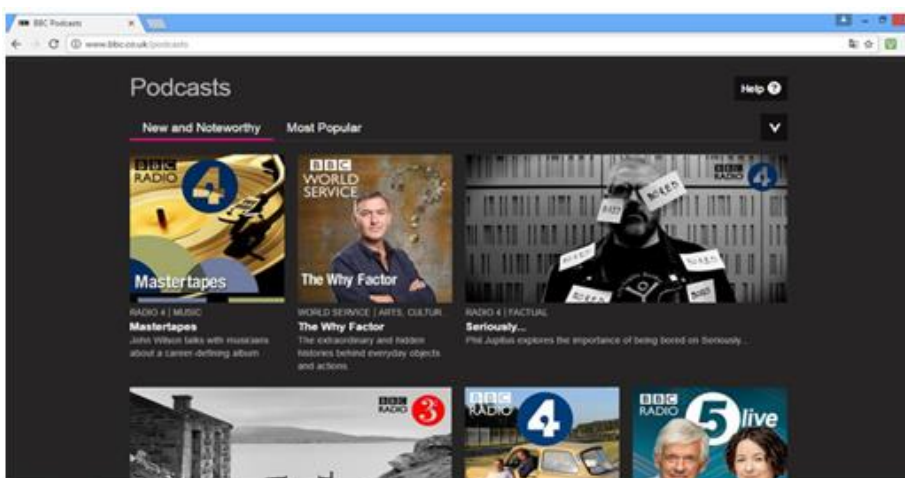


Figure 2.1. BBC Podcasts

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>

With the popularity of podcasting and portable media players, the potential uses and advantages of integrating podcasts into the language learning has been investigated. As Rosell-Augilar (2007) emphasizes, “podcasting can support principles advocated by several theories of learning, such as the use of authentic materials, informal and lifelong learning, the use of learning objects for the provision of learning materials and just in time teaching” (p.477).

Podcasting is regarded as a part of “mobile learning”, which occurs “when the learner is not at a fixed, predetermined location, or when the learner ‘takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies’” (Kukulska-Hulme, 2005, p. 1). In addition, using podcasts provide learners with various advantageous. For example, podcasting distribute the materials in a format which is handy, easy to be carried and access. The pace of the distribution of information in podcasts can be controlled as well. Moreover, the format is interesting and encouraging. Not only it is free to access but also it offers different competently created resources which present a variety of topics.

It is possible to access to podcasts from aggregators which are “websites or software that allow the user to download or subscribe to the media files” (DOTS, 2016, p.3). iTunes is the most widespread and well-known podcast aggregators. In addition to offering an entertainment store including video, music and various apps, it provides a podcast part which enables people to deliver their video and audio files at no extra cost. People can download podcasts individually or new installments of the series can be obtained automatically through subscription.



Figure 2.2. Podcast Downloads on iTunes

Source: <http://www.independentenglish.wordpress.com>

Other podcast directories contain:

- PodcastAlley
“http://www.podcastalley.com/top_podcasts.php?num=20&genre=7&year=2011&month=4”
- “iPodder: <http://www.ipodder.org/podcasts>” (DOTS, 2016).

2.2.2. Using Podcasts in EFL Classrooms

The significance of learning and teaching language in a communicative environment through using authentic materials has been emphasized by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories. In order to increase learners' motivation it is necessary that they receive comprehensible input in a meaningful context. Furthermore, learners' cultural competence should be developed. In this sense, podcasting assist teachers with the achievement of these primary goals of foreign language teaching. Podcasts enable learners to have access to authentic materials. These educational materials can be used by students to enhance their listening skills or they can develop their own podcasts. It takes only a few seconds to access and share podcasts by means of the World Wide Web (WWW) (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

Podcasts can be integrated into the foreign language instruction in various ways. Teachers can use podcasts prepared specifically for foreign language learners or authentic podcasts which are taped in the target language and culture. While learners are listening to podcasts, they can listen to the material again when they do not comprehend the audio content of podcasts. In other words, learner's individual learning pace is regarded during podcasting process. Foreign Language Learners (FLL) can also create their own podcasts and publish them on the Internet. As regards developing learner podcasts in language classrooms, learners can carry out interviews with native speakers or hold radio shows in the target language (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

Learners can develop podcasts in the classroom or on field trips and share them with worldwide or target audience. In addition, podcasts provide learners with opportunities for repeated listening as educational tools and enable students to improve their listening and speaking skills through a meaningful context. Moreover, they give students a chance to enhance their self monitoring abilities and as a result of this develop learner autonomy (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

With regard to the integrating podcasts into the language teaching and learning, teachers and students do not need to have advanced technology knowledge or computer operating skills to create and use podcasts. Just using a computer with a microphone and mp3 player makes it possible to produce and listen to podcasts. Learner podcasts can be designed through some websites like www.podomatic.com

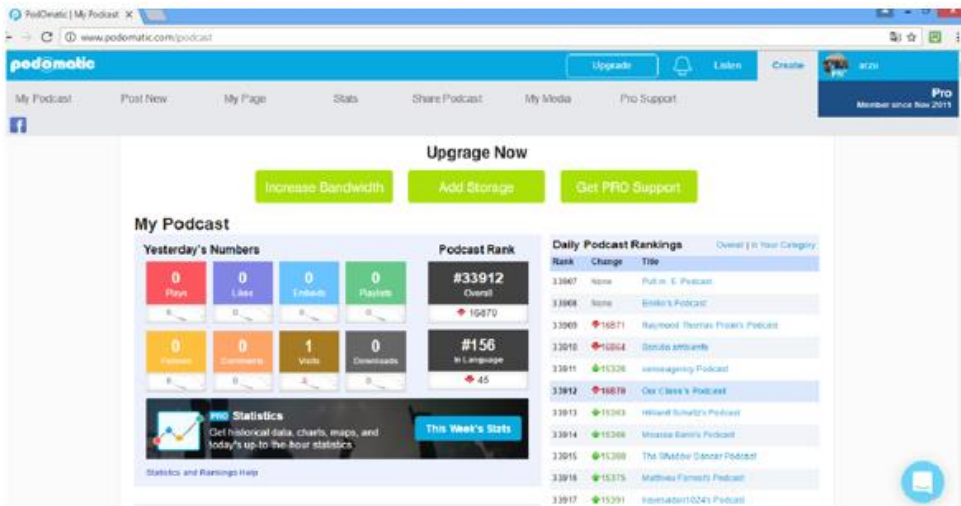


Figure 2.3. Podomatic

Source: <http://www.podomatic.com/podcast>

In addition, they can record audio files free of charge and develop podcasts via www.gabcast.com only with the help of a telephone as a recording instrument (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

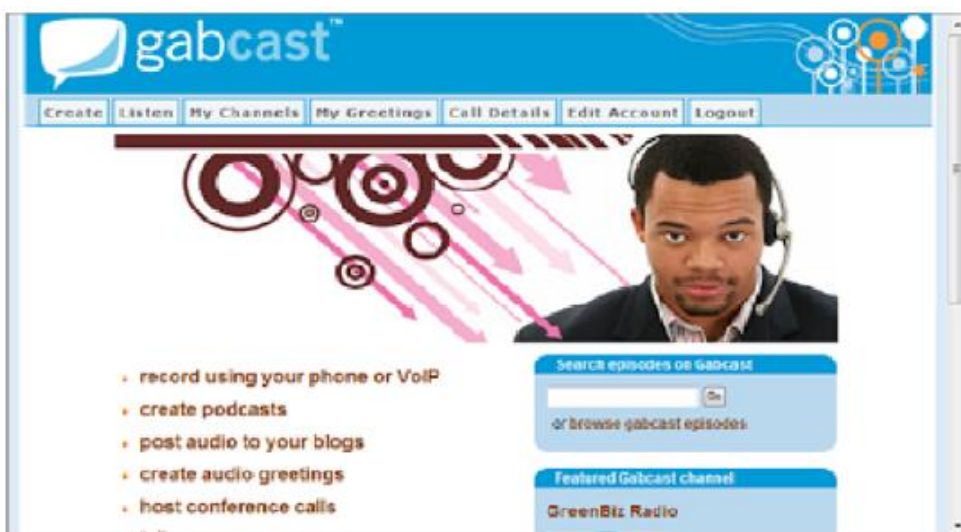


Figure 2.4. Gabcast (Royal & Von Koss, 2008, p.7)

With regard to the use of podcasts in language teaching, Dudeney and Hockly (2007) point out that a podcast is similar to a radio or TV show; nevertheless, the main difference between them is that using podcasts offer an opportunity to listen to sound files on a topic which engages your interest any time you need. According to Dudeney and Hockly (2007), “Typically, a podcast will consist of a ‘show’ which is released either sporadically or at regular intervals, for example every day or once a week” (p.98). A podcast can contain video and music, and they can be developed about any topic. Video podcasts are called as ‘Vodcasts’ or ‘PodClips’. The length of a podcast can range from a few minutes to an hour or more. In addition, podcasts can be made either authentic such as BBC radio shows which can be downloaded as podcasts or particularly set up for language learners (Dudeney and Hockly, 2007). Podcast directories allow teachers and learners to access to and benefit from podcasts. By clicking on a category and scrolling to a wide range of podcasts, they can listen to and subscribe to podcasts that are engaging for them. For instance, Englishcaster is a podcast directory which directly serves English teachers and learners for podcasting.

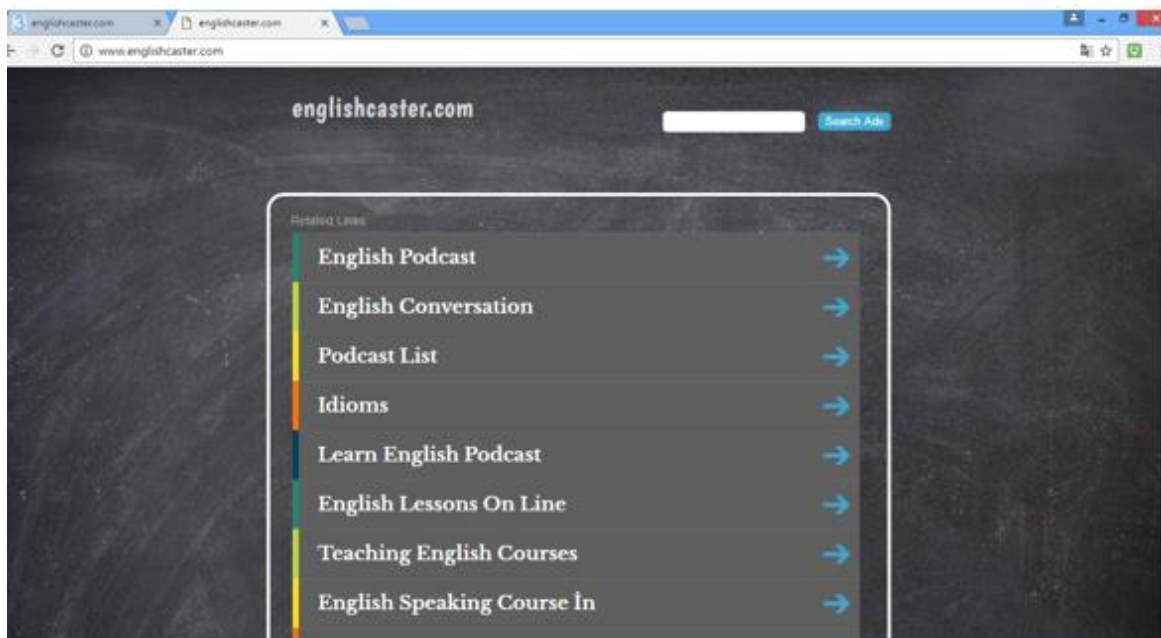


Figure 2.5. Englishcaster

Source: <http://www.englishcaster.com>

Dudeney and Hockly (2007) explains two fundamental ways of incorporating podcasts into teaching:

- Listening to podcasts produced by others
- Creating your own podcasts

For instance, in tertiary education podcasts are commonly used by professors to record their lectures and publish them to learners for later listening. These lecture podcasts enable students that miss the courses to listen to the lecture through downloading podcasts on their mobile devices such as an MP3 player or computers. This is also called as 'course casting'. Lecturers can use standard lectures recorded before as podcasts and they can be delivered to students at specific points during the academic year. In addition, they can develop their own lecture podcasts for learners on a regular basis. Similarly, it is possible to benefit from podcasts in teacher training. Trainees can improve their methodological knowledge and may develop their teaching by listening to or watching different podcasts (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

Language learners can be required to use podcasts presented on the Internet to study on their own or podcasts can be listened to in the class by means of a computer. These podcasts can include authentic podcasts or ones produced for learners like those available at the English caster directory (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

Another podcast task which can be used by language teachers is that learners can be asked to access to a podcast on a topic which engages them and listen to that podcasts regularly after subscribing to it. The Internet provides students with podcasts on a wide range of topics from "vocabulary items to discussions on topics of interest, to jokes and to learning songs" (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007, p.99). Besides, high-level learners can be motivated to subscribe to authentic podcasts, for instance from websites like "the BBC News (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>)" (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

As Dudeny and Hockly (2007) emphasizes "more demanding, but ultimately perhaps more rewarding" (p.99), is learners' creating their own podcasts. Learner podcasts can consist of a 'one-off' podcast, which is published on the Internet later on, or "a series of podcasts" on various topics made by learners such as a radio show (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

2.2.2.1. How To Create Learner Podcasts

Learner podcasts contains short audio files produced by individual learners. They can last from 10-20 seconds to several minutes. Longer podcats can be created by small groups. For example, podcasting projects require students to make podcasts about personal information (e.g. name, ages, likes & dislikes), views on different topics or telling jokes / anecdotes. The features of the podcast (the length of each podcast, individual / small group recordings, one-off, / series of podcasts) can be decided according to the language level of the students. Some suggestions for integrating podcasts into language teaching are as follows:

Table 2.1: Ideas for Podcasting Projects

<i>Podcast idea</i>	<i>Suggested Length of Each Podcast</i>	<i>Student Language Level</i>	<i>Individual/ Small Group Recording</i>	<i>One-off/Series of podcasts</i>
Personal Information (e.g.name,age,likes & dislikes)	1-3 minutes	Low	Individual	One-off
Views on topics	1-3 minutes	Low+	Individual	Series
Describing (e.g. national Customs/holidays)	5 minutes plus	Intermediate+	Small groups	One off/ Series
Telling jokes/anectodes	1-3 minutes	Intermediate+	Individual	One off/ Series

Source: Dudeney, G. & Hockly, N. (2007). How to teach with technology. England: Pearson Education Limited.

Dudeney and Hockly (2007) states that a sample class podcast project can consist of various steps:

“Step 1: Setting up a podcast page (approximately 30 minutes)

Step 2: Creating Learner podcasts (approximately 45-60 minutes)

Step 3: Listening to Learner podcasts (approximately 45-60 minutes)

Step 4: Follow-up (3-4 subsequent lessons)” (p.100).

In the first step, the teacher prepares a podcast page for the class podcast project via a free podcast site like podomatic ([www. Podomatic.com](http://www.Podomatic.com)). The technological equipment needed to record a podcasts includes a computer with Internet connection and a microphone. Podcasts can be posted using this website provided by the podcasts page. Moreover, “a short text description of the project” and example podcasts with photos can be presented on the podcast site by the teacher.

In the second step, students make their own podcasts and post them to the class podcast page. The podcast page enables learners to record and listen to their podcasts and make them available on the Internet. To create podcasts students can study individually or in pairs. For instance, they can organize and review a short text including personal information such as

- “Name and age
- Job or school year
- Hobbies or spare time activities
- One unusual thing about themselves” (Dudeny and Hockly, 2007, p.100)

Learners should be given enough time to revise and study the texts they have prepared. They should not be allowed to read out the texts; however, since learners attach too much value to being accurate in their speech, they can prepare notes to assist themselves in this podcasting process.

Podcasting sites like podomatic enable users to record, listen to and rerecord their podcasts. Thus, students have an opportunity to post their podcasts when they are satisfied with their performance in developing their own podcasts. In addition, as the recording software is integrated into the podcasts page, users do not need an extra software for recording and any advanced technical knowledge to record their podcasts. After students are pleased with the quality of their own podcasts, they can be sent to the class podcasts page.

In the third step, learner podcasts are listened in the class as a whole class activity and students can be required to take notes about their friends' podcasts. In the last step, students know how to create learner podcast and publish it to the main podcast page. Thus, it is time for the students to practice preparing podcast texts. With more practice, they will be more self-confident and they will produce more 'natural' recordings (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

The following section will give information about the use of podcast sites through providing instructions showing how to install and register some specific programs in order to benefit from podcasts as instructional tools for foreign language instruction. In addition, some sample teaching activities will be presented to demonstrate how to integrate podcasts into classrooms to enhance learners' language skills.

2.2.2.2. Some Basic Software and Podcast Sites for Using Podcasts

2.2.2.2.1. iTunes

iTunes is media management software which enables you to download podcasts, generally without any cost. In addition to various videos and music, teachers can access to a wide range of valuable ESL podcasts to use educational materials for their courses. It is necessary that iTunes be download on computers to be able to benefit from podcasts as instructional tools. iTunes can be download through the website <http://www.apple.com/itunes/> (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

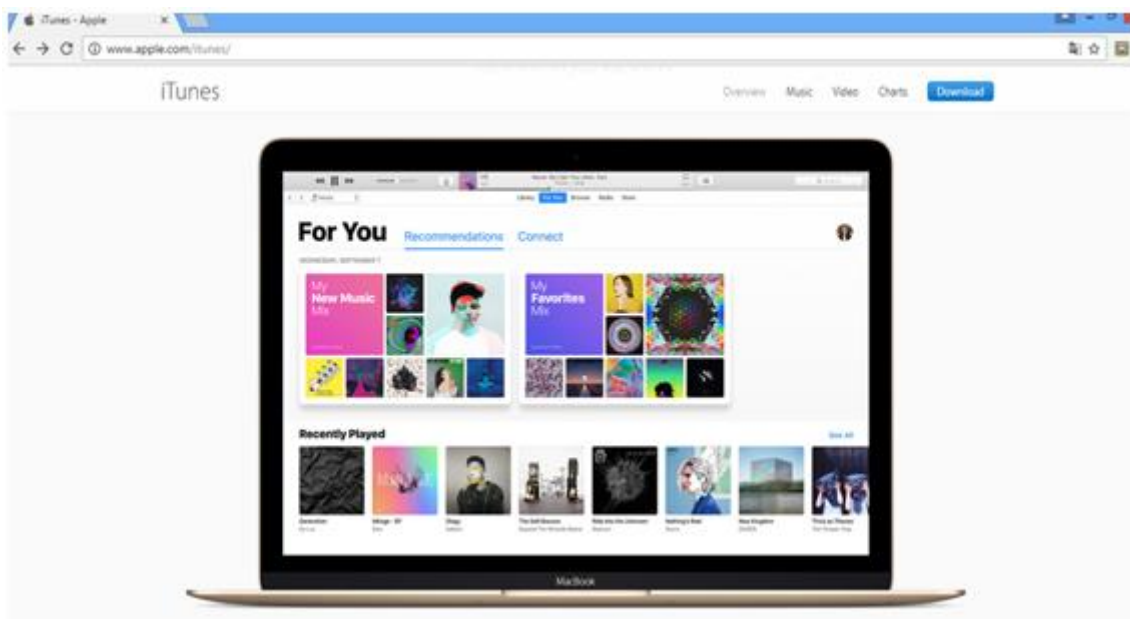


Figure 2.6. How to Download iTunes

Source: <http://www.apple.com/itunes>

2.2.2.2.2. Podomatic

Podomatic is a website that allows users to listen to and create podcasts. It is possible to register for the webpage free of charge with limited storage space. Podomatic enables users to upload audio files which are recorded previously. After that, the podcasts can be published to users' own podcast webpage (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

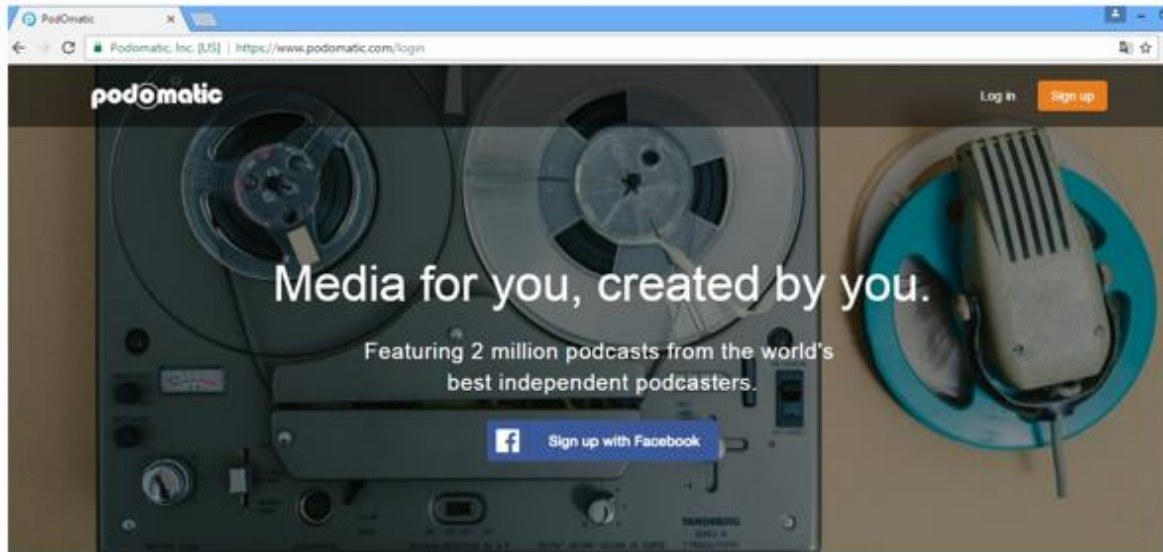


Figure 2.7. Podomatic

Source: <http://www.podomatic.com/login>

Furthermore, the website offers a variety of podcasts presented in Education category (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

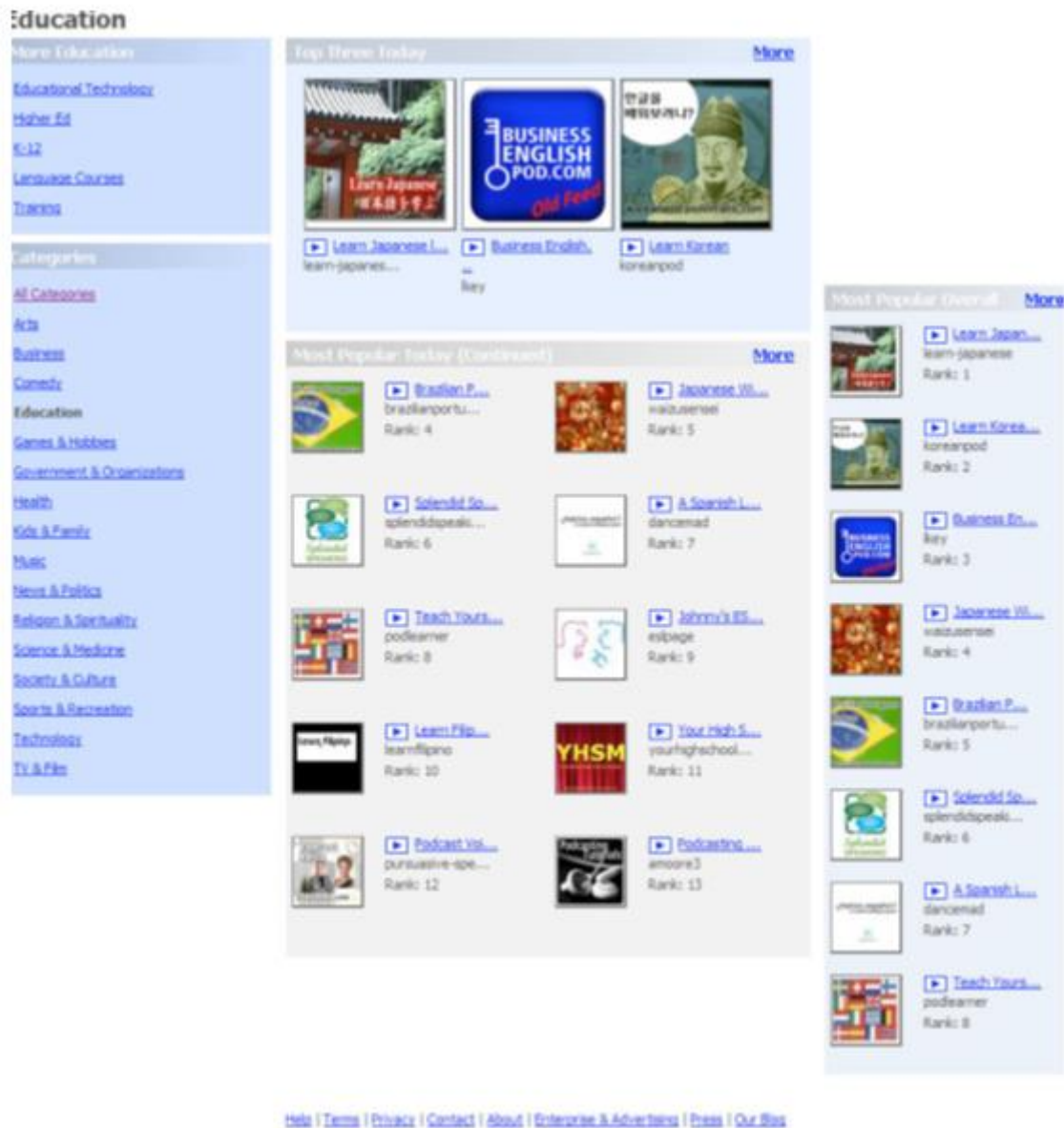


Figure 2.8. Educational Podcasts on Podomatic (Royal & Von Koss, 2008, p.4)

In previous years, Podomatic allowed users to record their own podcasts by using recording software on the website. Unfortunately, the new version used in 2017 does not have a recording feature. It is not a problem for users since they can make their podcasts using the voice recording software on computers and smart phones. In addition, several audio recorder are available on the Internet and they can be downloaded free of charge.

Besides, if it is allowed, listeners can comment on podcasts either in text form or in recorded. The parents of the young learners and other students can be motivated to listen to podcasts and make a comment. It is easy to use podomatic. It also

enables you to make your podcast page by offering a range of templates for a different look. In order to make the page visually attractive some photos can be presented together with audio podcasts (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007).

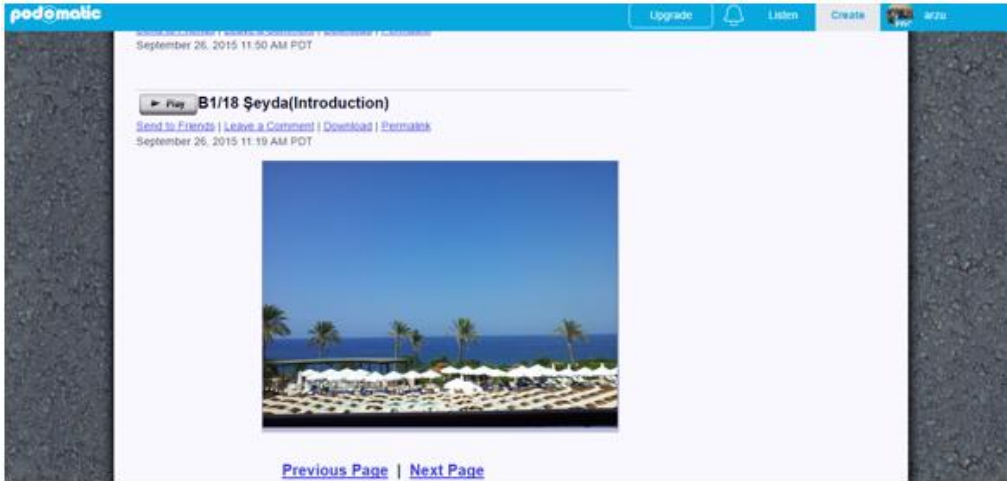


Figure 2.9. Audio Podcasts with Photos

Source: <http://kocaka.podomatic.com/?p=17>

Podomatic can be used by following the instructions given below:

- Go to the website www.podomatic.com
- Click 'sign-up' to submit your registration and create a user account (Users can sign up with 'e-mail' or 'facebook')

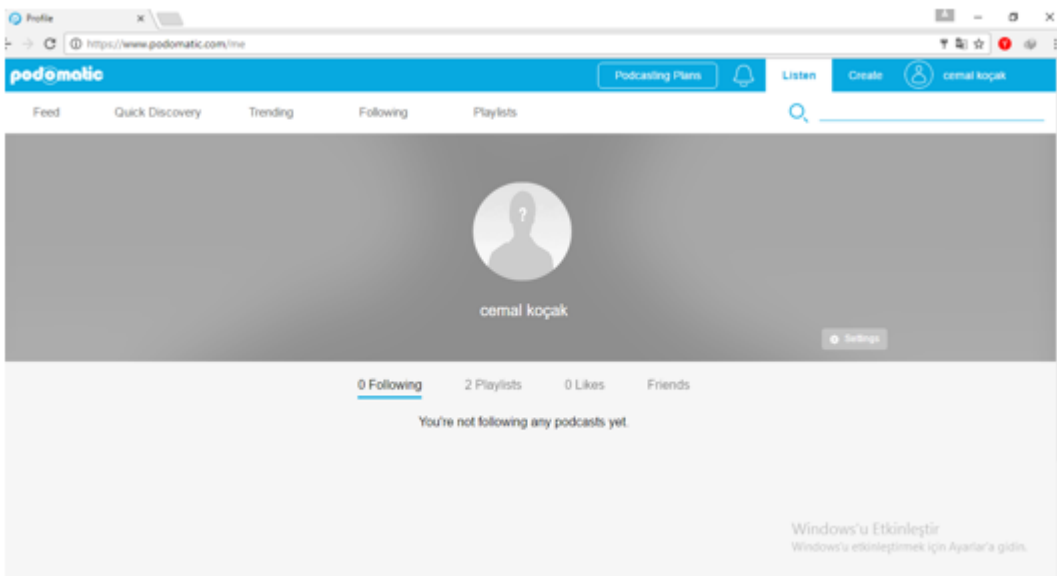


Figure 2.10. Creating a User Account for Podomatic

Source: <https://www.podomatic.com/me>

- Customize your podomatic page through choosing a webpage design and uploading photos
- Click on 'Create' button on the left side of the page to make your own podcast. In this step, users can upload the podcasts recorded beforehand (Media files include audio MP3, AAC etc.). After the media file is selected and uploaded, users can continue with the following steps:
 - Enter a title and description
 - Add an image
 - Choose a quality level
 - Publish

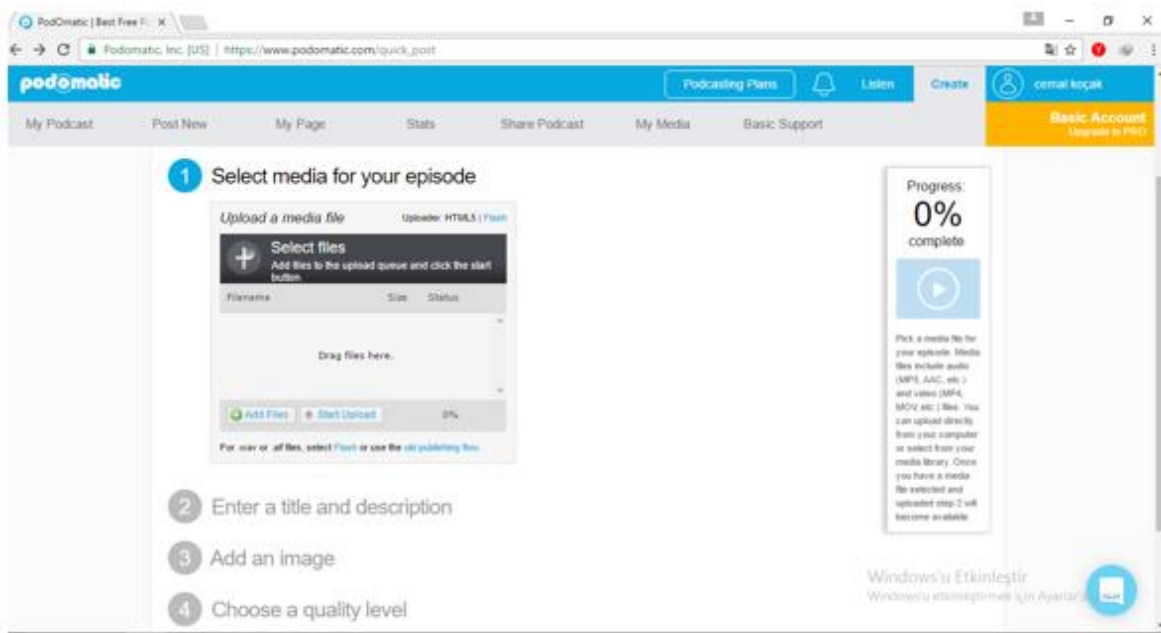


Figure 2.11. Creating a Podcast

Source: https://www.podomatic.com/quick_post

- After the podcast is posted to the podcast page and published, users can see them on a stable URL (uniform resource locator) presented in a list of podcasts which are published.

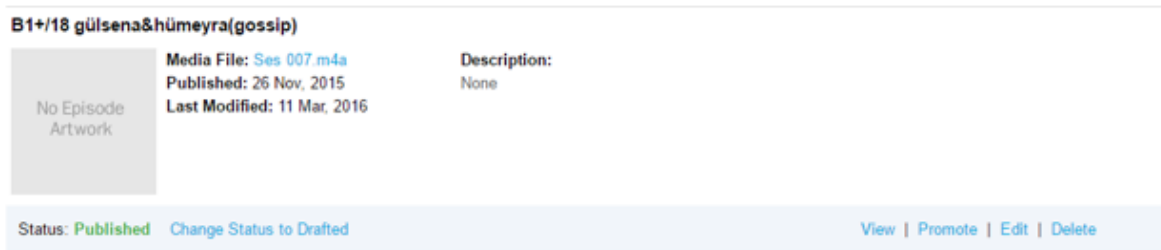


Figure 2.12. A Sample Podcast Recording and Post

Source: <http://www.podomatic.com/podcast>

2.2.2.2.3. Gabcast

Gabcast which is a kind of online tool can also be used for gab casting. Gabcast enables learners to use their mobile phones for podcasting in the classroom (El Harity, 2015). Audio files can be recorded and send to a user's 'Gabcast channel via cell phones for free (Royal & Von Koss, 2008). It is not difficult to use Gabcast to podcast (El Harity, 2015; Royal & Von Koss, 2008). For podcasting with gabcast students and teachers are required to

- "Create an account
- Dial the access number
- Log into their account
- Record their podcasts on their phones" (El Harity, 2015, p.304).

It is also possible to add podcasts to websites and blogs. In addition, users can download audio files as MP3 files.

Royal and Von Koss (2008) gives step by step instructions on how to use Gabcast to create podcasts:

- To set up a free Gabcast account go to the website <http://www.gabcast.com/> and click the 'Sign-up' button
- Complete the appropriate fields by giving necessary information about yourself
- Write down your e-mail address, create password and confirm it



Figure 2.13. Setting up a Gabcast Account (Royal & Von Koss, 2008, p.8)

- After clicking on 'Submit' button, you will get a confirmation mail which contains a link to activate your account
- Once your account is activated, login in to Gabcast using your email and password.
- When you log in to Gabcast, first of all, create a new channel by filling the 'Channel Name' and 'Password'.



Figure 2.14. Creating a New Channel (Royal & Von Koss, 2008, p.10)

- To record and post your podcasts from your cell phone, create two passwords which are numeric. One of the passwords will be used individually and the other is for conference calls.
- Choose a category according to the topic of your channel
- Permit other users to make comments on your podcasts or prevent them from commenting on your episodes.

Overall, gabcast as an online tool allows teachers and students to create their own podcasts from their cell phones. In addition, with the use of Gabcast, teachers also benefit from the advantages of Mobile Learning through integrating mobile phones into educational settings.

2.2.2.3. Some Podcast Activities for Foreign Language Classes

Activity 1. Discovering a podcast to use for listening activities:

After users download iTunes, they can have access to a number of free downloadable podcasts. The podcast directory in iTunes store allows you to find and

subscribe to various podcast. Moreover, it is also possible to search for iTunes for a particular podcast such as education podcasts and language education podcasts which designed for different levels ranging from beginner to advanced and native speaker.

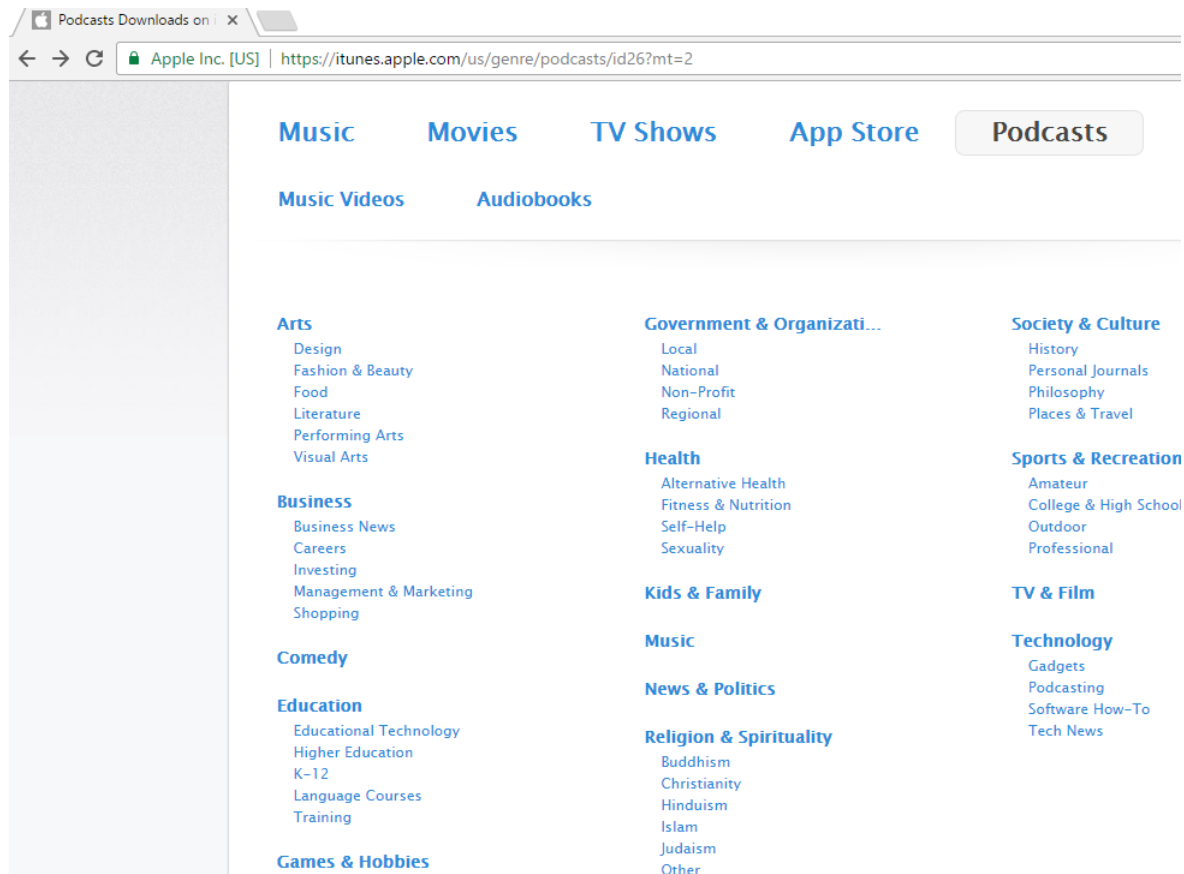


Figure 2.15. Finding a Podcast in the iTunes

Source: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/genre/podcasts/id26?mt=2>

iTunes also allows teachers to find podcast via language. When users click on 'Power Search', they can access to a variety of podcasts by language. For example, iTunes enables teachers to find and subscribe to 'German Poems' podcast through searching German language by means of 'Power Search' option. iTunes offers hundreds of thousands of podcasts on various topics to enhance language learners' speaking skills (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

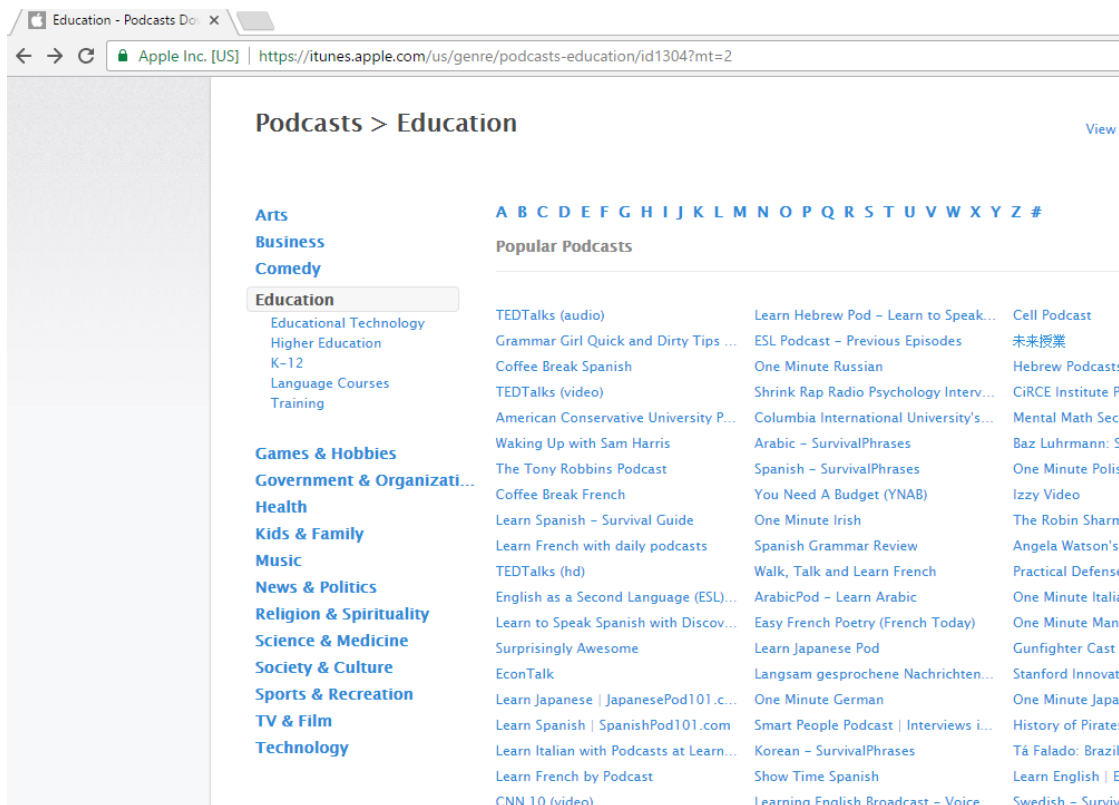


Figure 2.16. Education and Language Education Podcasts in the iTunes

Source: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/genre/podcasts-education/id1304?mt=2>

Activity 2. More Listening Skills Practice:

- ❖ **Nature of activity:** Learners are required to listen to a podcast given by the teacher.
- ❖ **Type of activity:** Learners are asked to listen to the podcast before the class in order to talk about the content of the podcast and express their ideas on the given topic in the language course the next day.
- ❖ **Proficiency levels:** all levels
- ❖ **Time:** 5-20 min.
- ❖ **Skills:** Listening comprehension
- ❖ **Additional material:** Computer or mp3-player (Royal & Von Koss, 2008, p.14).

In this podcast activity, a short podcast (nearly 5 min.) is found by the teacher to use as a listening material by considering the content of the language course. Learners are expected to listen to the information given in the podcast. The aim of the activity

is to determine students who are not good at listening and encourage them to listen to podcasts regularly to improve their listening skills in the target language.

This activity can be extended by assigning learners oral or written questions about the content of the podcast to answer at home. It is essential that learners be acquainted with recording audio files and have necessary technological equipment for podcasting (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

Activity 3. Creating learner podcasts through conducting an interview with a native speaker in the target language:

- ❖ **Type of activity:** This activity can be used as a podcast task or a project which helps to develop learners' intercultural competence.
- ❖ **Proficiency levels:** Intermediate to advanced
- ❖ **Time:** With the recording process 10-40 min.
- ❖ **Skills:** Listening, speaking and learners' intercultural competence

This podcast activity can be turned into a school project through studying learners in another school in the target language community. Each student is matched with another student of the target culture. Learners are required to inform their classmates about one aspect of the target culture. Therefore, they conduct an interview with native partners using interview questions they have previously prepared. After interviews are carried out with partners, learners create a podcast by using the interview questions and answers given by native speakers. Finally, each student make a short presentation in the class and present a particular aspect of the target culture. This activity can be extended by having a series of interviews with native speakers (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

Activity 4: Recording Presentations as Podcasts

- ❖ **Nature of activity:** Learners produce a podcast which includes a presentation made by them.
- ❖ **Type of activity:** This activity is a part of school project. Since this activity allows learners to communicate with a real audience, it stimulates their interest to a great extent.
- ❖ **Proficiency levels:** Intermediate to advanced

- ❖ **Time:** One week as a part of a project
- ❖ **Skills:** Speaking

In this activity, a podcast is created by a class in order to study with a partner university (the audience) in an exchange program. Learners are asked to develop a podcast which present relevant information about their school. Learners study in small groups and each group develop a podcast giving information on a specific feature of the school such as the size of the school, classes and the results of the interviews conducted with teachers, etc. It is also possible to extend this podcast activity. The learners of the partner school (the audience) can develop a podcast containing more questions about the school and the answers to the questions can be given by the class (Royal & Von Koss, 2008).

2.3. Assessing the Pedagogy of Using Podcasts in Foreign Language Instruction

With the effect of gradual developments in technology, the field of education has been reshaped. Thus, it is essential that both teachers and students catch up with the recent developments in technology and take new responsibilities on this technology based learning process. The use of technological tools like iPods, laptops, tablets, smartboards and smartphones has strongly supported instructional process in all fields of education and especially in English Language Teaching. Furthermore, the emergence of Web 2.0 tools and applications has greatly facilitated teaching and learning English (Yaman, 2016). Bonk (2009) mentions some starters for technology-based instruction to enhance learning:

- Web Searching in the World of e-Books
- E-Learning and Blended Learning
- Availability of Open Source and Free Software
- Leveraged Resources and OpenCourseWare
- Learning Object Repositories and Portals
- Learner Participation in Open Information Communities
- Electronic Collaboration
- Alternate Reality Learning

- Real-Time Mobility and Portability
- Networks of Personalized Learning (p.51)

It is obvious that in the 21st century, technology and education are inseparably linked. Nevertheless, it is difficult to integrate technology into the field of education. There is a sharp digital divide between generations. In this sense, to specify this classification Prensky (2001) introduced the terms “*digital immigrant*” and “*digital native*”. People who are born in digital age such as Generation X and younger are called as ‘*digital native*’. They are also named as “*iGeneration*” and said to have been born with “digital DNA”. On the other hand, the term “*digital immigrant*” is used for people who were born before around 1964. This group was brought up in a world which lacks computers. As a result, it is impossible for digital immigrants to cope with technology as naturally as digital natives that are used to living in culture of the web and speaking computer language (Zur & Zur, 2016).

According to Zur and Zur (2016), “digital immigrants” are divided into three main groups: “Avoiders, reluctant adopters and enthusiastic adopters”. Avoiders prefer to live without technology or with minimum level of technology. They do not use cell phones and social networking sites such as “Facebook” and “Twitter”. They even do not have an email account. The most obvious characteristic of this group is that they believe that technology and its applications do not directly benefit them.

Enthusiastic adopters are not eager to integrate digital technology into their lives and cautious about using technological tools. They are aware of the fact that technology is an indispensable part of today’s world and so they have to take part in the technology-driven change at the heart of modern society. They sometimes use Google. They would rather not create a Facebook account. In addition, they do not check their emails regularly. However, they may rarely use Internet banking. Although they have a simple cell phone, they do not prefer to text (Zur and Zur, 2016).

Enthusiastic adopters are interested in technology and have a capacity to deal with it. Therefore, they make an effort to catch up with digital natives and use the technology effectively. This group can consist of businesspeople and high-tech programmers who try to be assimilated into Cyber culture or computer culture. They want to benefit from technology. For example, Bill Gates variety has enough skills

and abilities to use technology though they belong to the group of digital immigrants. Enthusiastic adapters pay attention to technological improvements and are enthusiastic about innovative technological tools. Moreover, they use social networking sites and Skype effectively. The members of this group also text. In addition, the ones working in a company may have their own websites and create a blogs (Zur and Zur, 2016).

Digital Natives are also divided into three groups according to their perceptions of using digital technologies: avoiders, minimalists, and enthusiastic participants. It is surprising that some young people who were born in digital era are not willing to use digital technologies. The members of this group have an older phone and do not use text messaging or mobile applications. In addition, they are not fond of using Twitter or Facebook (Zur and Zur, 2016).

Minimalists think that technology is an inseparable part of today's modern world and they try to survive in the society with minimal use of technology. They benefit from technology only if they notice that it is absolutely essential. They search Google to find information when it is obligatory for them and shop online when it is not possible for them to walk round the local shops. Although they have a Facebook account, they occasionally use it. They would rather get someone to ask for directions rather than check the address on Google maps. Even though they are not willing to use a GSP or Skype, they use them if they have to take advantage of them (Zur and Zur, 2016).

Enthusiastic participants constitute a vast majority of the digital natives. They like technology and spent most of their time on the Internet by checking their Facebook accounts, tweeting, surfing, and watching some videos. They use Google for anything they need like learning an address, the correct spelling a word or translating foreign languages. They use iPod or smartphones in order to connect to the Internet. They also prefer to communicate through text messages and online methods instead of having communication with people via phones (Zur and Zur, 2016). The fundamental differences between digital natives and digital immigrants was originally grounded in Rosen's (2010) and Prensky's (2001) studies and adapted from the list that was presented by Zur and Zur (2016). Zur and Zur (2016) emphasize the importance of being aware of this obvious difference by saying:

“The native/immigrant distinction is important, as it can help explain tension between parents and children, educators and students, and business management and younger workers. Often, in these situations the different styles, values, and habits of the different groups create misunderstandings, misperceptions, conflict, disharmony and communication breakdowns” (p.1).

To comprehend basic differences between Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants enables each group to understand each other better and considerably improve communication between them. In addition, it has a magical effect on education by enhancing mutual understanding and effective learning (Zur and Zur, 2016). In the present day, students who were born in and after 1990's are considered to be Digital Natives and the older generations are regarded as Digital Immigrants. It is obvious that today in educational institutions, a vast majority of learners are Digital Natives; therefore, their interests, needs, and expectations should be taken into consideration (Yaman, 2016). Using podcasting and especially learner podcasts in foreign language education as an innovative instructional tool is important in the context of fulfilling Digital Native's increasing expectations.

Podcasts can be integrated into language learning in two fundamental ways: using existing podcast resources or developing podcasts. Previous research in this field concentrated on techniques for producing and delivering podcasts (Diem, 2005; McCarty, 2005; Meng, 2005; Bankhofer, 2005; Stanley, 2006) rather than the assessment of podcasts resources available as instructional tools for language learning in terms of SLA theories. Rosell-Aguilar (2007) states that podcasts offer various teaching materials and a significant input for authentic language which are based on different language learning approaches ranging from behaviorists to cognitive constructivists together with “communicative approaches, situated learning and lifelong learning”.

Language learning has been determined as one of the fields that is expected to use podcasting technologies (Kukulaska-Hulme, 2006). With regard to potential uses of podcasts, *the podcast resources available* can be divided into two categories: Podcasts in which native speakers of the target language present the content and podcasts which provides teaching content or language courses planned particularly for language learners. The authentic podcasts in the first group like radio programs and news feeds are generally used by native speakers. They are presented in the webpages of main radio or television broadcasters. It is also possible to access to these podcasts through looking for related themes such as news and football. For

instance iTunes enables its users to search with language of the podcast (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

The second group includes two different kinds of resources: the resources which offer “whole stand-alone courses” that try to function as “virtual classrooms” and the resources that allocate supporting materials for teaching activities. These supporting materials include either those produced for a particular audience (the materials designed by institutions or teachers for their own students) or those developed for “independent learners” who do not register for a specific course. The latter are distributed as a “public broadcast” (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

Teaching materials for an established audience are designed by instructors to address their own students’ needs and to widen the course syllabus. The first institutions that integrate portable media devices into learning are Osaka Jokaquin College in Japan and Duke University in Nort Caroline (US). These institutions supplied iPods to their students in order to enable them to benefit from materials specially made for them. At Duke University, for Spanish instruction, various custom-made materials including “audio flashcards”, pronunciation samples, and audio recordings of texts, oral quizzes, songs and oral feedback were prepared by the teacher. Moreover, students were required to do “audio diary” task each week that contains students’ recordings made on the assigned topics (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

After the successful attempt of Duke University to implement iPods to learning process effectively, other institutions have started to use podcasts for their students. Berkeley University in the US, Stanford University and Michigan School of Dentristry benefit from iTunes U, which is a content management server similar to iTunes. It creates content tailored to the students’ needs. In addition, in these universities, students take part in podcasting projects. In these projects, students are asked to design content through studying individually, in pairs or with their instructors. After that, the content developed by the students uploaded to a podcast directory (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). This kind of practical implementation of podcasts not only bring teachers and students considerable advantages for language learning, but also the production process can be encouraging and stimulating (Stanley,2006).

The taxonomy of usage of podcasts for language learning is presented by Rosell-Aguilar (2007):



Figure 2.17. Taxonomy of Uses of Podcasting for Language Learning (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007)

Although podcasting has been incorporated into language learning as a new instructional tool, there is not an extensive literature on the subject (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). The next section will give information about what is mentioned on the use of podcasting for language learning. Furthermore, it will focus on advantages and challenges of using podcasts both for learning on the whole and specifically for language learning in consideration of second language acquisition (SLA) and theories of CALL.

2.3.1. Podcasts and Theories of Learning

Rosell-Aguilar (2007) underlines several learning theories that reinforce the integration of podcasts into language learning:

- “Constructivism
- The use of authentic materials for language learning
- Informal and lifelong learning
- Theories on the use of learning objects for the provision of learning materials
- Mobile learning
- Practices of chunking and just in time teaching” (p.7).

Rosell-Aguilar (2007) states that podcasting is in harmony with constructivist perspective of learning. Constructivism appeared in the last part of the twentieth century as a predominant theory. Constructivists, like some cognitive psychologists, claimed that humans create their own styles of reality and so various opposing means of understanding and explaining are equivalently reasonable and acceptable (Brown,2000). Constructivism is described by Spivey (1997) as:

“An emphasis on active processes of construction (of meaning), attention to texts as a means of gaining insights into those processes, and an interest in the nature of knowledge and its variations, including the nature of knowledge associated with membership in a particular group” (p.23-24).

Since each individual’s construction of reality were dramatically highlighted by constructivist perspective, it can be said to slightly exceed rationalist/innanist and cognitive psychological perspective. Piaget and Vygotsky are generally called as “constructivists” (Nyikos and Hashimoto, 1997). However, they have different views on the role of social context in learning process. Piaget (1972) emphasized the significance of cognitive development on an individual base as a comparatively private act. For Piaget (1972), biological processes of development and genetic timetable were important factors and social interaction just served to activate improvement at the right time. In contrast, Vygotsky’s view differs from Piaget’s in that “social interaction” was fundamental to “cognitive development”. He was considered as to be a “social constructivist”. In addition, the concept of predetermined stages was not accepted by him (Vygotsk, 1978). As a result of his observations of interactions not only among children but also between children and adults, he assumed that language is acquired through social interaction. He claims that it is possible for children to achieve a remarkable progress towards a significant level of performance and knowledge with the effect of a supportive interactive environment. This metaphorical place is called as “ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT (ZPD)” which enables learners to co-construct knowledge with the help of interlocutor (Vygotsk, 1978).

With regard to constructivist learning, this perspective supports “learning in context” (Duffy and Jonassen, 1991, p.8). Moreover, effective learning can just be gained by means of “meaningful activity” and learning is a “life-long process” that stems from acting in situations (Brown, 1989, p.33). It is essential that learners be autonomous

and self-aware (Can, 2009). In this sense, in constructivist learning the following conditions should be provided (in Driscoll, 2000, p. 382-3 and elsewhere):

- 1." *Embedded learning in complex, realistic and relevant environments (Duffy & Jonassen, 1991; Cunningham, 1991; Honebein, 1996)*".
2. *Provide for social negotiation (cooperative and socio-moral atmosphere) as an integral part of learning (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1966; De Vries, 2002).*
3. *Support multiple perspectives and the use of multiple modes of representation (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996; Honebein, 1996).*
4. *Encourage ownership in learning (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996; Honebein, 1996).*
5. *Provide adequate time for learners' investigation and in-depth engagement (De Vries, 2002).*
6. *Nurture self awareness of the knowledge construction process (Jonassen, 2003; Duffy and Cunningham, 1996).*

These constructivist principles clearly indicate that the use of technologies and technology-based educational tools in learning process help to provide several "constructivist conditions for learning" (Driscoll, 2000; Duffy and Jonassen, 1992; Schank, 1994; Lebow, 1993; Can, 2006). As regards the principles of constructivism in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), Reinfried (2000) mentions that "constructivist language learning" should be grounded in action-orientedness. It should also be based on collaborative learning and creative classroom activities. In addition, it should enable learners to learn through carrying out projects and teaching others. Constructivist perspective in foreign language learning supports student-centered instruction which lead to learner autonomy and individualization of learning. It is essential that learners build a growing awareness of learning, language and intercultural skills. Finally, having a holistic approach to teaching is an indispensable feature of constructivist foreign language classes that rely on content-orientedness, complex, and authentic learning environment.

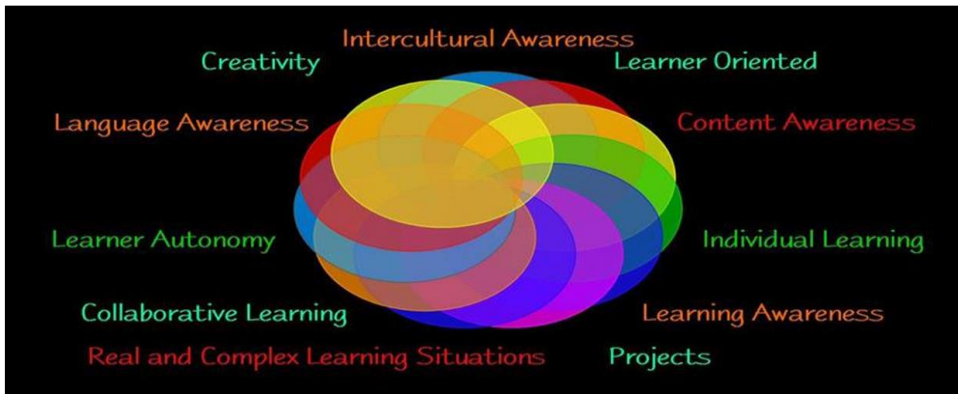


Figure 2.18. Principles of Constructivism in Foreign Language Teaching (Aljohani, 2017, p.104)

Considering the constructivist principles in foreign language learning and teaching it is obvious that constructivist perspective supports integrating technology-based educational tools and online applications into foreign language instruction (Can, 2009). Furthermore, another important point that should be emphasized is that the use of educational technologies and media in language teaching has been strongly encouraged by “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” (CEFR). The Education Committee of European Union favor a process-oriented approach to language teaching which focuses on developing language learners’ linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence together with the mastery of language skills. CEFR adopts an action-oriented approach which gives considerable support to learner-centeredness, developing learner autonomy, both cognitive and social learning and the use of technology-based instructional tools (CEFR, 2001). It is clearly seen that these notions are parallel with the principles of constructivist learning (Can, 2009).

Podcasting is compatible with constructivist learning perspective which enable individuals to construct knowledge using observation, examination, processing and analysis (Cooper, 1993). One of the points that may generate discussions about podcasting is that podcasts as educational materials do not provide learners with a “social context” essential for learning to occur and offer opportunities for “interaction”. Thus, it is believed that podcast materials fail to implement one of the key principles of constructivism (Dalgarno, 2001). On the other hand, Ellis (1999) claims that although interaction assists learning, it is not essential and it is also possible for learners to learn in non-interactive input. In this respect, Ellis’ view

supports the integration of podcasting into learning process. Moreover, this criticism against podcasting and its relevance to constructivism only refers to podcasts that do not offer additional technical features like blogs. Podcasters generally offer opportunities for learners to use podcast materials via “a blog” (that is also linked to from aggregators like iTunes); therefore, with the assistance of “Web 2.0 affordances”, “social environments” in which “interaction” arises can be established (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

With respect to the use of authentic materials for language learning, podcasts is a rich source of authentic materials. Podcasts also give information about various aspects of the society in which the target language is used, so learners are informed about different fields in the target community like politics, history, and culture. In addition, authentic materials presented in podcasts draw students’ attention to the use of grammatical structures and vocabulary in the target language. In this way, authentic materials provide detailed information on the use of language (Ryan, 1997). In addition, the materials make learners become involved in a variety of communication situations in the target society (Little, 1997). Authentic materials not only combine language learning with language use, but also improve learners’ self-confidence as they realize that it is possible for them to learn without completely understanding the input (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

Informal and lifelong learning theories emphasize that learning can occur on purpose or by chance, which is determined by what learners want and plan to do and it takes place throughout life. This perspective in learning that “takes it outside the classroom and, by default, embeds learning in everyday life” (Naismith et al, 2005,p.5) is suitable for podcasting. Podcasts bring about both intentional and accidental learning. With regard to learning intentionally through podcasts, learners can purposely try to find podcasts to use as educational materials or they can unintentionally encounter the content rather than design. It is seen that the learning process via podcasts can happen not only intentionally but also accidentally and since podcasting provides learners with opportunities to study out of the class, it is possible for them to access to podcasts whenever they want and in any place (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

As regards using podcasts as an enormous resource for language instruction, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) states that podcasts provide learners with “learning objects”. According to David Wiley (2000), learning objects refer to “any digital resource that can be reused to support learning” (p.7). Learning objects are also described by the “Learning Object Metadata Working Group of the IEEE Learning Technology Standards Committee” (2001) as “any entity, digital or non-digital, which can be used, re-used or referenced during technology supported learning” (2002, Section 1.1, p.1). In this respect, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) emphasizes that considering Wiley’s notion of learning objects, podcast directories may be regarded as the following step towards having access to a source of learning objects which are adjusted to RSS feed (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

Podcasting and mobile learning have several characteristics in common. Kukulska-Hulme (2005) points out that mobile learning is “spontaneous, personal, informal, contextual, portable, ubiquitous (available everywhere) and pervasive (so integrated with daily activities that is hardly notices)” (p.2). According to Kukulska-Hulme (2005), mobile learning “takes place when the learner is not at a fixed, predetermined location, or when the learner takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies” (p.1). Nevertheless, portable media players weren’t regarded as a part of mobile learning tools for a long time. In 2005, a variety of technological tools such as laptops, tablet PC’s, game consoles and mobile phones were incorporated into the category of mobile learning devices except “portable media players” (Naismith et al., 2005). The main reason was that as existing instructional content was either limited or unavailable for these gadgets, they were considered not to be related to mobile learning. With the effect of the obtainability of the content via podcasting and their increasing popularity, portable media players are classified as mobile learning tools by the literature and it is stressed by the literature that mp3 players are commonly used compared to PDA’s (Personal Data Assistant) (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2006) and they are “particularly conducive to creative and social uses that had not been anticipated” (Kukulska-Hulme, 2006, p.304).

The use of podcasts in the field of foreign language learning is broadly consistent with mobile learning. For example, both in podcasting and mobile learning, to stimulate learning such factors as chunking knowledge and screen size are taken

into account for the design of the instruction (Ally, 2004). In addition, not only podcasting for language learning but also mobile learning distinguish didactic learning from discursive learning (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). "Didactic mobile learning" is defined as "learning from mobile educational material (...) in a way that responds to the potential and the limitations of mobile devices" (Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler, 2005, p.26). On the other hand, in "discursive mobile learning", the interaction among mobile learners is the key to success (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). In the same way, Felix (2003) made a clear distinction between presenting content and constructing "interactivity and connectivity" in order to adopt current best practices in online language education (Felix, 2003). According to Rosell-Aguilar (2007), with respect to podcasting, using available podcast resources refers to didactic learning /delivering content; however, podcasts offering opportunities for blog environments can support discursive learning / building interactivity though this kind of learning via podcasts is possible through using devices which enable users to get into such environments (laptops, PDA's and desk computers). In addition, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) emphasizes that learners should be motivated to create their own podcasts in the target language. This leads to learner production and give learners a chance to access their own performance. In this sense, creating learner podcasts, examined in this dissertation, encourages discursive learning as it creates interactivity among learners.

2.3.2. Potential Benefits and Challenges of Using Podcasts

The use of podcasts in the field of education as instructional materials has received much attention in recent years. However; there is still a need for further research on this subject (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). There is also some considerable controversy surrounding benefits, challenges and potential uses of podcasts for learning (Sloan, 2005, Meng, 2005, Clark & Walsh, 2006, Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005, Menzies, 2005, Thorne and Payne, 2005, Stanley, 2006, Scinicariello, 2006).

2.3.2.1. Potential Benefits of Podcasts for Language Learning

As stated before in the previous sections, podcasts enable learners to have access to authentic materials and they can be used as learning objects for independent learning. Some major benefits of podcasts for language instruction are as follows:

- “Portable”, “convenient” and user-friendly (Blaisdell, 2006, Clark & Walsh, 2004): When podcasts are downloaded, it is possible to listen to the files “anywhere”, as many times as you want, “at a time” that is most suitable for you. Technical facilities provided by podcasts such as pause, forward, or skip allow the user to control the pace effectively (Sloan, 2005). In addition, these functionalities increase learners’ independence by decreasing their reliance on physical materials and give learners who have different learning styles and specific needs growing support (Menzies, 2005). Moreover, learners do not have to use only portable media players to benefit from podcasts. It is also possible to play podcasts on a computer (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).
- “Attractive” (Stanley, 2006): “in terms of design, marketing and consumer appeal, [*iPods*] are hard to beat” (Clark & Walsh, 2004, p.11).” Portable media players” appear to be gaining in popularity, so there is a great demand for them and they are commonly used. In addition, learners can access to podcasts in a music store. These factors may raise the use of podcasts and learners may feel less like studying during listening activities done via podcasts (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).
- Motivating: the new format is expected to take learners’ attention as it might be motivating and assist to get students to engage with materials which might otherwise not be used by learners (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).
- Easy access: Learners can download content management software like *Juice* or *iTunes* “free of charge” and “navigation” is not complicated (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).
- Value for money: Learning materials can be downloaded for free, and materials can be produced “for a fraction of the cost of producing traditional materials and in hours” instead of years compared to conventional materials (Moody, 2006 as cited in Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).
- Publicity: Individuals and institutions which produce public podcasts gain visibility and those institutions are provided with free publicity and a good reputation by institution-wide initiatives since they take advantage of present - day technologies (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

- Podcasting enables lecturers who integrate podcasting into the teaching programme of an institution for their students as additional resources to concentrate on interaction by transferring preparatory work beyond times and locations (Blaisdell, 2006) and combine in-class materials and activities with ones outside the class (Thorne and Payne, 2005).

2.3.2.2. Challenges of Podcasting for Language Learning

With respect to challenges of integrating podcasts into language learning, it is believed that teachers have got an increased workload when they create the content for podcasts (Blaisdell, 2006; Sloan, 2005 and Menzies, 2005). Menzies (2005) emphasizes that it can be difficult to benefit from podcasting for students and teachers that are not good at using technology. Menzie (2005) also states that users are not allowed to search files within podcasts; therefore, they may be heavily overloaded with too much information. However, today it is possible to look for texts in podcasts through sites like Podzinger and gain access to transcripts over podcasters which deliver them (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). According to Blaisdell (2006), another challenge of using podcasting is that it alters the relationship between students and teachers. Blaistell emphasizes this point by saying that “If the lecture is going to be available for downloading, why bother coming to class?”(no page number).

Rosell-Aguilar (2007) mentions that the content of podcasts has been commonly distributed by audio when they are used for learning and this may be the greatest problem podcasting brings. Although this type of aural-only approach is adapted by a vast majority of podcast providers, it is somewhat restrictive and occasionally irritating, and besides, it seems that visual learners or sufferers of dyslexia are not taken into account as the context is delivered generally through audio for podcasting.

As regards the use of podcasts in language learning as instructional materials, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) highlights that two points should be taken into consideration: design and pedagogy. In the design of podcasts, the content can contain not only audio but also video images, music and supplementary materials. The pedagogy of podcasting, as mentioned before, applies to some of SLA learning theories and podcasting has a capacity to support learning process. In spite of its potential for

improving teaching and learning, it seems that most of the existing designs and materials prepared for podcasting is generally based on out-of-date learning theories like behavioristic language learning which adopts a teacher-centered approach, use materials including long grammar explanations, and consider knowledge to be gained through a “listen and repeat” method. In addition, podcasting do not motive learners to interact with each other; therefore, it seems to be parallel with “input hypothesis” rather than an “interactionist” view of SLA. Much of the material of podcasting is not clearly arranged within the directories and podcasting allows users to check the level and content of the materials just after they are downloaded. In general, podcast materials lack of statements of objectives, suggestions for syllabi and various uses of materials. Moreover, in order to address users, English is commonly used not considering their language level. In addition, cultural stereotypes are reinforced through some materials (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

On the other hand, all of these challenges mentioned above do not indicate that podcasts do not have great potential as innovative educational materials for foreign language instruction. We also have podcasts providers who are creating “pedagogically sound materials”; however, it is essential to examine how the materials are created. For instance, “iTunes” and “other directories” enable users to try various sources and decide on the materials which meet their needs and are entirely appropriate for their style. In this respect, in general, the podcast materials used will not be expected to be the only source of knowledge. Instead, they will constitute a piece of a “pick and mix “of resources. The existing podcasts materials can help to provide support to students who have different learning styles. Furthermore, podcasts allow students have access to useful and effective activities such as “listening to grammar explanations, drilling grammar points, repeating useful expressions and vocabulary, and practicing listening and pronunciation, as well as learning about the cultures of the target language” (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007, p.485-486). In this sense, in the following part, some information on the potential uses of podcasts will be given.

2.3.2.3. Potential Uses of Podcasts for Learning

The potential use of podcasting for learning is explained by some researchers. Sloan (2005) provides a list of possible uses of podcasts in the instructional process:

- *For distance learning*
- *To facilitate self-paced learning*
- *For remediation of slower learners*
- *To allow faculty to offer advanced and or highly motivated learners extra content*
- *For helping students with reading and/or other learning disabilities*
- *To provide the ability for educators to feature guest speakers from remote locations*
- *To allow guest speakers the ability to present once too many sections and classes*
- *To offer a richer learning environment (slide 12)*

Kaplan-Leiserson (2005) also points out the ways through which podcasts can support the learning process as technology-based instructional tools (no page number):

- *Assist auditory learners*
- *Provide another channel for material review*
- *Assist non-native speakers (who can listen many times, stop, rewind...)*
- *Provide feedback to learners*
- *Enable instructors to review training or lectures*
- *Replace full classroom or online sessions when content simply requires delivery*
- *Provide supplementary content or be part of a blended solution*

The lists given above refer to the advantages of using podcasts for learning in general, not particularly for language learning. However, these points mentioned about the benefits of podcasting for learning is convenient with the studies conducted in the field of languages and music in which the audio has an important role in the learning process (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

2.4. A Review of Recent Studies on the Use of Podcasts in Language Learning

Recently, there has been growing interest in podcasting that is a new technology-based instructional tool helping teachers to present instructional content and support learning out of the class. Research studies conducted on podcast applications in language learning have revealed that podcasting as a novel educational tool has a potential for language learning and it has been reported that learners' language skills, particularly listening and speaking skills, can be improved via podcasts (Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011; O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007). In this respect, Hasan and Hoon (2013) examined twenty journal articles to find out the effects of podcasts on ESL learners' language skills and their perceptions towards podcasts. The results of the review of related studies have indicated that in addition to helping learners to

enormously enhance their listening and speaking skills, podcasts enable learners to develop other language skills and such language areas as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation (Hasan and Hoon, 2013). Among twenty research studies reviewed by Hasan and Hoon (2013), four studies which were “experimental or quasi-experimental” investigated the influence of podcasts upon learners’ different language skills. The other sixteen studies which were descriptive examined learners’ attitudes and perceptions towards the use of podcasts for second language learning. According to the content analysis of chosen articles, the study was based on two main themes and tried to reveal how the use of podcasts affected SLA learners’ language skills and what their perceptions of using podcasts to develop their language learning were. The themes that were identified by the study are shown in Table 2.2:

Table 2.2: List of Podcast Research Themes on the Reviewed Literature

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>
1. Effects of podcasts on learners’ language skills Effective Outcomes:	Pronunciation, phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, listening comprehension
2. Learners’ perceptions towards podcasts	Attitudes, opinions, motivations, learning styles and strategies, barriers and institutional aspects.

Source: Hasan, M. & Hoon, T. B. (2013). Podcast applications in language learning: a review of recent studies. *English Language Teaching*, 6(2), 128-135.

2.4.1. Findings on the Effects of Podcasts on Learners’ Language Skills

Podcasts not only challenge conventional teaching in language learning but also help language teachers make learning easier. In traditional classrooms, much significance is not attached to listening activities (Lee & Chan, 2007). In order to improve learners’ level of proficiency in English, podcasts can be integrated into language instruction as supplementary materials together with course materials (Islanto, 2011; Lee & Chan, 2007). The incorporation of mobile technology into ESL instruction has gained popularity in various secondary and higher secondary institutions (Abdous, 2009). Abdous (2009) conducted a study which assessed the advantages of integrating podcasts into the curriculum and using them as “supplemental / review tool”. The findings revealed that podcasts could bring real benefits for learners when they are used more than basically as a review tool.

An independent listening pilot course which was based completely on the use of podcasts was developed by Hawke (2010). The podcasts used in the study were freely available podcasts on the Internet. The aim of the course was to enable graduate science students to enhance their listening skills. The materials were distributed and used by the students outside the classroom via portable MP3 players. The effect of the podcasts on students' listening skills was evaluated through "pre and post-tests". The results of the tests indicated that students' post-test scores were notably higher than their pre-test scores. In addition, the study showed that when podcasts were used as supplementary tools, students were encouraged to listen to podcasts from not only "top-down" but also "bottom-up perspectives" (Hawke, 2010).

In a similar study carried out by Asraf, Noroozi and Salami (2011) with Iranian EFL sophomores the influence of podcasts on students' listening skills was examined. The data gathered from pre- and post-tests, students' reflective diaries and interviews revealed that students in the experimental group using podcasts for listening activities outdid the students in the control group with their performance and they had positive attitudes towards using podcasts for their listening activities. Therefore, the results indicated that podcasts could help ESL learners to develop their listening skills.

There are several podcast resources on the Web which facilitate language learning and allow learners to enhance their listening competence. A language learning website was examined by Kan (2011) to find out whether it could enable learners to develop their listening skills. Kan (2011) analyzed "The Centre for English Language Education (CELFE) listening website" according to some criteria. In the study, both Web resources and traditional materials were evaluated to get information about strengths and weaknesses of the website which was examined for the study. Kan (2011) emphasized that to improve learners' listening skills by addressing their needs, it was essential that designers of Web contents determine their purpose, design content and improve its exercise.

With respect to the effect of podcasts on developing students' listening skills, another study was the one conducted by Islanto (2011) through developing five podcast units as supplementary materials to enhance students' listening skills and

grammar knowledge. The research findings showed that the use of podcasts as a supplementary instructional tool developed not only students' listening skills and grammar knowledge, but also their cultural knowledge of the target community. Therefore, podcasting is an innovative technology which has a remarkable capacity for the development of learners' listening skills (Artyushina et. al., 2011). The Internet offers a wide range of authentic podcast materials that can be downloaded by learners and gives them practice in listening through these materials (Artyushina et. al., 2011).

Podcast applications in language learning can also help to improve learners' pronunciation. The study carried out by Ducate and Lomicka (2009) focused on the effects of using podcasts on developing learners' pronunciation. In this mix-method study, 22 participants attending intermediate French and German courses were required to produce eight podcasts throughout the semester. The results of the pre and post Pronunciation Attitude Inventory (PAI) surveys revealed that although participants' pronunciation did not develop considerably in terms of comprehensibility because of time limitation of the course, their positive attitudes towards language learning rose dramatically after they used the podcast materials. Knight (2010) also investigated the effectiveness of using podcasts for phonetics exercises. The study was conducted with 36 participants through making 11 graded phonetics podcasts which were uploaded to the website for learners. At the end of the study, participant thought that the exercises of podcasts were beneficial to developing their phonetics. They also liked the facility offered by podcasts for repeating the recordings several times and believed that their confidence in their test scores and transcription enhanced with the use of podcasts.

Podcasts were also seen to have a positive effect on vocabulary learning. Vocabulary learning has an important role in CALL programs and it is believed that the recent improvements in podcasting can help to facilitate vocabulary instruction. It is possible to integrate vocabulary learning into podcast programs (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). Podcasts can substantially improve learning vocabulary (Borgia, 2010). Putman and Kingsley (2009) also reported that podcasts as an instructional tool could enable learners to expand their vocabulary. They examined the effect of the podcast, a new information and communication technology, on development of science vocabulary in fifth graders. For the study, the podcasts were developed and

published weekly with a consisted format. The data were gathered through a pre-and pos-test, and a survey investigating participants' views on using podcasts to develop their vocabulary. The findings of the study indicated that podcasts greatly assisted the participant with the improvement of science vocabulary and the participants stated that podcasts encouraged them to learn science vocabulary.

2.4.2. Findings on the Attitudes and Perceptions towards the Use of Podcasts

One of the most important and supportive factors which has a remarkable effect on language learning is positive attitude (Mian, 1998). The use of podcasts help to motivate students outside the class, which is always not easy for teachers. Podcasts can generate not only intrinsic but also extrinsic motivation among learners (O-Bryan and Hegelheimer, 2007). Kavaliauskiena and Anusiene (2009) investigated learners' perceptions of using podcasts for online listening activities. The participants from Mykolas Romeris University in Lithuania responded a questionnaire about their opinions on the use of podcasts for listening activities and the data gathered from the questionnaire showed that a vast majority of participants (76%) had positive attitudes towards using podcasts to improve their listening skills.

Kim and King (2011) asserted that learners' and teachers' attitudes towards the use of podcasts as an educational tool changed according to their previous experiences of using different computer technologies. Kim and King (2011) conducted an "in-depth case study of three ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teacher candidates" and examined questions about their actions, attitudes, and perceptions toward using podcasts and blogs as instructional tools in a core assignment. This study provided information on how they incorporate these innovative educational technology media while carrying out a case study research for a particular English language learner (ELL) in "a real-life classroom context". Data were collected through "research field notes, interviews, observations, emails, dialogue, and a pre-term anonymous survey" for this qualitative study. Kim and King (2011) stated that their findings obviously indicated that the integration of podcasting into the classroom was interesting and effective.

In a similar study, Chan et. al., (2011) assessed two podcast projects which were developed to support classroom instruction for Chinese and Korean as a foreign

language at a university in Singapore. The study was conducted with 120 Chinese and 61 Korean language students and data were gathered through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in order to get information about their views on the standard and practicality of podcasts, and their attitudes towards podcast assisted instruction. The results of the study revealed that the difference between perceptions and attitudes of the two groups of students are statistically significant. The findings indicated that there were some reasons for these notable differences: “1) the podcasts’ objectives and students’ learning motivation; 2) a mismatch between podcast design and students’ expectations, needs and preferences; 3) teacher encouragement and student preparation; and 4) the experience of mobile learning” (Chan et. al., 2011, p.312). Although one group of students’ (K1 students) perceptions were significantly more positive than that of the other group of students (C1 students), the study has showed that both group of students had positive perceptions of the practicality and quality of course podcasts used in the study.

Lord (2008) investigated a collaborative pod-casting project which was carried out with an undergraduate Spanish phonetic class in order to evaluate students’ attitudes, pronunciation and techniques used by instructors to improve learners’ pronunciation. Students were required to study in small groups to develop and maintain their own podcast channel. They uploaded their recordings on the podcasts channel to receive feedback from their peers. Each recording was based on specific “aspects of Spanish pronunciation”, “using tongue twisters”, and personal thoughts about students’ own pronunciation. Students’ pronunciation abilities and attitudes were evaluated before and after the project. The results of the study revealed that the project was liked by most of the students and they appreciated the feedback obtained from their peers. In addition, not only students’ pronunciation abilities but also their attitudes were recorded to develop.

Li (2010) investigated Hong Kong secondary 6 ESL students’ perceptions of using podcasts for learning English. In the study, students were asked to listen to podcasts available on the podcasting websites offered by the researcher. The data were gathered through pre-and post-research interviews, a questionnaire and students’ journal entries. The findings indicated that all of the students taking part in the study thought that podcasts developed their language skills. Li (2010) also mentioned that

the participants in the study took pleasure in listening to podcasts and they were eager to use this innovative technology to enhance their language skills.

O'Bryan and Helgeimer (2007) states that podcasting, which is a new way of distributing audio and video files through the Web, has a potential as a technological tool which can enable teachers to transcend the limitations of their classrooms, and is growing in popularity in the field of education. Nevertheless, current use of podcasting in education does not go beyond the distribution of recorded lectures in a portable, online format. O'Bryan and Helgeimer (2007) claims that podcasting has a capacity which provides a rich source of input and instruction for students in the language classroom and allows to alter instruction. They described an organized effort to incorporate CALL activities through the use of podcasts into an academic English as a Second Language (ESL) course offered for listening strategies. Preliminary assessment of this ongoing project indicated that not only the teacher but also the students considered the podcasts to be a positive element of the course (O'Bryan and Helgeimer, 2007).

The research on podcasting also focused on the relationship between podcasting pedagogy and learning strategies. Aston-Hay and Brooks (2011) showed how action research bring about the design of a student learning strategy webpage that included peer podcasts and effective language learning strategies in higher education. The action research investigated learning strategies of using podcasts that were created by learners. In the study, the learners designed a webpage in the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) by using "Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS)" as a platform to deliver the website. The podcasts, student photos and story transcripts were uploaded the website. After the web page had been created, both teachers and students were examined through some questions about the content. The findings revealed that the podcasts increased awareness of learning strategies and put a new perspective on learning and several beneficial strategies. Students found the strategies to be very useful and produced various ideas on how to develop their English.

Edirisingha et. al., (2007) conducted a research that investigated the benefits of incorporating podcasts into "a first year undergraduate module on English Language and Communication at Kingston University". In the study, six podcasts were

produced to enhance student learning and study skills and to offer helpful advice about presentation skills and portfolio development. In order to assess students' learning experience via podcasts, personal interviews were carried out with students and they were administered an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the semester. The study showed the "teaching and learning context" and the way through which podcasts were used "as a part of the blended learning delivery". The results of the study indicated that podcasts were beneficial in reinforcing "students' preparation for assessed work", giving valuable "advice on portfolio and presentations". They also supplied students with information concerning "the assessed work" and provided help to the preparation for seminars and workshops.

It is obvious from the studies conducted on podcasts that podcasting is more useful and effective than traditional methods of teaching. The effectiveness of computer applications in educational contexts and the contribution of the use of podcasts for learning to learners' academic performance, level of motivation and learning have been confirmed by a number of studies on podcasts (Hasan & Hoon, 2013). Moreover, podcasts are regarded as an efficient instructional method for teaching some aspects like history and culture of the target society. In general, the findings point to learners' positive attitudes towards using podcasts and their growing interest in integrating podcast technology into their language learning processes. Learners' positive perceptions of podcasts stem from the opportunities provided by the use of podcasts as an instructional tool such as the chance of learning at their own time and listening to materials missed or difficult to understand many times. The research studies investigated the effects of podcasts on language skills and learners' attitudes and perceptions towards the use of podcasts for learning have indicated that podcasts have beneficial effects on the development of learners' various language skills, and they have positive attitudes towards using podcasts in foreign language instruction (Hasan & Hoon, 2013).

2.5. Developing Foreign Language Learners' Speaking Skills via the Use of Podcasts

Harmer (2007) gives three important reasons why students should be encouraged to speak in the classroom. First, speaking activities create "*rehearsal* opportunities" which refer to "chances to practice real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom" (Harmer, 2007, p.123). Secondly, speaking tasks that require students to use what

they know about the target language enable not only teachers but also students to get feedback on their speaking performance. Thus, they can assess their strengths and weaknesses in speaking. Finally, the more students are provided opportunities to *activate* the different components of language kept in their mind, the more automatically they use language elements. This leads to students to be autonomous language users who have the ability to use words and phrases fluently (Harmer, 2007).

It is essential that good speaking activities attract students' attention. Students greatly enjoy the speaking activities prepared by the teacher correctly and encouraging full participation of students. Thornbury (2005) suggests that in order to teach speaking, it is necessary to have 'talking classrooms' in which the speaking activation should be an indispensable element of the class. Therefore, students will enhance their speaking skills and have increasing confidence in speaking in the target language.

Harmer (2007) emphasizes that in order to speak fluently in English it is necessary that correct stress and intonation patterns be used and phonemes be pronounced properly by learners. Moreover, speakers of English using that language as a second language must speak in a variety of situations and genres using different conversational repair strategies. In this respect, EFL learners need to have these essential skills to be able to operate in the target language successfully.

Harmer (2007) states that teachers can use a range of speaking activities which allow students to practice 'speaking-as-a-skill' which refers to completing a given task through speaking (Thornbury, 2005). Harmer (2007) gives a list of speaking activities that can be helpful to get students to speak in the classroom:

- "Information - gap-activities
- Telling stories
- Favorite objects
- Meeting and greeting
- Surveys
- Famous people

- Students presentations
- Balloon debate
- Moral dilemmas” (p.129-131).

In addition to traditional instructional materials and activities, podcasting, which is a new technology-based instructional tool, has come into use in foreign language teaching. Podcasting serve to distribute instructional materials and promote learning out of the traditional classroom (Farangi et. al., 2016). Gromik (2008) suggests that the use of podcasts can offer students “access to resources which are authentic, free and otherwise not available” (p. 50) in non-English dominant contexts. The reasons why podcasting should be integrated into language learning classrooms have been uncovered by some researchers (Blaisdell, 2006; Chinnery, 2006; Clark & Walsh, 2004; Laing, Wootton & Irons, 2006, Manning, 2005; Meng, 2005, Sloan, 2005):

1. It is possible to access to podcasts anytime and anywhere. Podcasting enables learners to gain their time, conserve energy and save money through downloading and listening to the podcasts when they want.
2. Personalization is an available option given by podcasting which allow learners to complement their learning strategies and styles. Personalized learning is defined by McRae (2010) as evaluating and satisfying individual learners’ strengths which is based on their particular needs and learning styles.
3. Podcasting can bring pedagogical benefits when they are employed as complementary to ‘e- learning’.
4. Undoubtedly, one of the most significant pedagogical features that characterize podcasts is that it facilitates learning through listening. Rosell-Aguilar (2013) claims that listening to the podcasts can be helpful for learning as it provides comprehensible input via meaningful and engaging activities.
5. Learning through podcasts is easier, faster and more attractive for the learners.

Several researchers point out that podcasting can have a considerable influence on learners' listening and speaking skills (Pun, 2006; Stanley, 2006). As regards the effect of podcasting on learners' speaking skills, McQuillan (2006) suggested many tasks which focus on learners' oral production. These tasks include some speaking activities such as holding talk shows, having interviews with native speakers and using audio diaries. In these tasks learners are required to "record themselves and classmates for a classroom assignment and provide speech samples to the teacher for assessment" (p.16). Furthermore, Tavales and Skevoulis (2006) recommended that learners make a recording of native speakers or themselves and after that, they use these recordings as listening materials by paying attention to intonation, pronunciation or grammar use. In addition, Stanley (2006) underlines that it is possible for learners to develop their self-studying skills through producing and publishing materials for a real audience, which is an educational opportunity offered by podcasting. In spite of these potential benefits of using podcasts in language instruction, one of the major drawbacks to using podcasts for language teaching and learning is that there is still considerable ambiguity with regard to pedagogical design of podcasts used for language learning, particularly for developing speaking skills.

As it was emphasized in Farangi et.al.'s (2016) study conducted on podcasts applications for developing EFL learners' speaking skills, the number of research studies which directly examine the effects of the use of podcasts as instructional tools on EFL learners' speaking skills is very limited. Only a few studies have focused on investigating whether podcasting improves learners' English speaking skills or not (Fitria et al., 2015; Farangi et.al. 2016). In the study carried out by Farangi et.al. (2016), a way of integrating podcasts in to EFL classrooms was investigated. The study conducted with 60 upper-intermediate Iranian learners examined not only the effects of podcasts on EFL learners' level of speaking skills but also if there was a significant difference between the effects of podcasts created by learners and web-based podcasts on learners' speaking skills. The findings revealed that the use of podcasts in the language classrooms had a significant effect on the development of EFL learners' speaking skills. The results also indicated as it was hypothesized at the beginning of the study that the learners who created their own podcasts outperformed the ones who used the podcasts available on the Web.

In addition, the results suggested that podcasting that was integrated into a preplanned syllabus (textbook) possibly yields better results than podcasting that is used as a main instructional tool.

Fitria et al. (2015) investigated if the use of podcasts for language teaching and learning contributed to the twelfth grade students' English listening and speaking achievements. The study also assessed the feedback received from students about the use of podcasts to develop their English listening and speaking skills. The study was conducted with two groups of students who were classified as experimental group and control group. Only the students in the experimental group provided treatment via the use of podcasts as educational materials. "Pre- and post tests", which included listening and speaking tests, were given to both groups of students. In addition, in order to get information about participants' opinions about the use of podcasting to develop their listening and speaking skills, a questionnaire was administered to the students in the experimental group. The findings indicated that there were significant differences between the experimental and control groups in terms of their listening and speaking performance. Moreover, the results of the questionnaire showed that podcasts provided learners with interesting tasks and authentic materials that led to an increase in their motivation and improvement in their comprehension. The findings of the study pointed to the significant role of podcasts in English classrooms as an effective and new technology-based learning tool, especially for developing learners' speaking and listening achievements.

In a similar vein, Jain and Hashmi (2013) assessed the advantages of using podcasts in English Language Classrooms. Jain and Hashmi (2013) states that not only teachers but also students can create their own podcasts using some websites like podomatic. Podcast websites enable students to do various listening activities which will also help to improve their oral proficiency. Thus, it is necessary to encourage learners to produce their own podcasts (Jain & Hashmi, 2013). In addition, with respect to creating learner podcasts, Jain and Hashmi (2013) suggest that learners be provided short texts which will allow them to prepare and rehearse to create their own podcasts. They emphasize that practicing podcast texts, reviewing and recording them lead to acquire greater proficiency in their speech.

In their study, Jain and Hashmi (2013) examined a group of EFL college students' attitudes towards using podcasts to improve their listening and speaking skills. For this study, students listened to ELT podcasts and they also received training to create their own podcasts. Students searched through the podcasts sites given to them and uploaded a variety of podcasts on different topics (learning songs, discussion on topics, vocabulary items, jokes, etc.). Then, students were asked to do some following activities such as writing a report on podcasts they had listened to, keeping notes of phrasal verbs, idiomatic expression, tags and significant words that were not familiar to them. They were also required to use them in different situations. It was supposed that students would pay attention to correct pronunciation and natural accent provided by native speakers while they were listening to podcasts. After students finished their homework, they came together and shared their findings with their peers. The findings of the study suggested that integrating podcasts into English language classrooms as a new method helped students to enhance their both listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, this modern technology gave learners confidence in acquiring the correct pronunciation and accent of the target language. In addition, the results of the study pointed to learners' willingness to use podcasts for learning English.

To conclude, although the number of studies investigating the effects of podcasting on foreign language learners' speaking achievements is very limited, the findings have revealed that the use of podcasts in language classrooms can help learners to develop their speaking skills. (Facer et al., 2009; Fitria et al., 2015; Farangi et.al. 2016) and learners have positive attitudes towards using podcasts as an technology-based instructional tool to enhance their speaking skills (Fitria et al., 2015; Farangi et al., 2016 & Jain and Hashmi, 2013) Moreover, the research studies assessing the effects of creating learner podcasts have showed that language learners have positive perceptions of making learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills (Farangi et al.,2016 & Jain and Hashmi,2013).

2.6. Conclusion

The previous sections gave information about podcasts which have emerged as innovative technology-based educational materials and the use of podcasts in foreign language instruction, and provided an overview of related studies on the use

of podcasts for teaching and learning foreign languages. It is clear that the potential benefits of integrating podcasts into language classrooms surpass its challenges (Yaman, 2016). However, as Rosell-Augilar (2007) emphasizes in order to use podcasts for language learning two points should be taken into account: design and pedagogy. Rosell-Augilar (2007) states that “the effectiveness of podcast materials depends on purpose” (p.487). Podcasting offers many opportunities to enhance language learning as a supporting instructional tool. In addition, creating podcasts can be useful for learners as a “motivating” and an “engaging” task. In this respect, podcasting can be incorporated into EFL classrooms as an alternative supporting instructional tool to help learners to enhance their language skills. Thus, this study assessed the use of podcasts created by EFL learners as a new technology-based instructional tool to improve their speaking skills.

3. METHODOLOGY

This dissertation presents research that investigates the EFL students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. The participants are EFL students in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University. This research explores perceived benefits of using learner podcasts for improving EFL students' speaking skills from the perspective of students. Moreover, it examines whether there are any significant differences among participants' views with respect to their demographic features in creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. This study also aimed to provide information about to what extent creating and using learner podcasts helps EFL students to develop their speaking skills.

3.1. Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at the Preparatory school at Hacettepe University. The aim of the Preparatory School is to enhance students' language skills and enable them to follow their undergraduate studies in their own department where the medium of instruction is English. Students attend English courses for 25 hours per week in order to reach the required level. According to the results of proficiency exam students take at the beginning of the each academic year, they are placed in classes considering their English proficiency level (elementary, intermediate and upper-intermediate).

The EFL students in the preparatory school at Hacettepe University attend English courses for a year to enhance their language skills and to get prepared for their subsequent four year education. The students attend various English courses in prep school (listening, speaking, reading, writing, main course) in order to be proficient enough in English to enroll in their departments. These students have the instruction in their own department in English (30%, 50% or 100%). Therefore; they need English not only for operating successfully in the target language but also for learning English for a Specific Purpose (ESP) or for Academic Purposes (EAP). The primary mission of Hacettepe University, School of Foreign Languages, is to give an excellent all-round education and create stimulating learning environments which

will help its students to acquire the language skills they will need to communicate effectively not only in their academic society but also in the international arena and in different fields of life in which it is necessary to know a foreign language.

The participants in this study are 90 students (64 female and 26 male) at the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University. The participants, aged between 17 and 20, have been learning English for 7-13 years. The students chosen for this study are at B1 level. They will continue their education in various departments ranging from Business Administration to Medical Sciences in their subsequent four-year education. The distribution of the participants' departments (18 different departments) is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: The Distribution of Participants According to Their Departments

<i>The Name of the Department</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Geomatics Engineering	1	1.1 %
Civil Engineering	1	1.1 %
Physics Engineering	2	2.2 %
Environmental Engineering	1	1.1.%
Mining Engineering	2	2.2 %
Computer Engineering	2	2.2 %
Nuclear Engineering	3	3.3 %
Automotive Engineering	3	3.3 %
Chemical Engineering	7	7.7.%
Electrical & Electronic Engineering	10	11 %
Food Engineering	10	11 %
Medical Sciences	14	15 %
Nursing	17	18 %
Information Management	2	2.2 %
Public Finance	3	3.3 %
Political Science and Public Administration	3	3.3 %
Business Administration	4	4.4 %
International Relations	5	5.5 %

Note: Number of participants =90

F: Frequency, P: Percentage

The main reason for choosing these students as participants for the study is that the students did not have any information about what a podcast is and how they can be used to develop their English language skills. In addition, they have not created learner podcasts before. This study helped them to get experience in producing learner podcasts. Students' viewpoints about podcast-based speaking tasks also provided information about how the learner podcasts might best be integrated in to the curriculum of speaking courses at Hacettepe University. It is obvious that students that have an advanced knowledge of the English language are much more likely to advance their careers. In this respect, it is absolutely necessary for these students to enhance their English speaking skills to become highly successful in their own professions; therefore, these 90 students are considered to need to possess more improved speaking skills.

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

The data for this research were collected via a questionnaire for students and semi-structured interviews that were conducted with students. In addition, a podcast page for the class podcast project was set up by “using a free podcast site ‘podOmatic’ (www.podomatic.com)”. Moreover, a pre-test and post-test were used to see whether creating and using learner podcasts help EFL learners to develop their speaking skills.

3.2.1. Student Questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared for students (shown in Appendix IV) to gather data for this research. The questionnaire was prepared to gather information about students' opinions on creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. It was prepared in Turkish in order to enable students to completely understand the questions and express themselves well. Before the preparation of the student questionnaire, the questionnaires used in some studies investigating students' perceptions of and attitudes towards using new instructional tools and especially podcasts in foreign language instruction were examined in order to get ideas for this questionnaire. Also, some questions were adapted according to the context in which the questionnaires would be used (Chan et.al., 2011; Li, 2010; Koçak, 2010). To get feedback about the questions in the questionnaire and to

ensure that the questionnaire was reliable, before the questionnaire was administered, questions were checked by five English instructors working in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University. After these processes, necessary changes were made in the questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire was piloted by 56 students studying in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University to assess its validity and reliability. According to the results gathered from the pilot study, the questionnaire was reviewed and a couple of minor changes were made as well. The questionnaire includes only one section which contains 13 questions eliciting responses on 5 points Likert scales.

3.2.2. Semi-Structured Interviews With Students

Interviews were conducted with a group of students from each class (totally 33 students) to be able to get in-depth responses and get detailed information about students' viewpoints on creating and using learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills. After the end of the study (after the implementations of the tasks), students were interviewed about their opinions on using learner podcasts. The interviews were conducted in Turkish in order to enable students to express themselves well. The interview questions were prepared by the researcher. In order to establish the validity of interview questions, they were checked for readability, clarity and comprehensiveness by five English instructors working in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University to ensure that the interview questions fully represent the domain of attitudes towards the use of learner podcasts. Then, the necessary changes were made for the wording of the questions. The students who were volunteer to be interviewed were chosen for the interviews.

During the piloting phase of this dissertation study, ten students were also interviewed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the questions that would be used in interviews during the main study. After the piloting study, it was seen that the interview questions consistently measure the participants' viewpoints on creating and using podcasts to develop their English speaking skills as the answers given to interview questions were consistent with each other. In addition, student interviews conducted as a part of the piloting study provided a framework in which students could express their own understandings in their own terms. Therefore, the same

interview questions were used for the main study (Interview questions for the students are shown in Appendix V).

3.2.3. A Pre-Test And Post-Test To Assess Students' Speaking Skills

Students' speaking performance was assessed via a pre-test and post-test. BTCE (The British Test Centre for English) exam was used to get data about to what extent creating and using learner podcasts contributes to developing EFL students 'speaking skills. BTCE exam was decided to be used to assess students' speaking skills for this study as it is an international standardized test, and so it has validity and reliability (BTCE exam pretest and posttest questions are shown in Appendix VI and Appendix VII). Both in pre-test and post-test, six instructors (including the researcher) who are working in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University tested the participants. Instructors' year of experience in teaching ranges from eight to ten years. Each student was assessed by a group of instructors (three instructors) in the speaking tests. The students were tested by the same teachers during the pre-test and post-test. The background information with regard to the instructors' education degree is presented in Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 and the distribution of participants according to year of experience are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.2: Academic Degrees of the Instructors

<i>Academic Degree</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
BA	1	16.6 %
MA	5	83.3 %
Ph. D.	-	-
Total	6	100%

Note: Number of participants =6

F: Frequency, P: Percentage

Table 3.3: Information About The Participants' Educational Background

<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Departments</i>
3	METU	English Language Teaching
1	Boğaziçi University	Translation and Interpreting
1	Hacettepe University	English Language Teaching
1	Hacettepe University	Linguistics

Note: Number of participants =6

Table 3.4: The Distribution of Participants According to Year of Experience

<i>Number of Years</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
8	3	50%
10	3	50%

Note: Number of participants =6

F: Frequency, P: Percentage

As can be seen in Table 5 and Table 6, most of the instructors taking part in the pretest and posttest speaking exams as interviewers (83.3%) have a MA degree. In addition, a vast majority of the participants are the graduates of department of English Language Teaching (66.6%). The other instructors, who are not the graduates of department of English Language Teaching, also received pedagogical formation training during their undergraduate education. In addition, as shown in Table 7, instructors' year of experience in teaching English is between eight and ten years.

The main reason for choosing these instructors for the study is that they have been teaching English as a foreign language for more than seven years. In addition, these instructors have been giving speaking courses in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University. Therefore, they have not only relevant but also previous experience of assessing EFL learners' speaking skills through speaking exams.

3.3. Procedures for Data Collection

In this research study, "a mixed methodological approach" merging "qualitative and quantitative methods" has been used as it is believed to increase the validity and reliability of results, decrease the weaknesses and problems resulting from mono methods and enable to add new dimensions to the studied phenomenon (Jick, 1979, Sechrest and Sidani, 1995, Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

With regard to the "types of mixed methods research designs", in this study, *the "Embedded Design"* was used. In "The Embedded Design", a mixed methods design, one data set occupies "a supportive, secondary role" in a study that is based mainly on the other data type (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al., 2003). The Embedded Design comprises the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data; however,

one of the data types has a complementary role in the whole design (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al., 2003) (as shown in Figure 3.1). An Embedded Design can use the quantitative and qualitative data to find answers for different research questions of the study (Hanson et al., 2005).

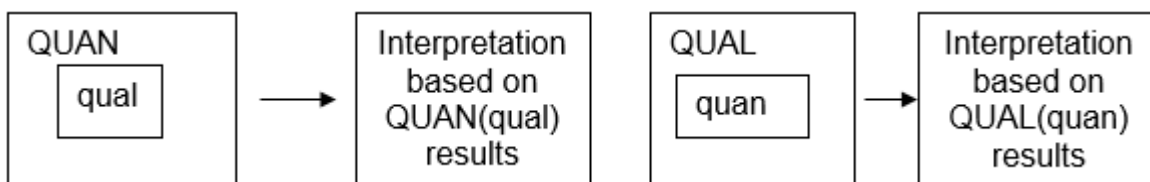


Figure 3.1. Embedded Design (Creswell, 2006, p.68)

This study included two phases: quantitative and qualitative. This study included the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, but the qualitative data performed a dominant role within the overall design to get reasonable answers to the research questions. In the design of this research, the researcher embedded a qualitative component (interviews conducted with participants) within a qualitative design. In the interpretation phase, the results gathered from both quantitative and qualitative data were integrated, compared, and interpreted. Thus, the qualitative results allowed the researcher to elaborate on the quantitative results and explore participants' views about the use of learner podcasts as an instructional tool to develop their English speaking skills in more depth.

In order to carry out the study, the researcher received the formal permission for data collection from the Hacettepe University Ethical Committee and then the administration of School of Foreign Language at Hacettepe University.

Before the study, the podcasts tasks were piloted with 56 EFL students studying in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University during 2014-2015 school year in the last quarter of the second semester to get information about the potential technical problems which may be encountered during the study. The students were at three different proficiency levels: B1, B1+ and B2. During the pilot study, after students completed podcast tasks, the questionnaire was administered by the students to assess its validity and reliability. The data gathered from the piloting study indicated that podcast scale (student questionnaire) has an acceptable internal consistency as Cronbach's alpha is 0.927, which indicates that this scale is reliable. In addition,

split half reliability indicates that Part 1=0.906 and Part 2=0.866. As the two values are close to each other, this scale is reliable. In addition ten students were interviewed to evaluate the validity of the questions that would be used in interviews during the study.

In the first week of the study (September 14, 2015), the teacher (the researcher) set up a class podcast page “using a free podcast site ‘podOmatic’ (www.podomatic.com)”. In the class, the students were informed about the study and shown the class podcast page for the project. During the study, after the students were introduced what a podcast was, how to create learner podcasts and make them available on the Internet, they created different podcasts and published them to the class podcast page. All of the podcast tasks were prepared by the researcher. During this process, the learner podcasts were created individually and in pairs. With regard to the podcasts which were created in pairs, after students created their podcasts, they were asked to listen to another podcast created by another pair, to record their comments as another podcast and send it to the class podcast page. In these podcasts, students were required to make comments on their friends’ opinions (not on their friends speaking performance in the podcasts). The length of the audio files in the podcasts were between 3 and 5 minutes. Some of the students’ podcasts were listened in the class and students discussed about these podcasts as a whole class. Students were given approximately a week to do each task and the podcasts were made by the students out of the class. Students were also required to use some speaking expressions, which were given to them on a worksheet, while they were producing their own podcasts on the given topics (shown in Appendix VIII). The worksheet including ‘speaking expressions’ was taken from the curriculum unit.

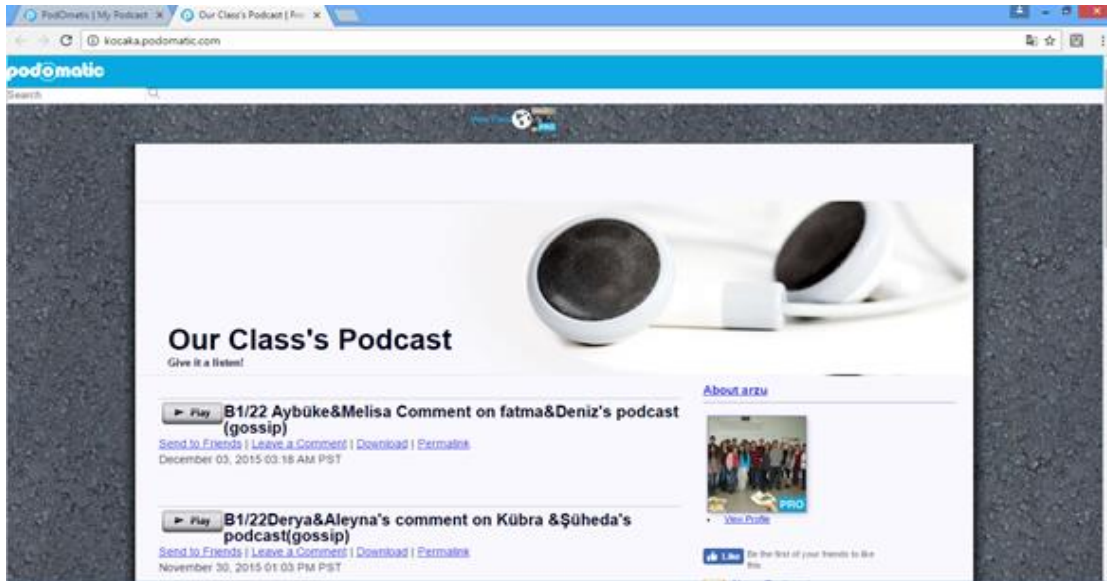


Figure 3.2. The Class Podcast Page Designed for the Study

At the beginning of the study, a *pre-test* was also administered by the participants to get information about students' level of speaking abilities (on September 28-October 2). BTCE (The British Test Centre for English) exam was used to test learners' English speaking skills. The pre-test exam was carried out for a week and it took eighteen hours. During the pre-test, seventy students were tested. Both in pre-and post speaking tests, students' performance was assessed according to BTCE exam rubric including 9-band scoring system (shown in Appendix IX). In addition, students were video recorded during the speaking tests.

After students experienced making learner podcasts, they reflected their perceptions in the *questionnaire* in the last week of the study. In addition, some students from each class (totally 33 students) were *interviewed* about their viewpoints on using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with students to get information about their perceptions of using podcasts to develop their speaking skills. Besides, at the end of the study (on November 30-December 4) a *post-test* was administered by students to get data about to what extent creating and using learner podcasts helps EFL students to improve their speaking skills. Unfortunately, just forty students were tested during the post-test and others did not take the post-test. This might be stem from students' negative attitudes towards speaking exams as they generally find it difficult and stressful to sit for English speaking tests.

As regards the study, the summary of the procedure is as follows:

Week 1, 2 & 3 (Orientation)

Week 1 (Orientation) (September 14-18, 2015): The teacher set up a class podcast page “using a free podcast site ‘podOmatic’(www.podomatic.com)”. In the class, the students were informed about the study and shown the class podcast page for the project. After the students were introduced what a podcast was, how to create learner podcasts and make them available on the Internet, they were required to create the first podcasts and publish it to the class podcast page.

Sample Task 1: personal information (name, age, likes & dislikes) (The podcasts will be created *individually*)

Giving personal information about yourself (name, age, likes & dislikes) (individual)

-What is your name?

-How old are you?

-What is your job?

-Where are you from?

-Give information about your family.

-Give information about your department.

What are your hobbies?

Week 2 (Orientation) (September 21-25, 2015): National Holiday

Week 3 (Orientation) (September 28, 2015-October 2, 2015): Some of the learner podcasts were listened in the class and students were given the second podcast task: discussing about a specific topic (e.g. online dating, gossip, language learning...) with a partner (The podcasts were created *in pairs*). The length of the audio files in the podcasts were between 5 and 10 minutes. In addition, students were given a worksheet including useful phrases used during a discussion (e.g. asking for an opinion, giving your opinion, agreeing with an opinion, etc.) and required to use these phrases in their podcasts.

Sample Task 2: discussing about a specific topic (e.g. online dating, gossip, language learning...) with a partner:

- **You will discuss about online dating with your partner.** Prepare a conversation in which one of the students (Student A) will support “online dating”; on the other hand, the other student (Student B) will oppose to the ideas given by student A.
- During the discussion, please **try to use the appropriate speaking expressions**

Discuss the following questions (Argumentative speech):

- What do you think about online dating? Do you think it is a good way to meet someone (a girl friend or a boyfriend)?
- Have you ever experienced online dating? What are the advantages and disadvantages of online dating?

Week 4 (October 5-9, 2015): Some of the students’ podcasts were listened in the class and students discussed about the topic (online dating) as a whole class (for a short time). Then, the third task was given to the students. For the third podcast task, students were required to work in pairs. The pairs were matched with each other. They listened to another pair’s podcast and created a new podcast in pairs by making comments on the ideas discussed by their friends in the podcast. In these podcasts, students were required to make comments on their friends’ opinions (not on their friends’ speaking performance in the podcasts).

Sample task 3: With your partner listen to another pair’s podcast, create a new podcast in pairs by making comments on the ideas discussed by your friends on the given topics in the podcast.

Week 5 (October 12-16, 2015): Some of the students’ podcasts were listened in the class. Then, the fourth task was given to the students:

Sample Task 4. Discussing on a specific topic with a partner (e.g. gossip...) (The podcasts will be created *in pairs*):

You will discuss about gossip with your partner. Discuss the following questions (Argumentative speech):

- What do you think about gossip? Do you think gossip is a good or bad thing overall?
- Do any of the following statements sum up your opinion about gossiping?

*Gossip is a good thing
Gossips are friendly.*

*Gossip is a bad thing
Gossiping is cruel and can be harmful.*

Curiosity is only human.

Interfering in other people's lives is wrong

*It's a good way of getting to
know people.*

Gossip is the cause of friction and quarrels

- Do you think women are more likely to gossip than men?

Week 6 (19-23 October, 2015): Some of the students' podcasts were listened in the class and students discussed about the topic (gossip) as a whole class (for a short time). Then, the fifth task was given to the students:

Sample Task 5. With your partner listen to another pair's podcast, create a new podcast in pairs by making comments on the ideas discussed by your friends on the given topics in the podcast.

Week 7 (26-30 October, 2015): At the beginning of the course, some students' podcasts were listened and students discussed about the topic (gossip) presented in the podcasts.

Week 8 (2-6 November, 2015): The questionnaire was conducted with 90 students and then some students (33 students) were interviewed to investigate their attitudes towards using and creating learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills.

Week 9 (9-15 November, 2015): Holiday for students in the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University

Week 10&11 (16-29 November, 2015): The post-test speaking exam was planned and organized. In addition, the students who couldn't complete their podcasts tasks were allowed to create their learner podcasts and send them to the class podcast website before the post-test.

Week 12 (30 November, 2015-4 December, 2015): a post-test was administered by forty students to see to what extent creating and using learner podcasts enables students to develop their speaking skills.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data gathered from the student questionnaire and the pre-test and post-test were analyzed quantitatively using Statistical Packages in Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20. The answers to Likert type questions in the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively using *percentages* and *frequencies*. In addition, to find out whether creating and using learner podcasts has a reliable effect on the development of students 'speaking skills, a *paired-samples t-test* was used to assess the data gathered from pre-test and post-test. Moreover, *the effect size* was calculated to see the role of learner podcasts in developing EFL learners 'speaking skills. Furthermore, a *Mann Whitney U Test* was conducted to investigate whether there were significant differences among participants' views with respect to their demographic features (gender and how long they have been learning English) in creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. Finally, the data gathered from the interviews were analyzed qualitatively using NVIVO after they were recorded and transcribed.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This study investigated the viewpoints of EFL students studying at the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University on using and creating learner podcasts to enhance their speaking skills. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, this dissertation has focused on the following research questions:

1. What are the EFL students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills?
2. To what extent does creating and using learner podcasts help EFL students to develop their speaking skills?
3. Are there any significant differences among participants' views with respect to their demographic features in creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills?
 - a) Gender
 - b) Learning period (how long the participants have been learning English)

4.2. Data Analysis

In this section, data gathered from student questionnaire, student interviews and pre- and post-tests will be discussed separately in relation to the research questions.

4.2.1. RQ1: What are the EFL Students' Viewpoints About Creating and Using Learner Podcasts To Develop Their Speaking Skills?

In order to gather detailed data to examine students' opinions on creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills not only a student questionnaire was administered but also semi-structured interviews were conducted with students. The data obtained from the study were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Therefore, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected to answer the first research question will be presented separately.

4.2.1.1. Quantitative Analysis (Student Questionnaire)

The results received from student questionnaire gave valuable information relating to EFL students' viewpoints on using and creating learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the responses given to questions in the student questionnaire. In addition, the answers to Likert type questions in the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively using percentages and frequencies. Moreover, the data gathered from the main study showed that podcast scale (student questionnaire) has an acceptable internal consistency as Cronbach's alpha is 0.799, which indicates that this scale is reliable.

The results concerning personal viewpoints of EFL students on the use of learner podcasts to enhance their speaking skills are presented in Table 4.1 respectively. The questionnaire includes 13 questions requiring responses on 5-point Likert scales (ranging from "strongly disagree=1" to "strongly agree=5"). In the table, responses "agree" and "strongly agree" are combined as "A/SA"; "disagree" and "strongly disagree" are combined as "D/SD".

Table 4.1: EFL Students' Viewpoints on Using and Creating Learner Podcasts to Develop Their Speaking Skills

		<i>A/SA</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D/SD</i>	<i>M</i>
		%	%	%	%
Q1	I believe creating learner podcasts is useful for developing my English speaking skills	83.3	12.2	4.4	4.11
Q2	Creating learner podcasts can be used to develop my English speaking skills to support my learning	86.7	10	3.3	4.20
Q3	I generally have positive attitudes towards creating learner podcasts in English courses	76.7	17.8	5.5	3.95
Q4	I believe that creating learner podcasts is a good instructional tool helping me to develop my English speaking skills	85.6	10	4.4	4.13
Q5	Creating learner podcasts helps me to improve my English pronunciation	78.9	12.2	7.9	4.43
Q6	Creating learner podcasts helps me to practise intonation and stress during the speech	73.4	18.9	7.7	4.01
Q7	Creating learner podcasts helps me to learn to use appropriate speaking expressions in a particular context	87.8	8.9	3.3	4.21
Q8	Knowing that the podcast I create will be listened by world-wide audience increases my motivation to create this podcast	31.1	40	28.9	2.88
Q9	I think creating learner podcasts is interesting	64.5	21.1	14.4	3.73

Q10	I think using creating learner podcasts is enjoyable	57.7	26.7	15.7	3.73
Q11	I believe creating podcasts and publishing them does not require students to have advanced computer and Internet operating skills	83.3	10	6.6	4.27
Q12	I liked creating learner podcasts	71.1	20	8.9	3.93
Q13	I want to create learner podcasts in English courses	67.8	20	12.3	3.78

Note: M: Mean Number of Students: 90

A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

The mean scores of responses to the questions about students' opinions on creating and using learner podcasts (except the 8th question) were between 3.73 and 4.43, indicating that students think that creating and using learner podcasts is beneficial to improving their English speaking skills. The overall mean scores of the items also show that students have positive viewpoints on creating and using learner podcasts to develop their English speaking skills. The results show that a majority of the students (85.6%) agree that learner podcasts can be used as a technology-based instructional tool to enhance their English speaking skills and most of the students (86.7) believe that podcasts created by learners can also serve to facilitate their learning as supportive materials. The answers given to the question 5, 6, and 7, shown in Table 8, indicate that students think that creating and using learner podcasts provide students with many benefits. According to the students, the most beneficial aspect of making learner podcasts is that it helps them to learn to be able to use appropriate expressions for discussion in a particular context (e.g. asking someone for their opinion about a topic, presenting arguments, giving your opinion about a topic, agreeing, disagreeing, clarification, etc.) (87.8%). In addition, they believe that learner podcasts enable them to improve their English pronunciation (78.9%) and practice intonation and stress during the speech (73.4%). Moreover; it is noteworthy that knowing that the podcasts created by students will be listened by world-wide audience does not lead to increase their motivation to create podcasts (31.1%). Therefore, it seems that this feature of learner podcasts are not regarded as a really stimulating aspect of producing learner podcasts by EFL learners. The answers given to the questions 9 and 10 show that most of the students think that podcast tasks are both interesting (64.5) and enjoyable (57.7%). However, when the answers given to question 9 and 10 are compared, the result suggests that students

found the task more “interesting” than “enjoyable”. As Table 8 shows most of the students (71.1%) liked the activity and more than half of the students (67.8%) want to create learner podcasts to enhance their English speaking skills. The results also show that students strongly believe that creating and using learner podcasts enable them to improve their speaking skills (4.11). Apart from benefits of using and creating learner podcasts, question 11 focused on exploring whether creating podcasts and publishing them requires students to have advanced computer and Internet operating skills. The results show that a vast majority of the students believe that (83.3%) making learner podcasts and publish them to the class podcast page is not technically challenging for students; therefore it seems that, as shown by the mean scores of the item 11, they did not have much difficulty in doing the podcast tasks. In sum, the overall mean scores of the items are rather higher (closer to 4 than to 2), suggesting that the participants have positive opinions of creating and using learner podcasts to develop their English speaking skills.

It is also remarkable that the data gathered from students questionnaires administered in the piloting study and the real study yielded identical results. Table 4.2 shows the results of the questionnaire responded to during the piloting study.

Table 4.2: EFL Students ‘Viewpoints on Using and Creating Learner Podcasts to Develop Their Speaking Skills Investigated in the Piloting Study

		<i>A/SA</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D/SD</i>	<i>M</i>
		%	%	%	
Q1	I believe creating learner podcasts is useful for developing my English speaking skills	87.5	5.4	7.2	4.12
Q2	Creating learner podcasts can be used to develop my English speaking skills to support my learning	89.3	1.8	9	4.12
Q3	I generally have positive attitudes towards creating learner podcasts in English courses	75	19.6	5.4	3.98
Q4	I believe that creating learner podcasts is a good instructional tool helping me to develop my English speaking skills	84	10.7	5.4	4.08
Q5	Creating learner podcasts helps me to improve my English pronunciation	75	17.9	7.1	4.14
Q6	Creating learner podcasts helps me to practice intonation and stress during the speech	83.9	7.1	8.9	4.23
Q7	Creating learner podcasts helps me to learn to use appropriate speaking expressions in a particular context	91.1	7.1	1.8	4.28

Q8	Knowing that the podcast I create will be listened by world-wide audience increases my motivation to create this podcast	39.3	30.4	30.4	3.10
Q9	I think creating learner podcasts is interesting	57.1	23.2	19.7	3.55
Q10	I think using creating learner podcasts is enjoyable	62.5	23.2	14.2	3.67
Q11	I believe creating podcasts and publishing them does not require students to have advanced computer and Internet operating skills	80.4	1.8	17.9	4.10
Q12	I liked creating learner podcasts	64.3	23.2	12.6	3.75
Q13	I want to create learner podcasts in English courses	64.3	21.4	14.3	3.75

Note: M: Mean, Number of Students: 56

A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

The results of the piloting study also reveal that the mean scores of responses to the questions about students' opinions on creating learner podcasts (except the 8th question) were between 3.55 and 4.28, showing that students think that creating learner podcasts make a useful contribution to the development of EFL learners' speaking skills. Moreover, the overall mean scores of the items indicate that students have positive attitudes towards creating learner podcasts to improve their English speaking skills.

It is seen that the results of the student questionnaire conducted for the pilot study are parallel with the findings of the questionnaire carried out in the real study. Similarly, the findings of the pilot study gathered from the items in the questionnaire support the responses to questions in the real study. When the results of the pilot study and real study are compared, it is noteworthy that the most advantageous feature of producing learner podcasts for students is that it enables them to use appropriate expressions during speech in a specific context (e.g. asking someone for their opinion about a topic, presenting arguments, giving your opinion about a topic, agreeing, disagreeing, clarification, etc.) (87.8% for piloting study and 91.1% for real study).

4.2.1.2. Qualitative Analysis (Student Interviews)

This section presents the analysis of qualitative data gathered from students' interviews. The interviews were carried out with 33 students to receive in-depth information about students' viewpoints on the use of learner podcasts to improve

their English speaking skills. Students' interviews have focused on six open-ended questions. These are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Interview Questions Carried Out With Students

<i>Interview questions</i>
1. Do you think that creating and using learner podcasts is beneficial to developing English speaking skills? (Why do you think so?)(What kind of benefits does it offer EFL students to develop their speaking skills?)
2. Which components of language developed while speaking through creating and using learner podcasts? Grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, stress, and intonation, speaking fluently, etc.?
3. What kind of problems did you encounter while creating podcasts and publishing them to the class podcast page?
4. Do you want to do this kind of podcast tasks in English courses? (Why do you think so?)
5. Do you think that these podcast tasks enable you to develop your English speaking skills?
6. Learner podcasts can be created individually, in pairs or groups. Which of these types should be used in the class to make podcasts? (Why do you think so?)

Note: Number of Students: 33

The data gathered from student interviews were analyzed using NVIVO 11 Starter for Windows. In this study, NVIVO was used in data analysis since qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) facilitates analyzing qualitative data for the researcher (Welsh, 2002). Using NVIVO, the researcher created a project called "podcasts" and examined the transcribed interview data. In order to organize and manage data according to research goals, some codes were created through a coding process which allowed the researcher to analyze the interview data around emerged codes to draw conclusions. The interview data was classified and analyzed under five groups after the researcher carefully considered thematic connections across the data. The researcher tried to establish a general framework within which the data gathered from interviews could reflect accurately and completely the participants' point of view about the use of learner podcasts. The classification for nodes is shown in Figure 4.1.

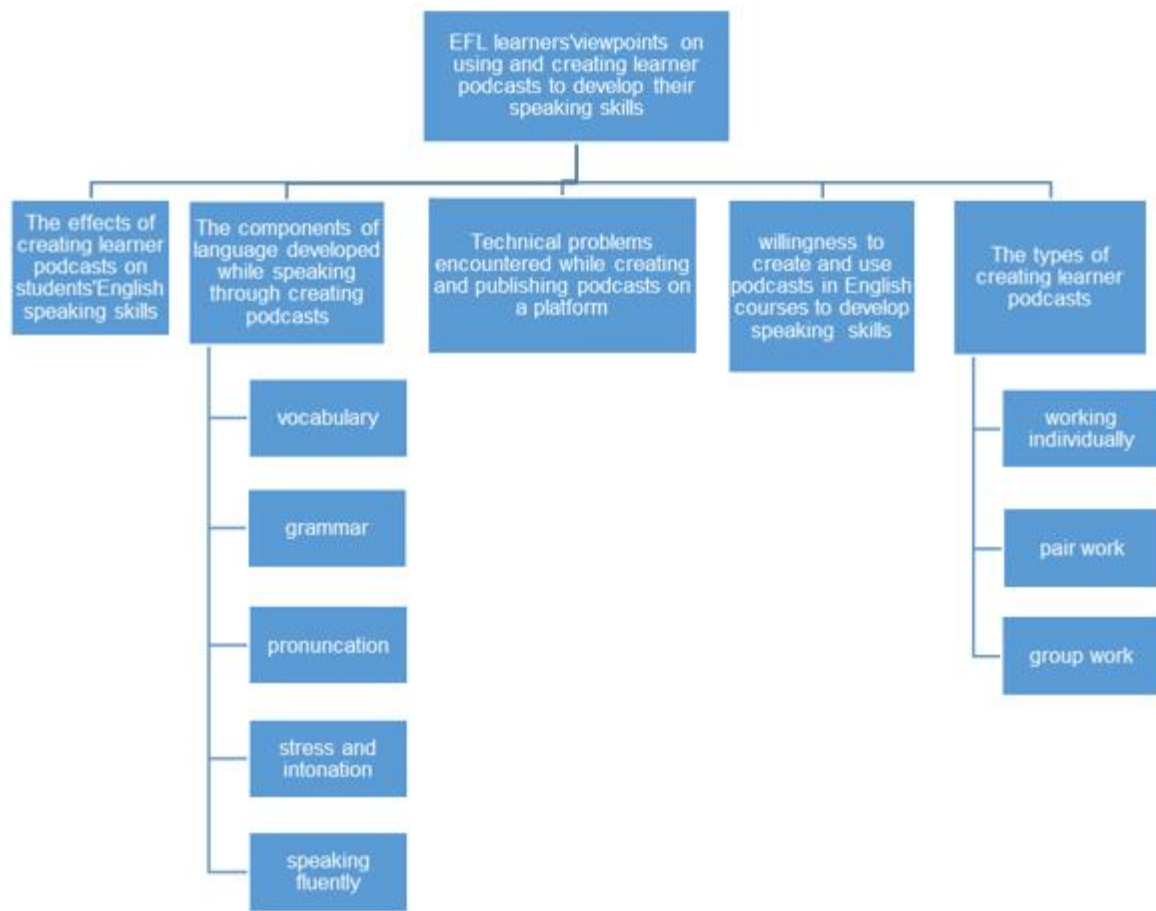


Figure 4.1. The Analysis of Interview Data Around Emerged Codes

The data obtained from each category will be present separately in the following section (Turkish transcriptions are presented in Appendix X).

4.2.1.2.1. The Benefits of Using Learner Podcasts to Develop Students' Speaking Skills (Q1&Q5)

All of the students (interview responses: 33/33 students) stated that creating and using learner podcasts is beneficial to developing their speaking skills:

“I think it is entirely beneficial for speaking skills” (interview responses) (1).

“Of course, I think it is useful. At the beginning, I really cannot talk English, but now I realize that there is a noticeable improvement in my speaking skills” (interview responses) (2).

“I think it is extremely beneficial to improving speaking skills. Our speaking skills has started to develop” (interview responses) (3).

“There are current topics of conversation in podcast activities and I’ve learnt to make comments on these current issues” (interview responses) (4).

“When I started to attend Preparatory School, I could not talk. I could hardly use grammar. I could not use vocabulary appropriately in the context. However, creating learner podcasts provided considerable benefit to the development of my speaking skills. My speaking skills markedly improved” (interview responses) (5).

“Some of my friends, for example Fatma and Almina, has enhanced their speaking skills significantly. I found podcasts very beneficial” (interview responses) (6).

“I’ve realized that there are a lot of differences in many aspects of language knowledge between that I had seven weeks before and my current level of English” (interview responses) (7).

“For instance, when we started discussing with each other in pairs, we did not use to have any information about how two people start holding a dialogue and how they talk. However, when we began speaking and using some speaking expressions through creating podcasts, it brought great benefits for us. I have learnt how to use some speaking expressions during the conversation. I could scarcely speak English beforehand. Now, I have started to speak English.” (Interview responses) (8).

“It is useful because whether we want to develop our speaking skills or not, podcasts improves our speaking skills” (interview responses) (9).

“It is beneficial. It motivated me to speak English” (interview responses) (10).

“It is useful for improving speaking skills. There are no other places anywhere which offer that opportunity for speaking English” (interview responses) (11)

“It is the first step towards speaking. From now on, I think I will considerably develop my speaking skills, develop myself more and podcasts will provide benefit for me (interview responses) (12).

“While creating podcasts we are trying to think about the topic and speak. I could not form grammatical sentences before. Producing podcasts has enabled me to develop myself. I have started to talk in a planned way, so creating and using podcasts is useful and allow me to develop my speaking skills” (interview responses) (13).

“I think it is beneficial. While we were producing podcasts and trying to speak like native speakers, podcasts enabled us to improve intonation and stress. In addition, it developed our vocabulary. As we were making an effort to construct grammatical sentences, we learnt a wide range of vocabulary. In my opinion, creating and using podcasts is very useful” (interview responses) (14).

As regards the benefits of podcasting tasks for students, some of the students (interview responses: 2 students) stated that experiencing producing learner podcasts enabled them to be successful in the speaking exam administered at school for their own English courses:

“I personally think creating and using learner podcasts is useful for developing speaking skills. It enables us to get prepared for the speaking exam. Students generally have difficulty in speaking English; therefore, podcasts are very beneficial to improving speaking skills” (interview responses) (15).

“For example, as we created learner podcasts and talked with our friends, we did not have any difficulty in speaking during the speaking exam. However, if we had not produced podcasts before, we would have encountered enormous difficulty in speaking in the exam” (interview responses) (16).

Some students (interview responses: 2 students) also reported that in the process of learning English, their biggest difficulty is speaking English and creating learner podcasts helped them to improve their speaking skills:

“I think it is beneficial to developing our speaking skills because the greatest problem for EFL students is the difficulty in speaking” (interview responses) (17).

“It is absolutely beneficial to enhancing speaking skills. It has considerably improved our speaking skills. I can express myself much better now. The biggest difficulty for me is speaking English. I do not have difficulty in reading, but I did not use to speak with foreigners. I think if I had not experienced creating learner podcasts, I would not develop my speaking skills” (interview responses) (18).

In addition, according to some respondents (interview responses: 2 students), the podcasting tasks provided more benefits for students to enhance their speaking skills than speaking activities done in the class:

“The courses at school have not brought real benefits for developing speaking skills, so podcasts were beneficial to enhancing our speaking skills” (interview responses) (19).

“I think it is beneficial to enhancing speaking skills since in the class we cannot speak a lot. During creating podcasts we speak much more. While speaking with our partner, we care about the conversation as the podcast will be listened by others. In addition, we are trying to write a scenario for our conversation in order to produce a podcast different from others. Therefore, it also serves to develop our creativity, it is useful” (interview responses) (20).

Another important point emphasized by one of the students is that the more podcasting tasks are performed by students the more benefits will be gained in the development of speaking skills:

“Our academic term was short. I think when podcast tasks were done for a longer period of time, it would be more beneficial” (interview responses) (21).

With respect to the benefits of creating and using podcasts reported by students during the interviews, the important points mentioned by students about podcasts can be listed as follows:

- Encouraging students to speak English
- The advantages of studying with a partner
- Learning to think in English
- Being useful for shy students
- Dealing with speaking anxiety
- Realizing the mistakes done while speaking
- Developing students’ skills in generating new ideas during speech
- Providing the opportunity for English speaking practice outside the class in a relaxed atmosphere
- Speaking about the topics similar to ones studied in the class

Some students (interview responses: 7/33 students) stated that creating podcasts encouraged them to speak English:

“Podcasts enabled us to practice speaking English and somehow encouraged us to speak English, so they must be undoubtedly integrated into English courses” (interview responses) (22).

“While we are discussing with our partner through creating podcasts, we are gaining self-confidence in speaking English” (interview responses) (23).

“For instance, I have never talked like that beforehand. This podcasting activity is a new beginning for me. In fact, at the beginning of these activities, I was extremely anxious about speaking English. Then, I realized that I could speak if I had some information about the topic in Turkish in my mind. I could not speak very well but I could express myself, so it was beneficial. At least, I was encouraged to speak. I mean I liked creating and using podcasts” (interview responses) (24).

“I do not abstain from speaking English with someone anymore. I have gained self-confidence through speaking a lot. I have realized that I can speak more properly and express myself well. Learner podcasts brought substantial benefit to the improvement of speaking skills for us” (interview responses) (25).

Another benefit of creating and using podcasts reported by some students (interview responses: 7/33 students) is that studying with a friend to create a podcast provides students with many advantages in developing language skills:

“While we are creating podcasts with our friend, we develop high self-confidence. As we speak with our friends, we do not be shy with them. The speech flows more intimately and creating podcasts with a partner is very enjoyable” (interview responses) (26).

“I met my friend to produce a podcast each week. My friend is good at English. We both learnt new vocabulary and used them in the context during speech. In addition, we could use our sense of humor while speaking with each other. Podcast activities offered these benefits to us” (interview responses) (27).

“We make an effort to speak with each other and exchange ideas. For example, If I stuck in a conversation, my partner helps me to move on speaking” (interview responses) (28).

Moreover, some of the respondents (interview responses: 5/33 students) stated that learner podcasts enabled them to learn to think in English:

“Learner podcasts allowed me to think in English and speak instead of thinking in Turkish to speak English” (interview responses) (29).

“I have learnt to think in English” (interview responses) (30).

“I think the greatest benefit of learner podcasts to EFL students is that it teaches us how to think in English. In the first podcast we created, we organized what we would talk about. Then, we just started to think about the topic and the sentences were formed simultaneously; that is, we achieved fluency in speaking” (interview responses) (31).

In addition, some students (interview responses: 5/33 students) mentioned that producing and using learner podcasts bring real benefits for shy students to overcome their shyness and start speaking English:

“I do not generally speak in the class. These podcasting activities are beneficial. Moreover, they should be a part of class assessment. There are some shy students like me who do not prefer to speak much in the class. Therefore, podcasts should be a part of curriculum” (interview responses) (32).

“I am not a student who actively takes part in speaking activities. I am a bit of a shy person. It was more comfortable to do this activity with someone I knew. I think this podcasting activity has improved me” (interview responses) (33).

“It also allows us to overcome shyness. For instance, I generally do not talk much; however, when we create podcasts, we use what we learn in the class as well and I see that my speaking skills gradually improves” (interview responses) (34).

A few respondents (interview responses: 4/33 students) also reported that creating podcasts helped them to deal with speaking anxiety:

“After I created podcasts, my pronunciation improved, I managed speaking anxiety and got used to speaking English” (interview responses) (35)

“I could not speak fluently as much as I desired. When I started to speak with my partner, I dispelled the anxiety about speaking English” (interview responses) (36).

The results also show that some students (interview responses: 2/33 students) reported that creating learner podcasts offered opportunities for students to assess their speech and discover the mistakes they made during their speech:

“We realize our language mistakes through recording our voice and notice some differences in our conversational speech by listening to other students ‘podcasts” (interview responses) (37).

“When I speak in podcasts, I can listen to my voice and what I say. If I make a language mistake, I realize it” (interview responses) (38).

“I have difficulty in grammar. I can listen to my speech recorded in podcasts again. I discover my mistakes and then correct them” (interview responses) (39).

Concerning the advantages of creating and using podcasts to improve EFL students ‘speaking skills, another interesting point emphasized by one of the students is that making podcasts allowed students to generate new ideas quickly during their conversational speech:

“For instance, I could not come up with new ideas directly while speaking before. Creating podcasts enabled me to produce ideas quickly during the speech” (interview responses) (40).

It is also noteworthy that one of the students stated that podcasting activities provide students with the opportunity for English speaking practice outside the class in a relaxed atmosphere:

“We sometimes do not feel very comfortable to speak. I think speaking through creating podcasts is much more comfortable for students” (interview responses) (41).

“First of all, it is necessary to be courageous enough to speak in the class, but students may sometimes avoid speaking in the class. I think this is also related to the topics used for speaking activities. In the class, we sometimes have to speak about topics which we do not have any idea about even in Turkish. However, in order to create podcasts, we get prepared for the topic of conversation before starting speaking with our partner” (interview responses) (42).

In addition, one of the students mentioned that the topics used for podcasting activities are parallel to the ones students studied in their own English courses:

“Learner podcasts are beneficial to improving our speaking skills because they are similar to the topics we studied in our courses” (interview responses) (43).

The overall results obtained from number of coding references indicate that all of the students taking part in the interviews believe that learner podcasts provide them with many benefits in respect of developing their English speaking skills:

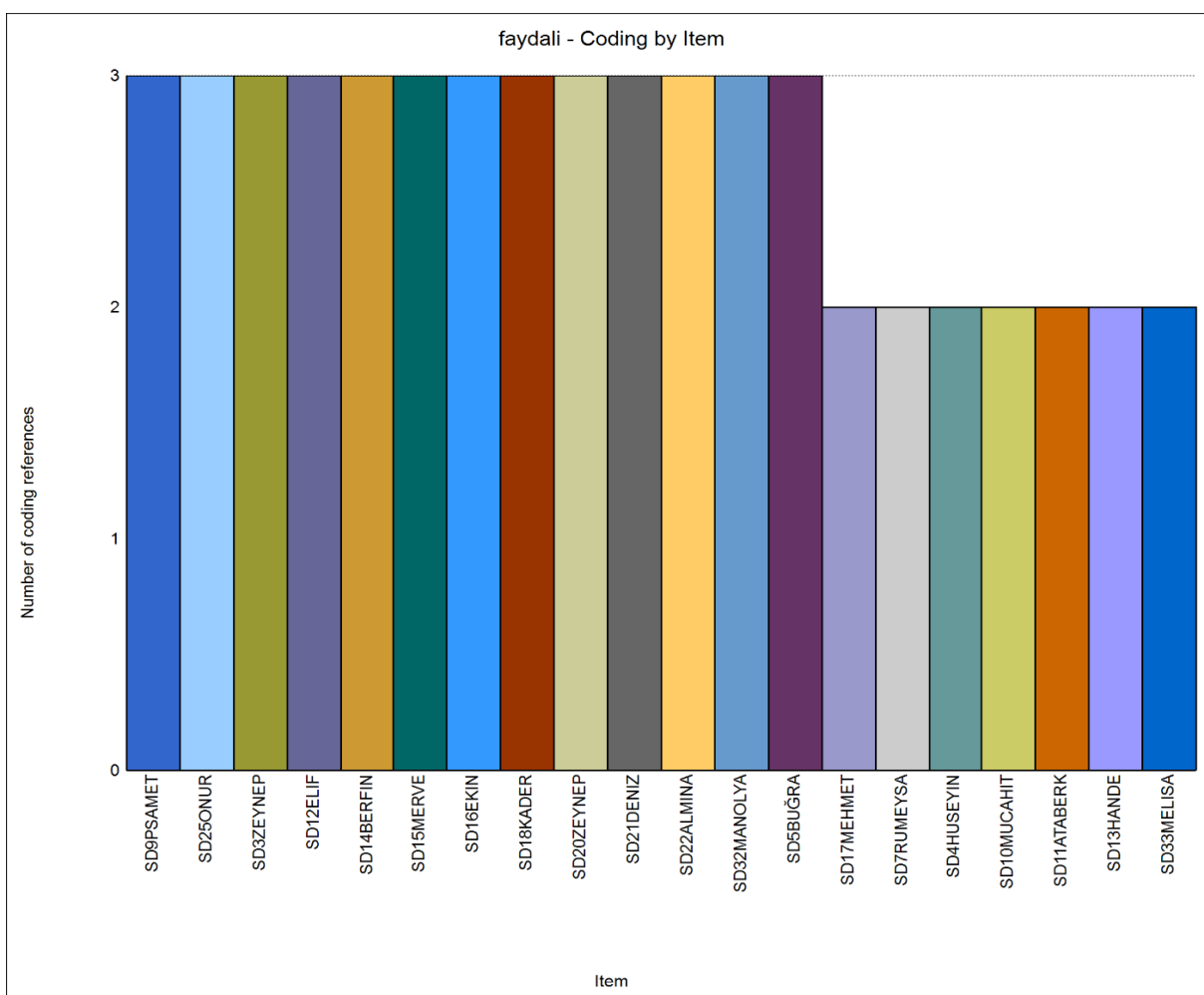


Figure 4.2. Number of Coding References for the Item Called “Beneficial”

4.2.1.2.2. The Components of Language Developed Through Creating Learner Podcasts (Q2)

The second interview question focused on getting information about whether creating and using learner podcasts enabled students to develop some components of language:

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Pronunciation
- Stress and intonation
- Fluency

Responses to the interview question show that most of the students believe that podcasting tasks allow EFL learners to improve their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, stress and intonation and fluency (Although “stress and intonation” is a part of “pronunciation”, it is assessed for the study as a separate item after the analysis of qualitative data by considering students ‘responses to the second interview question).

A vast majority of the participants (interview responses: 25/33 students) reported that creating and using podcasts enabled them to improve their pronunciation: “We listen to how other people pronounce some words and accordingly, we develop our pronunciation” (interview responses) (44).

“As regards pronunciation, we both use online dictionaries and learn from each other for the correct pronunciation. For example, I pronounced a word incorrectly many times and my partner corrected it again and again” (interview responses) (45).

“While producing and using podcasts I developed my pronunciation the most. I learned the correct pronunciation of the words which I used to pronounce incorrectly” (interview responses) (46).

“As we record our speech, we try to pay attention to our pronunciation” (interview responses) (47).

“My pronunciation also improved. We checked the correct pronunciation of some words on the Internet. I think learner podcasts has contributed enormously to the development of our pronunciation (interview responses) (48).

“While creating podcasts, we sometimes encountered some words which we had difficulty in pronouncing. At that moment, we stopped the recording and checked the

correct pronunciations of those words on the Internet, and then we began pronouncing them correctly” (interview responses) (49).

“We sometimes check correct pronunciation of words on the Internet not to be a disgrace (to the people who will listen to our podcasts). Pronunciation improves through repetition and speaking while we are producing podcasts. (Interview responses) (50).

With respect to the effect of learner podcasts on the development of students ‘vocabulary, a number of students (interview responses: 20/33 students) stated that their English vocabulary developed during the podcasting activities:

“I think it is beneficial to developing the ability to be able to use appropriate words in a particular context. When I speak, I generally do not use a variety of grammar structures; I usually use simple present or simple past tense. I do not prefer to use complex grammar structures. However, I think choosing the right word for a specific context is more important. Creating and using podcasts provides benefit for word usage. (Interview responses) (51).

“Learner podcasts developed my pronunciation, grammar knowledge and vocabulary” (Interview responses) (52).

“Using and creating learner podcasts enabled me to expand my vocabulary” (Interview responses) (53).

“While creating podcasts, I check the correct pronunciation of some words in the online dictionary. In addition, meanwhile, I get detailed information about the meanings of these words (Interview responses) (54).

“We have learnt new words and we can use them during our speech” (Interview responses) (55).

“We have learnt some speaking expressions such as ‘I agree with you’ and ‘what do you think about it?’ while creating learner podcasts” (Interview responses) (56)

“It allows to expand vocabulary. For instance, when we come with a new idea, we look up new words on that topic in the dictionary. It unquestionably increases our vocabulary”

(Interview responses) (57).

Interestingly, although a vast majority of the students who were interviewed stated that they found the podcasting activities beneficial in developing their English vocabulary, one of the students stated that it did not bring any benefits for improving vocabulary:

“In fact, it has not contributed to the development of my vocabulary because I tried to form sentences using the words I had learned before” (Interview responses) (58).

As regards grammar, nearly half of the students (interview responses: 15/33 students) reported that they improved their English grammar while producing and using podcasts:

“We have also learnt new grammar structures through creating and using learner podcasts” (Interview responses) (59).

“It improved our grammar the most” (Interview responses) (60).

“For example, we could use the grammar structures we had learnt in our English courses before in our speech on learner podcasts” (Interview responses) (61).

“For instance, everybody has some knowledge of English grammar; however, we cannot use grammar properly in our speech. Podcasting activities is beneficial to learning correct grammar usage. For example, in the speaking test, I was confused about using gerund or infinitive after the verb “like”. Although I know the correct usage, first of all, I said “eat” and then “eating”. Another example is that we know after the verb “want” “infinitive to” must be used; however, it is difficult to use the correct form while we are speaking although it is easy to make the correct choice for grammar structures in the written exercises” (Interview responses) (62).

With regard to the effect of learner podcasts on fluency in spoken language, half of the participants (interview responses: 15/33 students) mentioned that learner podcast helped them to achieve fluency in their speaking:

“It enabled me to acquire fluency in spoken English and construct sentences easily” (Interview responses) (63).

“The podcasts I created allowed me to speak more fluently and to think in English to talk instead of thinking in Turkish before speaking English. Therefore, I began to

speak more fluently and the sentences which I formed gradually become more logical and coherent (Interview responses) (64).

“In the first podcast activity, we speak slowly with the effect of thinking about the topic of conversation. However, in the second and third speech, we speak simultaneously as if we are using our mother language. Thus, it is beneficial to improving fluency in spoken English” (Interview responses) (65).

As regards stress and intonation, some students (interview responses: 8/33 students) stated that learner podcasts contributed to improving stress and intonation:

“I think podcasting activities are beneficial to improving stress and intonation. I derived the greatest benefit from the podcasts to the improvement of stress and intonation” (Interview responses) (66).

“While speaking during the podcasting tasks, we tried to speak like native speakers” (Interview responses) (67).

“For instance, while we were speaking about gossip, we tried to act out a scene; therefore, stress and intonation gained importance during our speech” (Interview responses) (68).

Students’ responses received during the interviews about the the influence of learner podcasts on the development of language components (five items: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency and stress and intonation) were compared to investigate the differences among students ‘viewpoints on the improvement of each component of language through creating and using podcasts. These items are shown in Figure 22 with the percentages for each of these items:

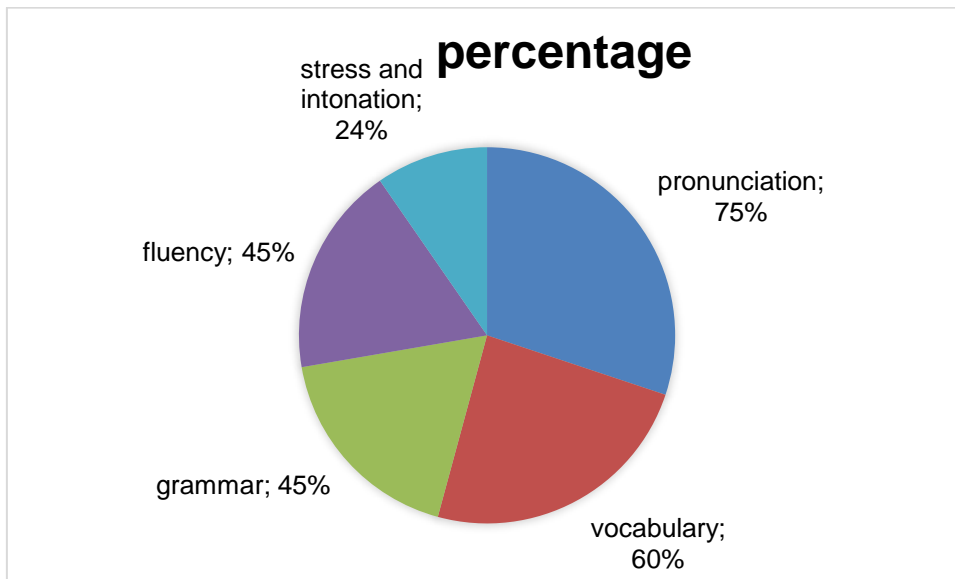


Figure 4.3. Comparison of Data Gathered From Interviews for Viewpoints on the Development of Components of Language

Students' overall responses revealed that while they were making podcasts on different topics, they also had an opportunity to improve their English language. As can be seen in Figure 21, according to students as regards the development of components of language, the most beneficial aspect of creating and using learner podcasts is that it enables them to improve their pronunciation (75%). It is followed by vocabulary development (60%). Less than half of the students (45%) believe that learner podcasting tasks allow them to improve their grammar and fluency in English. The results also show that some students (24%) think that they can enhance stress and intonation via creating and using learner podcasts (Although "stress and intonation" is a part of "pronunciation", it is assessed for the study as a separate item after the analysis of qualitative data by considering students' responses to the second interview question).

4.2.1.2.3. Technical Problems Encountered While Creating and Publishing Podcasts On A Platform (Q3)

The results show that creating learner podcasts and publishing them to class podcast page was technically an easy process and they did not encounter many challenges during completing podcasting tasks. Most of the students (interview responses: 27/33 students) stated that they did not confront any technical problems while producing learner podcasts and sending them to the podcast website:

“I did not confront any problems during carrying out podcasting tasks. It was technically an easy process” (Interview responses) (69).

“I did not encounter any problems. Podcasts could be published easily” (Interview responses) (70).

“It took a short time to create and publish podcasts; it was not challenging for me. It was undoubtedly a technically quite easy process” (Interview responses) (71).

“I did not meet any challenges; it was easy; it takes just a few minutes” (Interview responses) (72).

Although a vast majority of the students reported that they did not encounter any problems while creating learner podcasts and publishing them to the class podcast page, a few students (interview responses: 3/33 students) mentioned that they faced some challenges during completing podcasting tasks. Also, one of the students emphasized that he did not have any problems with carrying out podcasting tasks; however, some of his friends encountered some technical problems. It is seen that the challenges students stated do not stem from the nature of the podcast tasks; they generally arise from technical problems with mp3 converter or the types of mobile phones students use (android or iphone):

“In fact, I confronted a problem; that is, the audio file I recorded before lasted 1 minute and 6 seconds. However, while I was converting the audio file to mp3 player, 6 seconds was not recorded to the new audio file in the mp3 format” (Interview responses) (73)

“We encountered some problems with smart phones. We could not directly upload the audio files (recorded on the phone) from smart phones to the podcast website twice. Later, we sent the podcast to a platform we use with our friends and then, we published it to the podcast site from that platform. I think that problem was related to the types of smart phones we use” (Interview responses) (74).

“I generally face technical challenges. This challenge do not arise from class podcast website. We have difficulty in uploading podcasts from smart phones to the website. We also sometimes experience difficulty in converting audio files to mp3 player” (Interview responses) (75).

In addition, one of the respondents stated although they did not confront any technical problems, they encountered challenges while they were studying with their friends to create a podcast. This challenge is caused by working in pairs to create a podcast:

“We faced some challenges while creating podcasts; that is, there were some noise, sounds and laughing occurred as a result of working in pairs. Aside from these challenge, we did not encounter any problems while we were uploading our podcasts to the podcast website” (Interview responses) (76).

Moreover, another student emphasized that he had difficulty in uploading the podcast to the website for the first time; however, after learning the technical process of uploading, he alleviated that problem:

“At first, I had problems about uploading files to the podcast website. After I learn how to do it, I managed to upload podcasts to the site” (Interview responses) (77).

The responses indicated that creating and using learner podcasts was not challenging for EFL learners. Apart from some minor technical problems they encountered during completing podcasting tasks, they did not mention any distinctive problem. These problems either stem from the types of smart phones used by students (android or iPhone) or the mp3 converter software. It is obvious that it is really easy for students to go through the process for creating learner podcasts.

4.2.1.2.4. Students’ Willingness to Create and Use Learner Podcasts to Develop Their Speaking Skills (Q4)

Students responses show that all of the students (interview responses: 33/33 students) are willing to create and use learner podcasts to develop their English speaking skills. In addition, they (33 students) think that learner podcasts should be integrated into school curriculum:

“I want to create and use learner podcasts in English courses. Podcasts should be integrated into courses; they contributed enormously to the development of English skills” (Interview responses) (78).

“Of course I am willing to create podcasts in English courses. I wish we did these podcasting activities in the class; they provide benefits for us. I think learner

podcasts should be integrated into English courses. There is a significant difference between the podcasts we produce and the speaking activities we are involved in during English courses. We speak more consciously while creating podcasts compared to the speaking activities done in the class. I also think that learner podcasts are more systematic and organized than the speaking activities undertaken in our English courses” (Interview responses) (79).

“I think these podcasting activities should be a part of English courses. Moreover, it should be obligatory to create learner podcasts for students. At first, it was difficult both for me and my friends to complete these podcast tasks. However, after a while, I feel that I improve myself. In my opinion, learner podcasts are beneficial to students” (Interview responses) (80).

“Of course I am willing to create podcasts in English courses. I want to take part in every activity that will help me to improve myself. Podcasts should be integrated into English courses at school. Furthermore, learner podcasts can be offered as a separate course for students at school because learning English means being able to speak English” (Interview responses) (81).

“Podcasts should be unquestionably integrated into English courses. For example, as we provided with the opportunity to create and use learner podcasts, we could improve ourselves. However, others who lack of this opportunity are not as lucky as us. Therefore, podcasting activities not only be done at university, but also EFL learners should be involved in these activities since primary school education. Now, students learn English even at pre-school. However, to what extend we have developed our English skills up to now? I has not improved much! I think podcasts will take students ‘attention much more as they are interactive” (Interview responses) (82).

“I think we will learn English that we have not learned for ten years thanks to creating learner podcasts” (Interview responses) (83).

As regards using learner podcasts in English courses, some important points were emphasized by students:

- Having the opportunity for speaking English out of the class

- Being able to speak English with foreigners
- Choosing appropriate topics for podcasting tasks

With regard to having a chance to be able to speak English outside the class, ten students reported that creating learner podcasts allowed them practice speaking English out of school through setting aside time to do podcasting activity:

“We have been learning English since we were in the fourth class at the elementary school; however, we cannot still use the language effectively. Although we studied the same grammar structures many times, we are not still good at grammar. Why do we have difficulty in learning English? Because we have not had the opportunity to speak English so far. Our teachers had to speak Turkish in English courses as they had to teach English in crowded classes including thirty or forty students. Nobody talked to us in English. Most of us are from small cities; we have not had the chance to speak with tourists. In this sense, podcasts provided us with opportunities to improve our speaking skills. They should be undoubtedly integrated into English courses (Interview responses) (84).

“Generally, we do not have a chance to speak English outside the class; however, podcasting activities enabled me to improve myself considerably through practicing regularly with my partner” (Interview responses) (85).

In addition, one of the students reported that creating learner podcasts enabled them to acquire the ability to speak English with foreigners:

“We both have close relationship with our friends and know new people. In addition, we are able to speak with people we have not known before. When we go abroad, we will have to ask something to foreigners, so it is beneficial to that” (Interview responses) (86)

Another important point stated by one of the students is that the topics of conversation chosen for podcasting activities should motivate students to speak:

“The choice of topics used for learner podcasts is very significant. It is important that everyone have opinions on the selected topics or the topics attract students’ interest. Some topics do not stimulate people’s interest and motive them to speak. If the

topics used for podcasting activities generate students 'attention, they will be more willing to create podcasts" (Interview responses) (87).

4.2.1.2.5. The Types of Creating Learner Podcasts (Q6)

Students' responses on their preference for studying to do podcasting tasks indicated that students generally prefer to create learner podcasts in pairs or groups instead of studying individually. Half of the students (interview responses: 15/33 students) stated that they would rather produce podcasts in pairs:

"Working in groups can cause chaos as there are a lot of students in a group. Working individually does not bring benefits to students as much as working in pairs. It is more logical to work with a friend" (Interview responses) (88).

"It is difficult to work in groups as nobody lives together. However, working in pairs is better. While working with our partner we have an opportunity to think about the topic together and discuss about it. It is more enjoyable. In my opinion, pair work is better to produce podcasts" (Interview responses) (89).

Moreover, six students reported that they prefer to create podcasts in groups:

"I think group work is better because a variety of ideas can be generated in a group compared to pair work" (Interview responses) (90).

"I do not think it is beneficial to create podcasts individually. In my opinion, it is better to work in groups. When I create a podcast individually, I speak myself. When I work with a partner, I have to produce new ideas according to the points mentioned by my friend during the speech. Working in pairs is better in terms of studying comfortably, but if we work in groups, we learn much more from each other" (Interview responses) (91).

With respect to types of producing learner podcasts, seven students think that EFL learners can study both in pairs or groups:

"I think it is better to create podcasts in pairs or groups because we communicate with someone in our daily lives" (Interview responses) (92).

"Learner podcasts can be more effective when they are created in pairs or groups (Interview responses) (93).

using learner podcasts to improve their English speaking skills. They think that learner podcasts bring real benefits for students to enhance their speaking skills. Podcasting activities enable them to improve not only their speaking skills but also grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and stress and intonation. When the data gathered from both student questionnaire and interviews are compared, it is seen that most of the students believe that learner podcasts has contributed enormously to the development of their pronunciation. Moreover, creating learner podcasts and publishing them to a website is not challenging for students; it a technically easy process. The overall results also show that most of the students liked creating learner podcasts and all of them want to make learner podcasts in their English courses. They also think that learner podcasts should be integrated into school curriculum as these podcasting tasks allow them to practice speaking English outside the class. It is also noteworthy that the data gathered from the questionnaire and interviews carried out in the pilot study and main study produced consistent results regarding students' perceptions of creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills.

4.2.2. RQ2: To What Extent Does Creating and Using Learner Podcasts Help EFL Students to Develop Their Speaking Skills

The second research question has focused on investigating whether using and creating learner podcasts enables EFL students to improve their speaking skills or not. A pre-test and post-test design was used in order to provide a satisfactory answer to this research question. At the beginning of the study, before students experienced creating and using learner podcasts, a pre- speaking test was administered to get information about the participants' current level of English speaking skills. After a period of eight week in which students were required to produce podcasts on various topics, the post-speaking test was conducted to measure the improvement of students' speaking skills as a result of the experience of making podcasts and to analyze the efficiency of using learner podcasts in foreign language instruction as an innovative instructional tool to enhance learners' speaking skills.

A dependent samples t-test was performed to compare and analyze the results of pre-and post-tests. Before conducting the analysis, the assumption of normally

distributed difference scores was examined. A Shapiro Wilks test ($p > .05$) and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that the exam scores were approximately normally distributed for pre- and post-test, with a skewness of 1.036 (SE=.374) and a kurtosis of 1.326 (SE=.733) for the pre-test and a skewness of .497 (SE=.374) and a kurtosis of .367 (SE=.733) for the post-test. The assumption was thought to be satisfied as the skew and kurtosis levels were respectively between the maximum acceptable values for a test (skewness and kurtosis are between -2.0 and +2.0, George, D., & Mallery, M., 2010; between +1.5 and -1.5, Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013) This indicates that the data are normally distributed. Therefore, a dependent samples t-test was used to test the effectiveness of the use of podcasts created by students to enhance their English speaking skills.

The post-training mean (M=4.57) was statistically significantly higher than the pre-training mean (M=3.37). Pearson's r was estimated at .81 which is a large effect based on Pearson's (1901) guidelines. It tells us the strength of the relationship between the two variables, indicating a perfect positive linear relation between the pre-test and post-test scores. A graphical representation of the means and adjusted 95% confidence intervals (Loftus & Masson, 1994) is shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Pre-Test & Post-Test Results

	<i>Speaking Tests</i>						<i>95% CI for Mean Difference</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	<i>Pre-test</i>			<i>Post-test</i>					
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>			
EFL Learners' speaking skills	3.37	1.44	40	4.57	1.51	40	-1.205	-2.072	39

The results of the paired-samples t-test indicated that on average, participants significantly developed their English speaking skills after they created learner podcasts (M = 3.37, SE = 1.44), as compared to their level of speaking skills before they experienced developing learner podcasts (M = 4.57, SE = 1.51, $t(39) = -12.072$, $p < .05$ ($p = .000$), $r = .81$). The results show that the difference in means is statistically significant. Therefore, the overall results obtained from the paired-samples t-test demonstrated that creating and using learner podcasts has

contributed enormously to the development of EFL learners 'speaking skills, as shown in Figure 4.5.

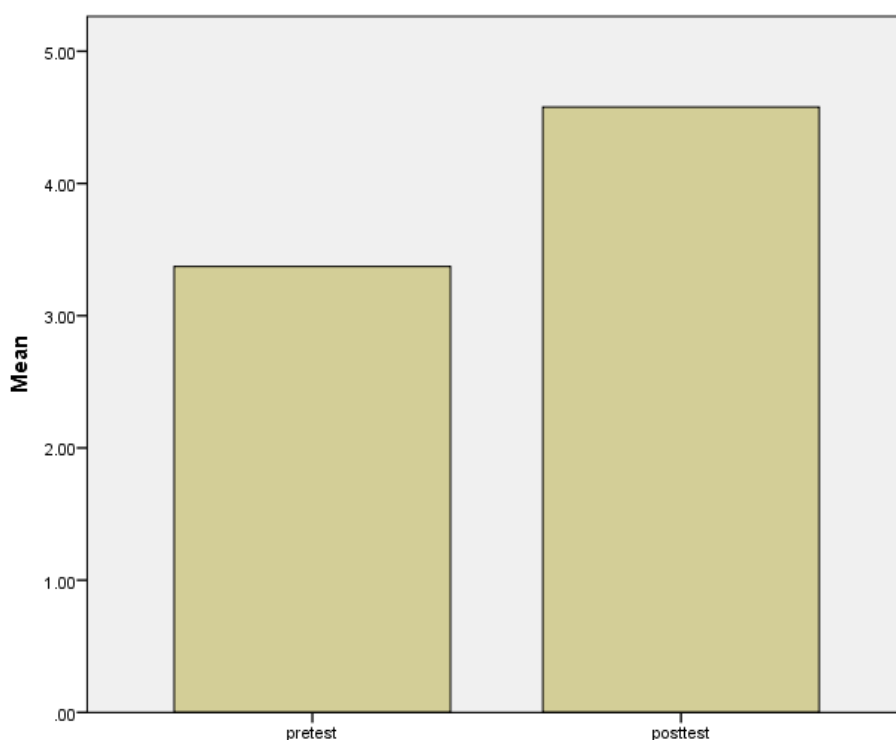


Figure 4.5. Pre-Test & Post-Test Results

4.2.3. RQ3: Are There any Significant Differences Among Participants' Views With Respect to Their Demographic Features in Creating and Using Learner Podcasts to Develop Their Speaking Skills?

This research question aimed to investigate whether EFL learners 'viewpoints on using and creating learner podcasts change significantly according to their demographic features:

- a. Gender
- b. Learning period

The data gathered were computed in SPSS 20. Although comparisons were planned to make through using t-tests to find out whether the participants' viewpoints on creating and using learner podcasts to develop their English speaking skills change or not according to demographic features: gender and the period for learning English, it was determined that the scores in two factors (gender and learning period) did not show a normal distribution and this was statistically proven in both

Kolmogorov- Simirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests ($p < .05$). Therefore, instead of t-tests, which were parametric tests, a nonparametric test, Mann Whitney U Test, was used (Büyüköztürk, 2013; Doğan & Doğan, 2014; Green & Salkind, 2008; Özdamar, 2013; Siegel, 1977). The learners' viewpoints on learner podcasts according to different variables are presented separately in the following section.

4.2.3.1. Viewpoints on Learner Podcasts According to Gender

Table 4.5: Effect of Gender on Viewpoints on Learner Podcasts (Mann Whitney U Test)

<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Rank Mean</i>	<i>Rank Sum</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
Male	26	31.69	824.00	473.00	.001
Female	64	51.11	3271.00		

Table 4.5 indicates that gender plays a significant role on the viewpoints of learners on the use of learner podcasts to improve their English speaking skills and makes a difference in perceptions of using and creating podcasts ($U = 473$; $p < .05$). It is seen that female students have much more positive opinions of using and creating podcasts to enhance their speaking skills ($M=51.11$) compared to male students ($M=31.69$).

Previous research carried out on gender difference in attitudes towards using technology during the learning process is questionable. Some studies has shown that male students are more eager to integrate technology into learning compared to female students and this difference is ascribed to the lack of a gender equal curriculum for technology-based learning (Vale and Leder, 2004; Kaino,2008; Yau and Cheng, 2012). These studies suggested that female students should take technology training course in order to adapt to technology-based learning. The results of the study conducted by S. L. Wong and Hanafi (2007) showed that female participants not only had a higher level of confidence but also took a positive attitude to using technology for learning after they completed a technology training course. However, another study conducted by Arbaugh (2000) indicated that female students had less difficulty in using instructional technology for class participation than female students.

In general, previous studies investigating gender differences in attitudes towards computer use have revealed that male students adopt more positive attitudes towards computer use compared to their female counterparts, especially in terms of self-confidence, anxiety and enjoying (AiJabri, 1996; Tsai, Lin, & Tsai, 2001). Interestingly, another study showed that although technology is generally regarded as a toy by male students, female students are inclined to consider technology to be an instrument. As regards using computers, while men make an effort to vie and ensure victory for themselves, computers are used by women just to achieve their ambitions (Eck, Hale, Ruff, & Tjelmeland, 2002).

In this sense, with regard to EFL students' viewpoints on learner podcasts according to gender, the results of the study indicate that although both male and female students have positive perceptions of producing and using podcasts, female students take much more positive viewpoint to the use of learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills than male students. This survey finding can also be partly attributed to man and female spoken language differences. It is commonly believed that woman talk more than men. Contrary to public belief, previous research on men and women conversational styles demonstrated that women talked less than men (Tannen, 1993). Despite the fact that men talk more than women, the findings of this study indicated that female learners adopted more positive attitudes to use learner podcasts as an instructional tool to enhance their speaking skills compared to male learners. This result may stem from the topics and the content used in the learner podcasts created by participants for this study.

Henry Moore, the first person to investigate gender differences in conversation topics in 1922, proposed that gender differences in the preference of topics revealed the exact nature of men and women; therefore, these differences would continue to exist at all times. However, with the effect of change over time, there has been a decrease in gender difference in the selection of conversation topics. With regard to the gender differences in conversation, the discourse is seen to be influenced by social effects rather than the choice of conversation topics itself (Bischoping, 1993). A recent study conducted by Andrew Schwartz and his team (2013) at the University of Pennsylvania examined language of social media in terms of gender and age difference. The results of the study have showed that on social media women

generally use vocabulary and expressions related to emotional issues such as “family, birthdays, shopping and love”. On the other hand, the vocabulary used by men is about “girlfriend, football, government, PlayStation and sex”. The topics used in this study for the learner podcast tasks were “online dating” and “gossip”. Considering gender stereotypes about topics of conversation, these topics could be taught to take female students’ attention much more than male students.

4.2.3.2. Viewpoints on Learner Podcasts According to Learning Period (The Time Spent on Learning English)

Table 4.6: Effect of Learning Period on Viewpoints on Learner Podcasts (Mann Whitney U Test)

<i>Age</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Rank Mean</i>	<i>Rank Sum</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>P</i>
7-9 years	51	40.06	2070.50	744.50	.041
10-13 years	39	51.91	2024.50		

Table 4.6 shows that the time spent on learning English creates a significant difference in learners’ viewpoints on using and creating learner podcasts ($U=744, 50, p<.05$). It seems that learners who have been learning English for a long time (10-13 years) have more positive attitudes towards using and creating learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills ($M= 51.91$) than learners learning English for 7-9 years ($M= 40.06$).

This finding indicates that the participants who have been learning English for longer time are more willing to create learner podcasts. This could stem from the fact that they want to broaden their experience in speaking by using their previous knowledge of English. In other words, the more experienced students in learning English are more likely to speak as making learner podcasts offers them an opportunity to use during the speech what they have learnt so far in English courses.

Another point is that it is difficult for Turkish EFL learners to develop their oral communication skills in English as they do not live in the target society where English is spoken as a mother tongue. Therefore, they do not have many facilities to be exposed to English except English courses given at school. However, creating learner podcasts, as a new technology-based educational material provides ESL

learners with an opportunity to speak English out of the class. For this reason, the highly experienced students in learning English (10-13 years) who have completed a variety of speaking tasks during their learning period could regard learner podcasts as a remedial tool to develop their English speaking skills as they have difficulty in speaking English despite the fact that they have been trying to learn that language for a long time.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter presented the data analysis of student questionnaire, the interviews with students and pre-and post-speaking tests. Students' general viewpoints on using and creating learner podcasts, their views on learner podcasting activities according to gender and learning period, and the effects of learner podcasts on the development of students' English speaking skills were presented. The next chapter will discuss research results and provide pedagogical implications and suggestions for further studies.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Overview of the Study

This dissertation assessed the use of learner podcasts as a new technology-based instructional tool to improve EFL learners' speaking skills. This study investigated the viewpoints of students at the Preparatory School of Hacettepe University on using and creating learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. The study also explored whether students' perceptions about creating and using podcasts changed according to some demographic features: gender and learning period (how long they have been learning English). In addition, the study examined the effect of doing learner podcast tasks on the development of students' speaking skills.

In this study, the data were collected through a student questionnaire, interviews with students and pre- and post-speaking tests given to participants. The student questionnaire and interviews were employed to get information about students' viewpoints on producing and using learner podcasts for developing speaking skills. The pre- and post-speaking tests were administered to assess to what extent learner podcasts enable students to improve their English speaking skills.

The research questions answered by the study are as follows:

1. What are the EFL students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills?
2. To what extent does creating and using learner podcasts help EFL students to develop their speaking skills?
3. Are there any significant differences among participants' views with respect to their demographic features in creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills?
 - a. Gender
 - b. Learning period (how long the participants have been learning English)

An in-depth analysis of the results was carried out in three sections:

- Data collected from Likert-scale items and demographic features from the student questionnaire (90 students, 64 female and 26 male, at the Preparatory School at Hacettepe University)
- Data collected from the responses of the interviews conducted with thirty-three students
- Data collected from pre-and post-speaking tests administered to assess students' speaking skills (forty students)

In this section, the findings of the study will be reported and discussed. Then, pedagogical implications of the study will be presented. Suggestions for further research will also be offered. Lastly, the summary of significant results will be supplied.

5.2. Discussion of the Results

This study aimed to explore how learner podcasts were viewed by EFL learners at Hacettepe University as innovative instructional materials to improve their speaking skills. In this section, the results obtained from the data analysis were reviewed and discussed in three parts:

- EFL learners' general viewpoints on creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills
- The effects of learner podcasts on EFL learners' speaking skills
- EFL learners' viewpoints on the use of learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills as regards gender and learning period

5.2.1. EFL Learners' General Viewpoints on Creating and Using Learner Podcasts To Develop Their Speaking Skills

The data regarding EFL students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills showed that students have positive viewpoints on the use of learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. This finding supports previous research on learners' perceptions towards podcasts which has demonstrated that students have positive attitudes towards application of podcasting in language learning (Chan et. al., 2011; Kim and King, 2011; Li, 2010, Lord, 2008). In addition, a vast majority of the students believe that producing and

using learner podcasts is beneficial to developing their speaking skills and podcasts which are made by learners can be used as a supplementary educational material to enhance their speaking skills. Previous research on podcasting in language learning has also indicated that podcasts have a great potential as an instructional tool to improve learners' language skills (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Li, 2010). The results of his study concerning students' opinions on the use of learner podcasts are also consistent with other studies which have shown that the use of podcasting in language instruction offers major benefits to develop particularly learners' speaking and listening skills (Aston-Hay and Brooks, 2011; O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007). Most of the students who participated in the study think that producing and using learner podcasts give students chances to improve their speaking skills. Students state that student-made podcasts:

- Develop their speaking skills
- Improve their pronunciation
- Allow them to practice and improve intonation and stress during speech
- Develop and expand their English vocabulary
- Improve their fluency in English
- Enable them to learn to use appropriate speaking expressions in a particular context
- Enable them to learn to think in English
- Encourage students to speak English
- Provide shy students opportunities to be able to speak
- Enable students to deal with speaking anxiety
- Provide the opportunity for English speaking practice outside the class in a relaxed atmosphere
- Allow students to realize their mistakes made while speaking
- Develop students' skills in generating new ideas during speech

The results show that most of the students mention that the use of learner podcasts in language learning not only enables students to develop their speaking skills but also helps them to foster their language learning in some areas of English language:

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Pronunciation
- Stress and intonation
- Fluency

This confirms previous research, as reviewed by Hasan and Hoon (2013), which has indicated that “podcasts greatly support learning not just in speaking and listening but also in other language areas such as grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary” (p.128). It is possible for language learners to promote their listening and speaking skills and develop their grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation through podcasts (Chan et.al., 2011; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005).

The data gathered from the interviews with students reveal that the most significant benefit of using and creating learner podcasts in developing speaking skills is that learner produced podcasts help students to improve their English pronunciation. Students (75%) think that learner podcast tasks offer them a golden opportunity to enhance their pronunciation. Students try to pronounce the words correctly while they are creating their podcasts and recording their speech for the main reason that their podcasts will be listened to by others (their teacher, classmates and any people who subscribe to the podcast website, Podomatic). This generates the necessary motivation in students to improve their English pronunciation. Moreover, most of the students have stated that while they are producing podcasts in pairs, they learn the correct pronunciation of some words from each other and they benefit from online dictionaries with free audio pronunciation to learn how to pronounce the words properly. They check the correct pronunciation of the words which they do not know how to pronounce by using these online dictionaries with word pronunciations. Hearing the pronunciations spoken aloud enables them to acquire the correct pronunciation of some specific words and practice pronunciation. This is also a kind

of pronunciation exercise for students. During the podcasting activities, learning how some English words are pronounced correctly and making an effort to have a good pronunciation allows students to cope with their fossilized pronunciation errors and develop their pronunciation.

These findings parallel those in the literature. Previous studies indicate that podcasts can be integrated into foreign language instruction as an educational tool to improve learners' pronunciation (Ducate and Lomicka, 2009; Knight, 2010). Ducate and Lomicka (2009), for example, reports that

Using podcasting in contextualized language learning (as opposed to simple pronunciation drills) can also be useful in that it allows teachers to contextualize pronunciation and create meaningful tasks, rather than simply have students repeat and practice lists of words or sounds (p.69.)

Research studies on the use of learner podcasts to develop pronunciation have revealed that foreign language learners have positive attitudes towards using podcasts to improve their pronunciation and they believe that podcasts developed by FL (Foreign Language) learners serve to improve their pronunciation (Ducate and Lomicka, 2009; Lord, 2008). In addition, aside from FL learners' views about using podcasting to enhance their pronunciation, Lord's (2008) study reports some improvement in learners' pronunciation after the use of student-produced podcasts.

As regards pronunciation, students also mentioned that as they are making their own podcasts, they are provided with some opportunities available to any students who produce a podcast for monitoring themselves while they speak. Students stated that creating podcasts enables them to listen to themselves, detect the errors in their speech, and revise before they send the last version of their podcast to the class podcast page. Therefore, they emphasized that during the podcasting process, they can discover the errors in their pronunciation and get the chance to correct these errors.

With regard to comprehensible output, Swain and Lapkin (1995) point out that "sometimes, under some conditions, output facilitates second language learning in ways that are different from, or enhance, those of input" (p. 371). Output is regarded as an inseparable part of second language learning by Swain and Lapkin (1995). Furthermore, they propose that students should be allowed to "listen to themselves" after they "edit the output", and then check it again through listening once more and

undertake a fundamental revision in output when it is essential. It is possible for students to get feedback from not only their teachers but also their classmates. Ducate and Lomicka, (2009) suggest that this kind of a theoretical approach is consistent with podcasting. Podcasts are easy to produce since podcasting tools enable users to record, listen to, and rerecord the podcasts if necessary. Podcasts can be listened to by learners many times when they are recorded, so during the podcasting, learners have an opportunity for editing their recordings. In addition, they can make a personal comment about other learners' podcasts (Lord, 2008; Meng, 2005).

With regard to students' beliefs about the influence of learner podcasts on the development of their English pronunciation, the data gathered from the questionnaire revealed that a vast majority of the students (73.4%) mentioned that learner podcasts allows them to practice stress and intonation during the speech. It is noteworthy that some of the students (24%) stated during the interviews that podcasting tasks also help them to practice and improve stress and intonation. They think that since they try to speak like native speakers in the podcasts, they focus on the correct use of stress and intonation as well.

In teaching speaking, in addition to developing learners' communicative skills it is also necessary to teach suprasegmental properties of language in language teaching programs in order to improve learners' pronunciation. Concerning the role of suprasegmentals in pronunciation instruction, Hussain and Sajid (2015) emphasizes that suprasegmentals constitute an essential and fundamental part in teaching pronunciation. In this sense, creating learner podcasts could indirectly assist students with learning the correct use of stress and intonation to some extent. However student-made podcasts which are integrated into foreign language instruction as an alternative supplementary instructional tool to develop learners' speaking skills (as it is used in this study) cannot give students an explicit and detailed instruction on suprasegmental features of language like stress, intonation, tone or word juncture.

On the other hand, the general findings of the study based on both interviews with students and the student questionnaire designed to investigate EFL learners' viewpoints on the use of learner podcasts suggested that most of the students felt

their pronunciation improved during podcasting. This indicates that students also have positive attitudes towards the use of learner-made podcasts to enhance their English pronunciation skills. Perhaps, learner podcasts can be integrated into a phonology or phonetics course with a special instructional design to specifically focus on learners' pronunciation improvement.

According to students, the second most beneficial aspect of creating and using learner podcasts for developing their speaking skills is that students state that podcasting enables them to expand their English vocabulary and to learn to be able to use the appropriate words in a particular context. Moreover, they believe that during the podcast tasks, they also have an opportunity to learn some useful speaking expressions and phrases such as "I agree with you", "what do you think about it?" and "what do you mean by...", which will help them communicate in English, and to practice using these expressions appropriately in a specific context (87.8 %). These findings of the study indicate that creating and using learner podcasts could serve to develop students' not only grammatical competence but also sociolinguistic competence which is defined by Savignon (1983) as a type of competence that

"requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. Only in a full context of this kind can judgements be made on the appropriateness of a particular utterance" (p.37)

Previous studies on podcasting pedagogy have shown that podcasts can be used to foster learners' vocabulary development (Borgia, 2010; Putman and Kingsley, 2009). Moreover, comprehensible input, which was first proposed by Stephen Krashen (1981) through his "Input Hypothesis" occupies a crucial role in foreign language instruction. This hypothesis asserts that a significant

"condition for language acquisition to occur is that the acquirer understand (via hearing or reading) input language that contains structure 'a bit beyond' his or her current level of competence.... If an acquirer is at stage or level i, the input he or she understands should contain i+ 1" (Krashen, 1981,100).

According to this claim, in foreign language learning "comprehensible input" refers to the input which includes new words and phrases for students rather than the linguistic data that has already been known by students. The data gathered from the interviews with students indicated that most of the students (60%) stated that they learnt a wide range of new vocabulary during the podcasting process. In this sense,

considering students' responses received during the interviews about the significant contribution of learner-made podcasts to their vocabulary development, it seems that learner podcasts are also beneficial to developing students' English vocabulary. Furthermore, using learner podcasts can be an alternative way to bring "comprehensible input" into and out of EFL classrooms in order to assist learners in developing their communicative competence.

As regards grammar, almost half of the students (45%) believe that producing and using podcasts is useful for improving their English grammar. Students mentioned that they learnt new grammar structures during completing the podcast tasks. In addition, they emphasized that learner podcasts offered them an opportunity to be able to use the grammar structures they have learnt in their English courses before in their speech. Students think that they do not have difficulty in using grammar correctly in the written exercises; however, it is not easy for them to integrate correct grammar knowledge in to their speech. They stated that they generally make grammar mistakes when they speak although they study grammar structures many times. Therefore, students believe that podcasting gives them chances to learn to be able to use better grammar, and so speak proper English.

Previous research has also suggested that podcasting is influential in improving learners' grammar awareness in the target language (Islanto, 2011& Bamanger and Alhassan, 2015). However, very few publications are available in the literature that discusses the effect of podcasting on the foreign language learners 'grammar development. In this respect, this study not only presents EFL students' general views about podcasting to improve their speaking skills but also their opinions about the role of learner-made podcasts in improving their grammar skills.

With regard to the effect of learner podcasts on fluency, less than half of the students (45%) believe that learner podcast helps them to improve fluency in English. They stated that they started to speak spontaneously without much hesitation and felt confident while they were speaking after they begin to create their own podcasts. It seems that feeling confident leads to improve positive attitude towards language learning. This finding of the study is consistent with another finding which indicates that student-made podcast tasks helps students to learn to think in English while they are speaking. During the interviews, some of the students (15%) mentioned

that they learnt to be able to think in English instead of in their first language, Turkish, to speak English and they emphasized that this enabled them to attain fluency in English.

Native language (L1) transfer, which is a key part of cross-linguistic influence, has been a highly controversial subject in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (Han, 2004). The first language (L1) is considered to be “a major factor in SLA” (Ellis, 1990, p.297). Language transfer takes place in every linguistic subsystem ranging from syntax to discourse (Odlin, 1989). Therefore, foreign language learners also have to deal with the effect of their native language on their interlanguage during their learning process. Similarly, it is difficult for foreign language learners to control both their thoughts and the target language they will use when they speak. This difficulty poses a challenging question: “Can language control thoughts?” or “Can thoughts control language?” The answer seems to be related to transfer of “thinking for speaking” that was a term coined by Slobin (1996, p.75). It means “a special kind of thinking that is intimately tied to language-namely, the thinking that is carried out, on-line, in the process of speaking” (Slobin, 1996, p.75). In addition, this transfer of ‘thinking for speaking’ could be associated with Sapir-Whorf hypothesis which claims that our native language has a strong effect on how we think. As regards the linguistic relativity and determinism in this approach Slobin (1996) states that “languages differ from one another; thought and language are inseparable; therefore each community embodies a distinct world-view” (p.70).

With respect to the effect of thinking in the first-language on speaking in the second language, Slobin (1996) emphasizes that if the way of thinking in the first language is different from the one in the second language, it created special difficulties for learners. For instance, it is difficult for Turkish students who are learning English to be able to use definite and indefinite articles correctly in their spoken English (Slobin, 1996). In this respect, students’ responses indicate that they believe that carrying out learner podcast tasks is an effective alternative way to learn to think in English and so to increase their fluency.

As regards the advantages of creating and using learner podcasts to improve learners’ speaking skills, the data gathered from the interviews indicate that students also believes that podcasting is beneficial in that it encourages them to speak

English (21%) and enables them to deal with speaking anxiety (12%). Moreover, it allows shy students to overcome their shyness and start speaking English (15%). They also emphasized that learner podcasts enabled them to gain self-confidence in speaking English. Some EFL students are not willing to take part in the speaking activities in the class. It seems that producing their podcasts out of the class in a relaxed atmosphere through studying with a friend they know allowed them to feel comfortable and helped them to overcome their shyness and develop self-confidence in speaking. This can also increase students' positive attitudes towards learning English. This finding of the study can be attributed to Krashen's Effective Filter Hypothesis which suggests that "affective variables" such as "motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence" have a crucial role in second language acquisition (Krashen, 1982).

Krashen proposes that learners who have "high level of motivation and self-confidence", and "low level of anxiety" are likely to be successful in second language learning (Krashen, 1982). In other words, students acquire the language best in a low-anxiety environment. Previous research also asserts that "foreign language anxiety can be distinguished from other types of anxiety and that it can have a negative effect on the language learning process" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991c, p.112).

Consequently, the findings of the study reveal that creating and using learner podcasts creates an environment for students in which "the effective filter" is low and learners are motivated to speak in English. Moreover, using student-made podcasts to develop students' speaking skills can help teachers to decrease the stress level in the class. In addition, it can help shy students to get rid of the negative effect of stress and anxiety which result from speaking English in front of the teacher and classmates as creating podcasts enables EFL learners to practice speaking English out of the class in the comfort of their home, dormitory, or even a café where they prefer to study. This confirms previous research, as reviewed by Hasan and Hoon (2013), which has showed that it is impossible for teachers to give every students useful feedback to fulfil their particular needs; thus, they emphasizes that it is also possible to learn a language out of the classroom and learning can occur anytime and anywhere through using podcast (Hasan and Hoon, 2013).

Regarding the advantages of using learner podcasts to improve English speaking skills, an important point mentioned by some of the students (6%) during the interviews is that podcasting allows students to discover the mistakes they make while speaking, especially grammar and pronunciation mistakes. This finding of the study is compatible with Krashen's The Monitor Hypothesis (1981). This hypothesis claims that the "monitor" plays a role just in learning process. It is a tool which serves to observe our output (what we say or write), edit, and correct our mistakes. Accordingly, as podcasts allows students to listen to their speech, it offers an opportunity for self-monitoring in speech production.

It is also worth stating that some of the students think that podcasting enables students to develop their skills in generating new ideas quickly during the conversational speech as they generally have difficulty in producing ideas in the flow of the speech. Therefore, learner podcast tasks may also assist students in developing their speech production.

Considering the technical problems students encountered during podcasting process, the data gathered from the student questionnaire indicated that most of the students believe that (83.3%) creating learner podcasts and publish them to the class podcast page is not technically challenging for students. They believe that they do not need to have advanced computer and Internet operating skills in order to complete podcast tasks. Moreover, the findings obtained from the interviews with students also revealed that a vast majority of the students (81%) think that it is technically an easy process and it does not cause any problems for students. On the other hand, a few students (15%) stated that they confronted some challenges during completing podcasting tasks. Students' responses shows that the challenges students mentioned do not result from the nature of the podcast tasks; they generally arise from technical problems with mp3 converter or the types of mobile phones students use (android or iPhone).

Previous research has also indicated that language learning podcasts offer practical tools and software to use (Blaisdell, 2006, Clark & Walsh, 2004) and that, as reviewed by Dudeney and Hockly, 2007, It is easy to use Podomatic which is the website used in this study by learners to create podcasts. Today, our students are "digital natives" who regard technology as an inseparable part of their life-styles.

Therefore, as indicated by the findings of the study, it seems that they will not have difficulty in the technical process of making and using podcasts such as recording their speech, converting the audio to mp3 or mp4 player, or uploading the file to the podcast website.

As regards students' willingness to create and use learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills, the results received from the questionnaire demonstrated that most of the students who took part in the study (67.8%) stated that they want to create learner podcasts in their English courses. The data gathered from the interviews yielded identical results and confirmed this finding showing that students have positive attitudes towards the use of student-made podcasts in their EFL classes. It is noteworthy that during the interviews, all of the students (100%) mentioned that they are willing to create and use learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills and learner podcasts should be integrated into English courses as a new instructional tool. They think that the use of learner-made podcasts facilitates their language learning and helps them to develop various language skills in English.

It is also worth saying that they believe that learner podcast tasks bring greater benefit to their speaking skill improvement compared to traditional speaking tasks used in EFL classrooms. Some of the students (30%) stated in the interviews that creating learner podcasts allowed them practice speaking English out of school through setting aside time to do podcasting activity. Since students do not live in an English-speaking community, except from the speaking activities they do in the EFL classroom, they do not have many opportunities to be exposed to English language and communicate with someone through using the target language. Therefore, the use of learner podcasts as an innovative educational tool can provide EFL learners with the input they need to practice speaking English. It can also be possible for EFL learners to get some amount of real-life conversation input in non-English environments, outside the class, via creating learner podcasts.

Concerning the use of podcasting in language learning, Rosell-Aguilar (2013) emphasizes that in foreign language instruction, once podcasts are integrated in to group work activities done in or outside the classroom, "they can provide input to engage in activities conducive to interaction such as reporting, discussing, summarizing, comparing, contrasting, and so forth" (p.77). In addition, previous

studies report that podcasts not only give students chances to use authentic target language, but also to become personally involved in activities which allow them to develop different English language skills (Bamanger&Alhassan, 2015). Although it is difficult to motivate students to study outside the class, using podcasts in language learning can serve to increase their motivation for making an effort to learn the target language out of the class (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Asoodar, Marandi, Vaezi & Desmet, 2014).

On the other hand, as regard students' willingness to create and use learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills, it is noteworthy that one of the students mentioned that the topics of conversation chosen for podcasting activities should motivate students to speak. It is an important point for the instructional design of learner podcasts that will be used to improve EFL students' speaking skills. It is necessary that the topics chosen for podcasting attract students' attention and stimulate them to speak. Thus, they will be more eager to produce podcasts to develop their speaking skills.

With regard to types of creating learner podcast, during the interviews the overall responses of the students indicated that students generally prefer to create learner podcasts in pairs or groups instead of studying individually. The findings reveal that nearly half of the students want to make learner podcasts in pairs. They think that it is difficult to study as a whole group and it can create some problems. They also believe that group work is more likely to end in chaos. On the other hand, some students (18%) stated that they would rather create podcasts in groups. They think that in group work, podcasting activities offer students opportunities to communicate with many friends (instead of only one person), a variety of ideas can be generated in a group compared to pair work and they learn much more from each other. In addition, some of the students (21%) mentioned that they favor creating podcasts in either pairs or groups but not individually. Interestingly, during the interviews, only one student stated that the easiest way of creating podcasts is working individually since it allows a student to talk to himself or herself. It seems that studying individually to make podcasts is not preferred by the students. This finding may result from the fact that individual podcasting does not provide an opportunity for interaction among students. It is necessary to increase student interaction to

enhance their language learning and specifically their English speaking skills. In this sense, learner podcasts seems to create a cooperative learning environment which enables students to learn from each other while they are working together (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Another finding of the study regarding types of studying for creating learner podcast is that some of the students (12%) think that all types of creating learner podcasts should be integrated into EFL classrooms. They emphasize that learner podcasts should be produced in a specific order: individually, in pairs, and then in groups.

Finally, the results gathered from the student questionnaire reveal that most of the students (71.1%) liked creating learner podcasts and they also found podcast tasks interesting (64.5%) and enjoyable (57.7%). The previous research on podcasting pedagogy has indicated that the use of podcasts in language instruction can be interesting (Kim and King,2011) and enjoyable (Lord, 2008) for learners. These findings indicate that students' general feelings about the use of learner podcasts to develop their English speaking skills led them to take a positive attitude to producing and using podcasts.

An interesting finding gathered from the student questionnaire is that some students (31.1%) think that knowing that the podcast they create will be listened by world-wide audience does not increases their motivation to create podcasts. On the other hand, the findings of the interviews with students revealed that students make an effort to use the target language (English) correctly in their own podcasts as they will be listened to by their instructor and classmates. In this study, the podcasts made by learners are uploaded to a website, Podomatic, which enables its subscribers all over the world to access to any podcast available on the website. It seems that it is not very important for students to be listened by anyone in the world; nevertheless, they care about being listened to by the teacher and other students, so they try to speak English well.

In sum, the overall results obtained from the study concerning EFL learners 'viewpoints on creating and using learner podcasts to improve their English speaking skills show that students hold positive views on the use of learner-made podcasts to develop their English speaking skills. They believe that learner podcasts offer major benefits for their speaking skill improvement. They liked creating learner

podcasts and found them both interesting and enjoyable. Moreover, students think that podcasting helped them to manage their speaking anxiety and encouraged them to speak English. It also enabled students to practice speaking English outside the class. They think that learner podcasts as an instructional tool not only allow students to improve their speaking skills, but also facilitate their language learning through providing them with many opportunities to develop their language competence, especially linguistic (grammatical) and pragmatic competence.

EFL students who took part in this study believe that creating and using learner podcasts is beneficial in improving their speaking skills. Consequently, they have positive attitudes towards student-made podcasts and they are willing to do this kind of podcast tasks for improving their speaking achievements. It is seen that the results obtained from the student questionnaire are parallel with the findings of the interviews carried out with students. The general results suggest that students seem to have favorable attitude for the use of learner podcasts to improve their English speaking skills.

This finding of the study is supported by another research carried out on the use of podcasts to develop EFL students' listening and speaking skills, which reports that students have positive perceptions of using podcasts to enhance their listening and speaking skills (Fitria et al., 2015). In addition, previous research on learner podcasts, as reviewed by Rosell-Aguilar, 2013), has suggested that student-made podcasts have a considerable potential as a learning tool to develop learners' speaking skills. However, to the researcher's best knowledge, very few publications can be found in the literature that discuss specially foreign language learners' perceptions towards the use of students-made podcasts to improve their speaking skills.

5.2.2. The Effects Creating and Using Learner Podcasts on EFL Students' Speaking Skill Improvement

This study also aimed at investigating whether creating and using learner podcasts have a significant influence on EFL learners' speaking skill improvement or not. In this study learner podcasts were used as an innovative supplementary instructional tool to help students to develop their speaking skills. Students' performance were assessed through a pre-and post-speaking test. The data gathered from the

speaking tests revealed that students who took part in the study significantly developed their English speaking skills after they created learner podcasts as compared to their level of speaking skills before they experienced developing learner podcasts. This finding indicates a potential benefit of student-made podcasts for EFL students' speaking skills in that the use of learner podcasts as a technology-based supplementary teaching tool enabled learners to develop their speaking skills. Previous research on podcasting pedagogy has also suggested that podcast is a useful educational tool which helps EFL learners to improve their speaking skills (Fitria et al., 2015; Farangi et.al. 2016).

On the other hand, according to Stockwell (2010), despite the fact that podcasting provides language learners with various audiovisual resources, it does not offer an opportunity for interaction which is an inseparable part of language instruction. However, Rosell-Aguiler (2013) claims that it is possible to create learning environments where students get considerable opportunities to interact with each other by incorporating podcasting into language learning. Rosell-Aguiler (2013) suggests that using podcasting in pair or group work tasks, inside or outside the class, can encourage student interaction. In this respect, in this research dissertation, learner podcasts serve a useful function as an interactive instructional tool.

In this study, the researcher aimed at integrating podcasts into the foreign language instruction to help students to improve their speaking skills. Therefore, students were required to produce their own podcasts on specific topics, mostly through working in pairs. Thus, in this study, learner podcasts provided a direct input which leads to interaction among students. This finding of the study suggests that learner podcasts, podcasts made by language learners, can be regarded as an invaluable source which promotes an increase in learner interaction as also indicated by previous research in the field (Ducate and Lomicka, 2009 & Roesell-Aguilar, 2013).

In addition, in this study, learner podcasts were integrated into English language instruction as an innovative supplementary instructional tool rather than a main educational tool to help EFL learners to develop their speaking skills. The findings of the study concerning both EFL learners' views on creating and using learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills and the effect of learner podcasts on

developing learners' speaking skills revealed that learner-made podcasts used as a supplementary learning tool are highly effective in enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills. Previous research also confirms this important research finding of the study through demonstrating that podcasting can best serve to foster teaching process as a complementary material instead of the main tool presenting the content of language instruction (Bennett, 2008; Heilesen, 2010; Lee & Chan, 2007).

5.2.2. EFL Learners' Views on Creating and Using Learner Podcasts To Develop Their Speaking Skills With Respect To Their Demographic Features

This research dissertation also discusses if EFL learners' viewpoints on using and creating learner podcasts change significantly according to their demographic features: *gender* and *learning period* (how long the participants have been learning English). As regards students' viewpoints on learner-produced podcast with respect to *gender*, the findings demonstrate that gender has a significant role as a demographic feature in the learners' perceptions of using podcasting to improve their English speaking skills. The research results indicate that female students have much more positive opinions of using and creating podcasts to develop their speaking skills ($M=51.11$) than male students ($M=31.69$).

The overall results of the study concerning EFL students' opinions on the use of podcasts produced by learners to improve their speaking skills reveal that a vast majority of the students have positive attitudes towards podcasting. Moreover, the findings of the study show that female learners in this study are more likely to create podcasts to facilitate their learning and develop their English speaking skills compared to male learners.

Previous research, as reviewed by Rosell-Aguiler (2013) has indicated that gender difference in attitudes towards the use of podcasting technology for language learning differs markedly according to learners' age range. In the younger group (aged under 18 and 35-44 age), female learners are seen to be more interested in podcasting than male ones. However, in the older group (older than 45), as a common stereotype about gender differences in learning, podcasting technology attracts male learners rather than females (Rosell-Aguiler, 2013).

In this sense, the finding of this study regarding learners' views on student-made podcasts used for their speaking improvement with respect to gender differences is in accordance with Rosell-Aguiler's (2013) study. In this study, the participants are aged between 17 and 20, indicating that they belong to the younger group. Therefore, perhaps, the finding of this study concerning the role of gender differences in learners' opinions about podcasting can be attributed to the age range they are in. On the other hand, to the researcher's knowledge, a gender difference in attitudes towards podcasting pedagogy has scarcely been investigated from the point of view of foreign language learners. Moreover, there are not enough research studies on the use of podcasting in language learning available to ascertain if this finding of the study is because of the differences in the language learners' age profiles.

Previous research investigating gender differences in the use of technology revealed controversial results. Concerning the use of Internet, the related studies have shown that adult men prefer to use the Internet to entertain, get information and carry on business (Chigona, et al., 2009; Donner, Gitau, & Marsden, 2011); nonetheless, adult women are seen to be more inclined to use the Internet to engage in social activities or to communicate (Tsetsi, 2016). Moreover, previous research has also suggested that there are major differences between male's and female's perceptions of using technology in that males are well-informed and skillful in using technology, whereas females show slight interest in technology use and they have difficulty in adapting technology (Ardies, De Maeyer, Gijbels, van Keulen, 2015; Young, 2000). Moreover, it is seen that as regards the gender differences in attitudes of men and women towards technology usage, the findings of earlier studies contradict recent research in that it has indicated that the gender differences arising from technology use has almost vanished (DiMaggio, Hargittai E, Celeste, et al., 2004); however, these differences occurs in each gender's way of employing technology (Odell, Korgen, Schumacher, & Delucchi, 2000). Similarly, Davison and Argyriou (2016) have suggested that as regards men and women's usage of and adaption to technology, in general, there is no significant difference between two genders. However, some significant differences were found in various domains of technology use. For instance, women would rather use text messaging as a

collaborative learning activity and men have personal preference in wikis as an individual learning activity.

As mentioned above, the studies in literature on gender differences in learners' perceptions of using technology in the learning environment have yielded conflicting findings. In this study, statistically significant differences between male and female students' viewpoints about creating and using learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills were recorded, indicating female learners have more positive opinions for the use of student-produced podcasts. This contradicts previous research revealed that male students adopted more positive attitudes towards the use of mobile learning compared to female students (Yorgancı, 2017).

Interestingly, another study suggested that although technology is generally regarded as a toy by male students, female students are inclined to think technology is an instrument which enables them to achieve their ambitions (Eck, Hale, Ruff, & Tjelmeland, 2002). Thus, in this study, it seems that student-made podcasts, as an alternative supplementary tool, have been more strongly favored by female learners than male learners have. This may result from female students' deeply-held belief in effectiveness of learner podcasts in developing their English speaking skills as an educational tool.

This survey finding can also be somewhat ascribed to man and female spoken language differences. It is a stereotype that woman talk more than men do. Contrary to this common belief, previous research on men and women conversational styles has suggested that men do not talk less than women (Tannen, 1993) do. In spite of the fact that men talk more than women, the findings of this study demonstrated that female learners get more positive perspectives on the use learner podcasts as an supplementary learning tool to develop their speaking skills than male learners. One speculation of the researcher about this finding of the study is that this gender difference in learners' opinions on learner podcasts may result from the topics and the content used in the learner podcasts made by participants for this study.

A previous study carried out by Andrew Schwartz and his team (2013) on the language of social media in terms of gender and age difference has demonstrated that on social media women generally use vocabulary and expressions associated

with emotional issues, whereas the vocabulary preferred by men are about topics like “girlfriend, football, and government”. For this study, the students were required to create their own podcasts about the following topics: “giving information about yourself”, “online dating”, and “gossip”. Regarding common gender stereotypes about topics of conversation, these topics may be considered to take female students’ attention much more than male students. The researcher cannot make any other reasonable guesses for why this finding concerning gender differences in learners’ viewpoints has existed as there is no previous study conducted specifically on gender differences in foreign language learners’ perceptions of using learner podcasts as an educational tool to improve their speaking skills. Therefore, further research is suggested to examine the effect of gender difference on students’ attitudes towards the use of student-produced podcasts in language learning.

This dissertation research also investigated whether EFL learners’ viewpoints on the use of learner-made podcast for their speaking achievement changed significantly with respect to *learning period factor* (the time spent on learning English). The findings revealed that there were significant differences in learners’ viewpoints based on their English learning experiences. The learners who have been learning English for a long time (10-13 years) were seen to have more positive opinions for creating and using learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills than learners learning English for 7-9 years do.

This suggests that the students who have been learning English for longer time seem to be more eager to create learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. This may be attributed to the fact that since they have been studying English for a long time, they want to be able to use their previous knowledge of English in their speech and learner podcasts offer opportunities for these students to use what they have learnt so far in English courses. Accordingly, the students can foster their language learning, especially their speaking skills, by means of student-produced podcasts.

Another important point is that Turkish EFL learners generally have difficulty in improving their speaking skills as they live in a non-English speaking country where they do not get much chance to have language input to facilitate their language learning except the English classroom. On the other hand, student-produced

podcasts appears as a new learning tool which allows learners to be exposed to English both in and out of the class and find a golden opportunity to communicate in the target language aside from the class. During their learning period, the students may have experienced various techniques and performed different speaking tasks in their English courses for their English speaking achievement. However, the results obtained from pre-speaking tests administered to students for this dissertation research have indicated that they need to develop their speaking skills. This shows that speaking English poses a big problem for these students, as also emphasized by some of the students during the interviews. Therefore, learner podcasts may attract the attention and interest of learners studying English for a longer time (10-13 years) since they have been looking for innovative alternative ways of improving their speaking skills. As regards this finding of the study, there are no studies available in the literature which investigates whether foreign language learners' previous learning experiences affect their perceptions of using podcasts, in particular, learner podcasts to foster their speaking skills.

Consequently, this study also investigated how some demographic factors depending on learners' profile, involving gender and learning period, have occupied a role in EFL learners' perspectives in learner podcast usage for their speaking skill improvement. Statistically significant differences in students' viewpoints about the use of learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills based on gender and their previous learning experience were found. As mentioned before, the researcher suggests future study to investigate the differences arising from learners' gender and learning period for language as a part of their demographic factors in podcasting pedagogy.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications

The results of this dissertation research study suggest that EFL learners have positive viewpoints on creating and using learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills. A vast majority of the students think that learner-made podcasts are extremely beneficial to improving their English speaking skills. With regard to learners' views, there are significant differences in students' perspectives based on two factors of personal profile: gender and previous language learning experiences. Moreover, the results of the study revealed that the use of learner podcasts as a supplementary

instructional tool is effective in facilitating EFL learners' language learning in various areas (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency), especially in improving their speaking skills. Thus, considering EFL learners' positive perceptions of using student-produced podcasts for their speaking achievement, and the significant effect of creating and using learner podcasts on EFL learners' speaking improvement, learner podcasts can be incorporated into foreign language instruction and they can be used as a new technology-based instructional tool in fostering students' speaking skills.

With regard to foreign language teaching, particularly in Turkish context, EFL learners generally have difficulty in improving their speaking skills as they are not many opportunities to be exposed to the target language, English, outside the class. Therefore, they need an additional comprehensible input to be able to practice speaking English aside from the speaking tasks they carry out in English courses. In this respect, learner podcasts enable learners to develop their communicative skills in a stress free atmosphere out of the class. Using podcasts for language learning is not only beneficial but also an enjoyable learning task for students (Fitria et al., 2015). It also allows shy students, who are reluctant to speak in class, to communicate with their friends outside the class without suffering from high level of speaking anxiety. In addition, in podcasting pedagogy, producing something can motivate students for learning (Stanley, 2006). Accordingly, learner podcasts can serve to develop their speaking skills as an effective educational medium through encouraging students' interaction.

With regard to problems with teaching and learning English in Turkish EFL context, as reviewed by Akalin and Zengin (2007), Büyükyavuz and İnal (2008), and Solak (2015), it is seen that English courses mostly focus on grammar instruction compared to other skills. In addition, unfortunately, the speaking tasks used in the English classroom to foster learners speaking skills seem not to be effective enough to help students to improve their speaking skills. In general, Turkish EFL students mention that: "I can understand English, but I cannot talk". In Turkey, students start to learn English at the fourth grade in the primary education, and today, in private education institutions, children learn English even at the kindergarten. Although students take English courses for a long time during their learning process (nearly

8-10 years till higher education), they still have difficulty in speaking. In this study, during the interviews with students on the use of learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills, one of the participants gave a noteworthy response as regards this issue:

“We have been learning English since we were in the fourth class at the elementary school; however, we cannot still use the language effectively. Although we studied the same grammar structures many times, we are not still good at grammar. Why do we have difficulty in learning English? Because we have not had the opportunity to speak English so far. Our teachers had to speak Turkish in English courses as they had to teach English in crowded classes including thirty or forty students. Nobody talked to us in English. Most of us are from small cities; we have not had the chance to speak with foreigners. In this sense, podcasts provided us with opportunities to improve our speaking skills. They should be undoubtedly integrated into English courses (Interview responses) (84).

This suggests that, in Turkish EFL context, it is necessary to employ new methods and instructional tools to allow students to enhance their speaking skills. It is also vital that speaking activities used for language instruction appeal to learners' interests and attract their attention. Today, we have digital natives in our classrooms, so it is necessary to integrate technology into foreign language instruction to keep and increase our students' engagement in language learning. Therefore, learner podcasts can be integrated into English curriculum as an alternative technology-based instructional tool. Students-made podcasts can be used either as a supplementary tool to support students' language learning or perhaps, a separate course can be designed for EFL learners in which they are required to carry out podcast projects through creating podcasts individually, in pairs and groups.

With respect to integrating learner podcasts into foreign language instruction, a key point is that a good instructional design is needed to be able to benefit from podcasting effectively for language learning and teaching. As regards podcasting pedagogy, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) emphasizes that two important factors should be taken into consideration to use podcasts in language instruction: “design and pedagogy”. In order to integrate learner podcasts into the EFL classroom, it is essential to determine learners' needs; accordingly, set goals by considering

students profile and decide on the types of podcast tasks that will be produced by students to allow them to develop their language skills challenging for them. In addition, teachers need a training to be able to use learner podcasts effectively to foster learners' speaking skills. They should be informed about what a podcasts is and how it can be efficiently integrated into language classes as an instructional tool for learners' speaking skill improvement. Moreover, as indicated by results of the study, both teachers and students can create and use podcasts easily just with basic computer and Internet operating skills.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Study

This study assessed the use of learner podcasts to develop EFL learners' speaking skills. With respect to podcast usage, the study also examined learners' viewpoints on creating and using podcasts to foster their speaking skills. Thus, further research investigating teachers' perceptions of using learner podcasts for learners' speaking development needs to be undertaken. This kind of a study can inform both teachers and curriculum designers of effective ways of incorporating learner-made podcasts in speaking classes.

Another suggestion for further research is that this study was conducted at a university setting. Therefore, this study may be carried out in a secondary education institution to evaluate the effect of learner podcasts on EFL learners' speaking skills through a pre-and post-test research design. This kind of a study may also create an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of learner podcasts usage in improving language learners' speaking skills through comparing speaking performance of EFL learners who have different learner profiles.

In this research study, the focus of attention is on not only gender but also learning period for English as demographic factors which may influence EFL learners' views on the use of learner podcasts to improve their speaking skills. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine whether learners' opinions on using and creating learner podcasts to develop their speaking skills change significantly according to their demographic features, that is, gender and their previous learning experience. More research into differences in attitudes towards producing and using learner podcasts in foreign language learning for speaking skill improvement based on

gender and learning period is still necessary to validate the results obtained from this study.

5.5. Conclusion

Quite recently, considerable attention has been paid to the use of podcasts in foreign language instruction in order to facilitate EFL learners' language learning. However, studies on podcasting pedagogy are still lacking. This dissertation research opens up a new issue through emphasizing the potential of the use of learner podcasts as an innovative technology-based instructional tool for foreign language education, especially for EFL learners' speaking improvement. This study also underlines the need for new educational materials and tasks which will help EFL learners to improve their speaking skills. Moreover, it shows that learner-made podcasts are effective educational tools that can enable learners to develop their speaking skills.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE ON ETHICS



T.C.
HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Genel Sekreterlik

GİZLİ

Sayı : 76000869/ 477-2053


29 Haziran 2015

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi: 16.06.2015 tarih ve 1135 sayılı yazımız.

Enstitünüz Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı doktora programı öğrencilerinden Arzu KOÇAK'ın Doç. Dr. Arif SARIÇOBAN danışmanlığında yürüttüğü "Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğrenen Öğrencilerin Konuşma Becerilerini Geliştirmede Öğrenci Podcastleri Oluşturulmasına ve Kullanımına Karşı Tutumları" başlıklı tez çalışması, Üniversitemiz Senatosu Etik Komisyonunun 23 Haziran 2015 tarihinde yapmış olduğu toplantıda incelenmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi rica ederim.


Prof. Dr. Ömer UĞUR
Rektör a.
Rektör Yardımcısı

Ek: Tutanak

APPENDIX II. ORIGINALITY REPORT



HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ
YÜKSEK LİSANS/DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
EĞİTİM BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ BİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 26/10/2017

Tez Başlığı : İngilizce Öğretiminde Öğrenci Podcastlerinin Oluşturulup Kullanılarak Konuşma Becerilerinin Geliştirilmesi

Yukarıda başlığı verilen tez çalışmamın tamamı (kapak sayfası, özetler, ana bölümler, kaynakça) aşağıdaki filtreler kullanılarak **Turnitin** adlı intihal programı aracılığı ile kontrol edilmiştir. Kontrol sonucunda aşağıdaki veriler elde edilmiştir.

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Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

26.10.2017

Tarih ve İmza

Adı Soyadı: ARZU KOÇAK

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Anabilim Dalı: Yabancı Diller Eğitimi

Programı: İngiliz Dili Eğitimi

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HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
THESIS/DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Date: 26/10/2017

Thesis Title : Developing Speaking Skills via Creating and Using Learner Podcasts in English Language Classes

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Program: İngiliz Dili Eğitimi
Status: Masters Ph.D. Integrated Ph.D.

ADVISOR APPROVAL


APPROVED
(Assoc.Dr. Nuray Alagözlü)

APPENDIX III. THE CONSENT FORM

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Bu çalışma, Arzu KOÇAK ve Doç. Dr. Arif Sarıçoban tarafından “Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce Öğrenen Öğrencilerin Konuşma Becerilerini Geliştirmede Öğrenci Podcastleri Oluşturulmasına ve Kullanımına Karşı Tutumları” başlıklı doktora tezinin bir parçası olarak yürütülmektedir. Bu çalışma yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmek için teknoloji temelli eğitimsel bir araç olarak öğrenci podcastleri oluşturulmasına ve kullanımına karşı tutumlarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Podcastler bilgisayar veya MP3 ÇALAR gibi mobil araçlara dinlemek veya izlemek amacıyla indirilebilen ve İnternette yayınlanabilen ses veya video dosyalarıdır. İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği sınıflarda, öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmede öğrenci podcastleri yeni bir öğretimsel araç olarak kullanılabilir. Çalışma sırasında sizden alınan veriler tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için İngilizce Okutmanı Arzu KOÇAK (E-posta: koçak_arzu@hotmail.com) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

Tarih:

Katılımcı:

Adı, soyadı:

Adres:

Tel:

İmza:

Araştırmacı:

Adı, soyadı: Doç. Dr. Arif SARIÇOBAN

Adres: H.U. Beytepe Kampüsü Eğitim Fak. B Blok Kat:3 Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim

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e-posta: arifs@hacettepe.edu.tr

Araştırmacı:

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APPENDIX IV. STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

BÖLÜM I: ÖZGEÇMİŞ BİLGİLERİ

Lütfen aşağıdaki bilgileri doldurunuz

Tarih:

Sınıf:

Bölüm:

Yaş:

Cinsiyet: Bayan Erkek

Kaç yıldır İngilizce Öğreniyorsunuz:

BÖLÜM II. ÖĞRENCİLERİN PODCASTLERE KARŞI TUTUMLARI

Öğrenci Podcastleri oluşturmanın ve kullanmanın İngilizce konuşma becerilerinize katkısı hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Alttaki seçenekler için, lütfen düşüncenizi en iyi anlatan ifadeyi daire içine alınız.

Size uyan seçeneği daire içine alınız.	Tamamen Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
1.Podcast oluşturmanın İngilizce konuşma becerilerimi geliştirmeme fayda sağlayacağına inanıyorum	5	4	3	2	1
2. Podcast oluşturmak, İngilizce konuşma becerilerimi geliştirmede, dil öğrenimimi destekleme açısından kullanılabilir	5	4	3	2	1
3. İngilizce derslerinde podcast oluşturmanın kullanımına karşı olumlu tutumlar içerisindeyim	5	4	3	2	1
4.) Podcast oluşturmanın ve kullanmanın İngilizce konuşma becerilerimi geliştirmeye yardım eden iyi bir eğitimsel araç olduğuna inanıyorum	5	4	3	2	1
5. Podcast oluşturmak İngilizce telaffuzumun gelişmesine yardımcı oluyor	5	4	3	2	1
6. Podcast oluşturmak konuşma sırasında tonlama ve vurguyu pratik yapmama yardımcı oluyor.	5	4	3	2	1

7. Podcast oluşturmak konuşma esnasında içeriğe göre uygun ifadeleri kullanmayı (kendi fikrini belirtme, tartışma, karşı fikre katılma veya katılmama vb.) öğrenmeye yardımcı oluyor	5	4	3	2	1
8. Oluşturduğum podcastin dünya çapında gerçek kişilerce dinleneceğini bilmek bu podcast'i oluşturma isteğimi artırıyor	5	4	3	2	1
9. İngilizce podcast oluşturmanın ilgi çekici olduğunu düşünüyorum	5	4	3	2	1
10. İngilizce podcast oluşturmanın eğlenceli olduğunu düşünüyorum	5	4	3	2	1
11.Podcast oluşturmak ve yayınlamak ileri düzeyde bilgisayar ve internet kullanma becerisine sahip olmayı gerektirmemektedir	5	4	3	2	1
12. İngilizce podcast oluşturma aktivitelerini sevdim	5	4	3	2	1
13.İngilizce derslerinde bu tip podcast oluşturma aktivitelerine katılmayı isterim	5	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX V. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. İngilizce konuşma becerilerini geliştirmek için podcast oluşturmanın faydalı olduğunu düşünüyor musun? (Bu şekilde düşünmenin sebebi nedir?)
(Konuşma becerilerini geliştirmesi açısından bu aktivitelerin öğrencilere sağladığı faydalar nelerdir?)
2. İngilizce konuşma becerileri açısından, yapılan podcast aktiviteleri dili en çok hangi yönlerden geliştirmene yardımcı oldu? Gramer, kelime bilgisi, telafuz, vurgu, tonlama, akıcı konuşma vb.?
3. İngilizce podcast oluştururken ve web sayfamızda yayınlarken ne tür zorluklarla karşılaştın?
4. İngilizce derslerinde bu tip podcast oluşturma aktivitelerine katılmak ister misin? (Bu şekilde düşünmenizin sebebi nedir?)
5. Bu aktivitelerin, İngilizce konuşma becerilerini geliştirmene olanak sağladığını düşünüyor musun?
6. Podcastler bireysel yapılabilir, bir arkadaşınla çalışabilirsin ya da grup çalışması yapılabilir. Bu üç formu düşündüğünde bunlardan hangileri podcast çalışması için sınıfta kullanılmalı?

APPENDIX VI. PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

BTCE Speaking Test

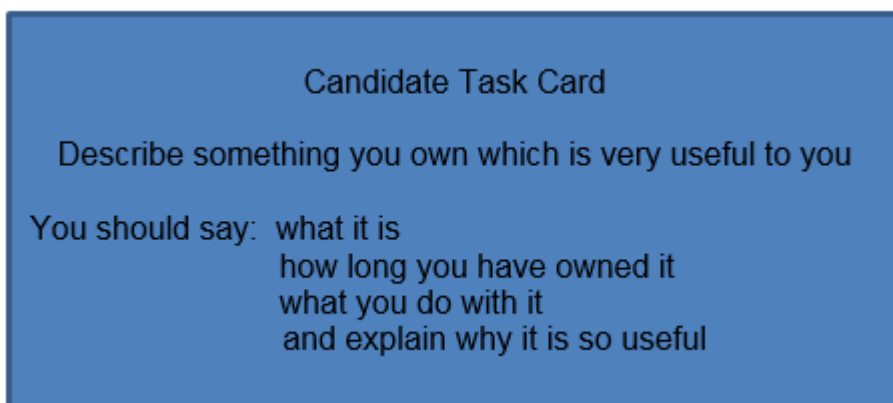
Part 1: Introduction / Breaking the Ice (2-3 minutes)

[Examiner introduces himself/herself and checks candidate's identification. Candidate is asked general questions on familiar topics.]

- Where do you live?
- What do you like or dislike about living there?
- What do you usually do in your free time?
- What are your plans for the future?

Part 2: Individual Extended Talk (4-5 minutes)

[Examiner gives the candidate a printed task card.]



Candidate Task Card

Describe something you own which is very useful to you

You should say: what it is
how long you have owned it
what you do with it
and explain why it is so useful

You will have to talk about the topic for 1 to 2 minutes.

You have one minute to think about what you're going to say.

You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

Concluding questions:

How often do you use it?

What would you do if you lost or broke it?

How has this object changed your life?

Part 3 : Interactive Discussion (4-5 minutes)

[Examiner has an interactive discussion with the candidate. Candidate is given the opportunity to elaborate on a topic, and is urged to use more detail.]

What is your favourite TV programme?

What role does technology play in our lives?

Why do you think social networking sites have become so popular?

Do you think advertising influences what we buy?

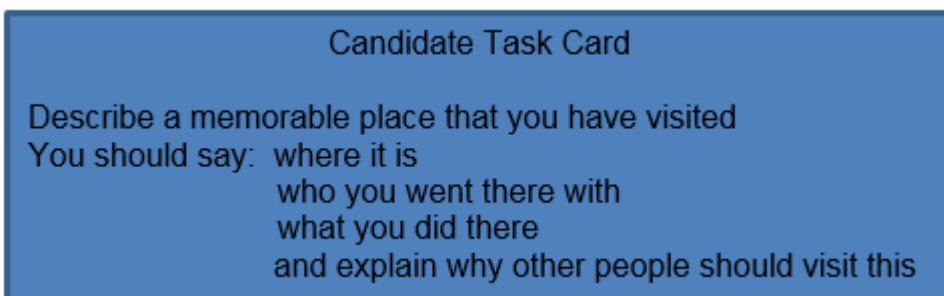
BTCE Speaking Test

Part 1: Introduction / Breaking the Ice (2-3 minutes) [Examiner introduces himself/herself and checks candidate's identification. Candidate is asked general questions on familiar topics.]

- What do you enjoy doing at weekends?
- What do you do to keep fit and healthy?
- Why are you studying English?
- If you were given the opportunity to travel abroad, where would you go and why?

Part 2: Individual Extended Talk (4-5 minutes)

[Examiner gives the candidate a printed task card.]



Candidate Task Card

Describe a memorable place that you have visited
You should say: where it is
 who you went there with
 what you did there
 and explain why other people should visit this

You will have to talk about the topic for 1 to 2 minutes.

You have one minute to think about what you're going to say.

You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

Concluding questions:

- Would you like to go there again? Why (not)?
- How did this place make you feel?
- Who would you like to go there with next time?

Part 3 : Interactive Discussion (4-5 minutes)

[Examiner has an interactive discussion with the candidate. Candidate is given the opportunity to elaborate on a topic, and is urged to go into greater detail.]

- Would you like to take a year off to travel and see the world? Why (not)?
- What preparations would somebody need to make before travelling round the world?
- How important do you think it is for people to visit different places?
- How do you think tourism changes local communities?

BTCE Speaking Test

Part 1: Introduction / Breaking the Ice (2-3 minutes) [Examiner introduces himself/herself and checks candidate's identification. Candidate is asked general questions on familiar topics.]

- Tell us about your family.
- What do you usually do when you are on holiday?
- What's your favourite season of the year?
- Which famous person would you most like to meet? Why?

Part 2: Individual Extended Talk (4-5 minutes) [Examiner gives the candidate a printed task card.]

Candidate Task Card

Describe an important decision you had to make in your life.

You should say: when you had to make this decision
 why you considered it important
 whether it turned out to be the right one
 and explain how you felt after you made this decision

You will have to talk about the topic for 1 to 2 minutes.

You have one minute to think about what you're going to say.

You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

Concluding questions:

- Were there other options available to you when you made this decision?
- What would have happened if you had made a different decision?

- Were you influenced by anyone else when you made the decision?
- How have other people been affected by it?

Part 3: Interactive Discussion (4-5 minutes) [Examiner has an interactive discussion with the candidate. Candidate is given the opportunity to elaborate on a topic, and is urged to go into greater detail.]

- Is it wise to ask others for advice when you have to make important decisions? Why (not)?
- Why do you think some people are better at making decisions than others?
- Is there anything that you regret doing or not doing in your life?
- Are some decisions more important than others? Why (not)?

APPENDIX VII. POST-TEST QUESTIONS

BTCE Speaking Test

PART 1

Please come in and sit down - over here. First, let me take a look at your identity card.... it's for security purposes only.

Thank you. My name is (interviewer's name). What is your name? What shall I call you?

How are you?

How old are you?

Where do you come from?

Where do you live now?

What kind of place do you live in (a house or a flat?)

Describe the neighbourhood that you live in at the moment?

What is your favourite pastime? Why do you enjoy doing this?

Do you prefer indoor or outdoor activities? Why?

Now move on to Speaking Test Part 2.

BTCE Speaking Test Part 2

Thank you. Now please take this card. I want you to speak for one or two minutes about the topic written on this card. Follow the instructions on the card. You have one

minute of preparation time before you give your talk.

Describe a place that you would like to travel to.

You should say:

- Where the place is
- What you can see and do there
- Why you would like to go to this place

- With whom you would like to go

You will have to talk about the topics for 1 or 2 minutes.

You've one minute to think about what you're going to say.

You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

Now move on to Speaking Test Part 3.

BTCE Speaking Test Part 3

Do you like travelling why?

How do you usually travel?

What kind of places do you like to travel to?

Do you like travelling alone or with other people?

What things do you take with you when you travel?

Where have you travelled lately?

What's the best place you've ever visited?

What was special about this place?

That's the end of BTCE Speaking Test

BTCE Speaking Test Part 1

Please come in and sit down - over here. First, let me take a look at your identity card.

it's for security purposes only.

Thank you. My name is (interviewer's name). What is your name?

What shall I call you?

How are you?

How old are you?

Where do you come from?

Can you describe your hometown?

Have you got any relatives there?

Follow-up: Who are they?

Do you like basketball?

Follow-up: Why? / Why not?

Now move on to Speaking Test Part 2.

BTCE Speaking Test Part 2

Thank you. Now, please take this card. I want you to speak for one or two minutes about the topic written on this card. Follow the instructions on the card. You have one minute of preparation time before you give your talk.

Describe a company that you would like to work for. You should say:

- What its main business is
- Why you would like to work for it
- What benefits it offers
- How you get paid

You will have to talk about the topic for 1 to 2 minutes.

You have one minute to think about what you're going to say.

You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

Now move on to Speaking Test Part 3.

BTCE Speaking Test Part 3

Do you have many friends?

Are they casual acquaintances or close friends?

Do you prefer to stay with your family or with your friends? Do you prefer one or two close friends or many friends?

Can you talk about your best friend?

How do you think one can make friends? What do you usually do with your friends?

Is the time you spend with your friends as much as that you spend with your family?

That's the end of BTCE Speaking Test.

APPENDIX VIII. SPEAKING EXPRESSIONS

Opening a Discussion

To begin with,

We need to discuss ...

Let's start by (V ing)

We'll start by (V ing)

The problem/question/issue here is

The important thing (here) is...

The main thing we need to discuss is...

Let's look at...

It looks like...

It appears that...

Asking for Input

What do you think?

How about you?

How do you feel about that?

Any ideas on that?

Responding

That sounds like a good idea.

Sounds good.

The problem with that is ...

Giving Opinions

I think we should get a new car.

I don't think we need one.

I believe (that) smoking should be outlawed.

I don't believe (that) it should be illegal.

In my opinion, *Gone with the Breeze* is the best movie ever made.

I feel that it's the right thing to do.

I don't feel that it's such a good idea.

Asking for Opinions

What do you think?

What's your opinion?

What are your ideas?

Do you have any thoughts on that?

How do you feel about that?

Asking for support or details

Why do you think that?

Could you elaborate?

Could you give (me) an example?

Can you illustrate that?

What evidence do you have?

Could you explain it in more detail?

Could you provide some details?

Supporting your opinions

Let me illustrate?

For example,

For instance,

To give you an example,

Let me give you an example,

To elaborate,

First, (second), etc.

(These phrases can be followed by details, examples, elaboration, or a summary of your main points.)

Agreeing

I agree.

You're right.

That's right.

I think that's a good idea

Good idea.

Disagreeing

I disagree.

I don't think so.

(No) That's not right.

(I'm sorry, but) I don't agree

Yes, but ...

APPENDIX IX. SPEAKING TESTS PUBRIC



Band	Fluency and Coherence	Lexical Resource	Lexical Resource	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar <input type="checkbox"/> speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features <input type="checkbox"/> develops topics fully and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics <input type="checkbox"/> uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately <input type="checkbox"/> produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety <input type="checkbox"/> sustains flexible use of features throughout <input type="checkbox"/> is effortless to understand
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language <input type="checkbox"/> develops topics coherently and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning <input type="checkbox"/> uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skillfully, with occasional inaccuracies <input type="checkbox"/> uses paraphrase effectively as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a wide range of structures flexibly <input type="checkbox"/> produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a wide range of pronunciation features <input type="checkbox"/> sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses <input type="checkbox"/> is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence <input type="checkbox"/> may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction <input type="checkbox"/> uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics <input type="checkbox"/> uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices <input type="checkbox"/> uses paraphrase effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility <input type="checkbox"/> frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation <input type="checkbox"/> uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies <input type="checkbox"/> generally paraphrases successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility <input type="checkbox"/> may make frequent mistakes with complex structures, though these rarely cause comprehension problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control <input type="checkbox"/> shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained <input type="checkbox"/> can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times

SPEAKING TESTS RUBRIC



+	5	<input type="checkbox"/> usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going <input type="checkbox"/> may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers <input type="checkbox"/> produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems	<input type="checkbox"/> manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility <input type="checkbox"/> attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success	<input type="checkbox"/> produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy <input type="checkbox"/> uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems	<input type="checkbox"/> shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6
	4	<input type="checkbox"/> cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction <input type="checkbox"/> links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence	<input type="checkbox"/> is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice <input type="checkbox"/> rarely attempts paraphrase	<input type="checkbox"/> produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare <input type="checkbox"/> errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> uses a limited range of pronunciation features <input type="checkbox"/> attempts to control features but lapses are frequent <input type="checkbox"/> mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener
	3	<input type="checkbox"/> speaks with long pauses <input type="checkbox"/> has limited ability to link simple sentences <input type="checkbox"/> gives only simple responses and is frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information <input type="checkbox"/> has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics	<input type="checkbox"/> attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances <input type="checkbox"/> makes numerous errors except in memorised	<input type="checkbox"/> shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4
	2	<input type="checkbox"/> pauses lengthily before most words <input type="checkbox"/> little communication possible	<input type="checkbox"/> only produces isolated words or memorised utterances	<input type="checkbox"/> cannot produce basic sentence forms	<input type="checkbox"/> speech is often unintelligible
	1	<input type="checkbox"/> no communication possible <input type="checkbox"/> no rateable language			
	0	<input type="checkbox"/> does not attend			

APPENDIX X. TURKISH TRANSCRIPTIONS

1. Kesinlikle faydalı olduğunu düşünüyorum
2. Faydalı olduğunu düşünüyorum tabi ki. İlk başta ben gerçekten hiçbir şekilde konuşamıyordum ama şimdi fark ediyorum ki ilerleme var.
3. Ben çok faydalı olduğunu düşünüyorum. Konuşma becerimiz gelişmeye başladı
4. Hem güncel konular vardı, hem onların hakkında yorum yapmayı öğrendim
5. Ben hazırlığa yeni başladığım zaman doğru düzgün konuşamıyordum, zar zor grameri kullanıyordum, kelimeleri yerinde kullanamıyordum ama podcasti yaptıktan sonra çok çok faydasını gördüm. Biraz daha ilerleme oldu konuşmamda.
6. Bazı arkadaşlarım mesela, Fatma ve Almina çok geliştirdi konuşmalarını. Çok faydalı buldum podcastleri.
7. Birçok alanda yedi hafta öncesi benle şu an arasında çok fark olduğunu görüyorum.
8. Mesela biz arkadaşımınla podcast yapmaya başladık. Diyaloğa nasıl başlanır, iki kişi nasıl konuşur hiç bilmiyorduk. Ama konuşmaya başlayınca, belli ifadeleri kullanınca çok güzel oldu, o ifadeleri kullanmayı öğrendim. Hiç konuşmuyordum, hiç konuşmuyordum. Şimdi konuşmaya başladım.
9. Evet. Çünkü iste sekte isteme sekte geliştiren bir şey.
10. Evet. Konuşmaya teşvik etti beni.
11. Evet. Böyle bir ortam yok başka yerde
12. Evet, işte ilk önce bir adım atmış oluyorsun. Bundan sonra, gerçekten speakingi geliştirebileceğimi, daha ilerleyebileceğimi, faydalı olacağını düşünüyorum.
13. Kafamızda bir şeyler düşünüp konuşmaya çalışıyoruz. Ben önceden düzgün cümleler tam kuramıyordum. Bu beni geliştirdi, podcastlerle daha planlı bir şekilde konuşmaya başladım, o yüzden yararlı ve ilerlememi sağlıyor.
14. Düşünüyorum. Podcastleri yaparken, ana dili İngilizce olanlar gibi konuşmaya çalışırken vurgu ve tonlamayı geliştirdi. Kelime hazinemi geliştirdi bir de. Düzgün cümleler kurmaya çalışırken çok fazla kelime öğrendik. Bence gayet faydalı.

15. Kesinlikle faydalı olduğunu düşünüyorum. Speaking (konuşma) sınavı için bir hazırlık oluyor. Öğrenciler İngilizce konuşmada genel olarak zorlanıyor zaten, podcast bu anlamda bize çok faydalı oluyor.

16. Mesela podcast yaptığımız için, arkadaşımızla karşılıklı konuştuğumuz için konuşma sınavında hiç zorlanmadık. Oysaki podcastler olmasaydı çok zorlanacaktık sınavda. Hatta sınavda, sınavda olduğumuzu unuttuk, podcast yapıyoruz zannettik

17. Bence faydalıydı çünkü bizim öğrenciler olarak genel problemimiz speaking (konuşma)

18. Kesinlikle. Çok geliştirdi. Kendimi artık daha rahat ifade edebiliyorum. Kendi açımdan İngilizcede en büyük sorun konuşma. Okuma tamam, okumayı halledebiliyorum veya anlayabiliyorum yavaş konuşulduğunda ama bir yabancı ile konuşurken kalıyordum, hiç bir şey konuşamıyordum eskiden. Ama podcastler olmasaydı hala eskisi gibi olacağımı düşünüyorum

19. Okullarda falan pek yarar sağlanmıyor buna, o yüzden podcastler yararlıydı.

20. Düşünüyorum çünkü sınıf ortamında pek konuşamıyoruz, podcastlerde daha iyi konuşuyoruz, arkadaşım ile konuşurken de özen gösteriyoruz başkaları dinleyecek diye, ya da farklı olsun diye diğerlerinden senaryolar yazmaya çalışıyoruz, bu yönden de yaratıcılığın gelişmesini sağlıyor, iyi oluyor

21. Evet, bizim dönem biraz kısaydı ama uzun süreli daha çok geliştireceğini düşünüyorum ben.

22. Podcastler İngilizce konuşmada pratik yaptırdı bize ve biraz güven sağladı, o yüzden kesinlikle derslerde olmalı kesinlikle

23. Bir de arkadaşımızla tartışma yaparken bir güven geliyor.

24. Ben kendimden örnek verirsem daha önce hiç bu şekilde konuşmamıştım. Bu podcast bir başlangıç oldu benim için. Aslında ilk başta çok korkuyordum. Konu ile ilgili Türkçesi aklıma gelirse konuşabileceğimin farkına vardım. Çok mükemmel olmadı ama derdimi anlatacak kadar da olsa, yararlı oldu. En azından korkum geçti birazcık. Yani sevdim ben bu tez uygulamasını.

- 25.** Ben artık birini görünce İngilizce konuşmaktan çekinmiyorum. Özgüvenim yerine oturdu konuşa konuşa. Daha düzgün konuşabileceğimi, kendimi daha iyi ifade edebileceğimi anladım. Podcastler konuşma açısından çok büyük fayda sağladı.
- 26.** En çok podcast oluşturunca kendimize güvenimiz geliyor. Arkadaşımızla konuştuğumuz için utanma, sıkılma falan olmuyor, daha içten oluyor, bayağı eğlenceli oluyor
- 27.** Arkadaşımla birlikte her hafta bir araya geldik podcast yapmak için. Arkadaşımın çok güzel bir İngilizcesi var. Onunla birlikte yeni kelimeler öğrendik hem de yeni kelimeleri konuşmada kullanabiliyoruz, konuşurken espri bile yapabiliyoruz. Bunları geliştirdi.
- 28.** Birbirimizle konuşmaya çalışıyoruz, fikir alışverişi yapıyoruz. Mesela ben bir yerde tıkanırsam yanımdaki arkadaşım yardım ediyor bana konuşma sırasında.
- 29.** Türkçe düşünüp İngilizce ye çevirmektense artık İngilizce düşünüp İngilizce konuşmamı sağladı,
- 30.** İngilizce düşünmeyi öğrendim
- 31.** Bence podcastin en büyük avantajı bize İngilizce düşünmeyi öğretmesi. İlk podcastlerde ne konuşacağımızı planlıyorduk, sonrasında neden bahsederiz diyoruz ve cümleler arkasından çıkıyor, yani akıcılık kazanıyoruz.
- 32.** Ben zaten sınıfta pek konuşan biri değilim, böyle bir şey olması iyi olur, hatta bundan not bile alınsa iyi olur. Benim gibi içine kapanık derste konuşamayan öğrenciler var, podcastler derslerin bir parçası olsa daha iyi olur.
- 33.** Sınıfta çok aktif konuşan bir insan değilim, biraz çekingen bir insanım. Tanıdığım biriyle bu aktiviteyi yapmak daha rahat oldu. Beni geliştirdiğini düşünüyorum.
- 34.** Utangaçlığı da atmamızı sağlıyor biraz. Mesela ben çok konuşan biri değilim normalde, âmâ podcast yaptıkça, sınıftaki öğrendiklerimizi de kullanıyoruz ve yavaş yavaş geliştiğini görüyorum konuşmamın.
- 35.** Podcast yaptıkça telaffuzum daha gelişti ve heyecanımı attım, konuşmaya alıştım.
- 36.** Aynı zamanda, ben hiçbir zaman istediğim kadar akıcı konuşamıyordum. Arkadaşımla karşılıklı konuştukça heyecanım gitti.

- 37.** Sesimizi kaydederek yanlışlarımızı fark ediyoruz, başkalarının podcastlerini dinleyerek farklılıkları görüyoruz.
- 38.** Ben konuştuğum zaman sonra tekrar sesimi duyuyorum, ne dediğimi duyuyorum, hatam varsa görüyorum
- 39.** Benim dilbilgisinde sıkıntım var, podcastlerde söylediklerimi bir daha duyuyorum, hatalarımı görüyorum ve düzeltiyorum
- 40.** Benim mesela konuşurken aklıma direkt bir fikir gelmiyordu, daha hızlı fikir gelmeye başladı aklıma
- 41.** Sınıf içinde belki çok rahat olamayabiliyoruz bazen, böyle çok daha rahat olduğunu düşünüyorum
- 42.** İlk önce speaking (konuşma) için cesaret gerekli, sınıfta pek olmuyor bazen. Bir de konularla alakalı sanırım Türkçe olarak ta düşünemediğimiz konular olabiliyor bazen. Önceden bir ön hazırlık yapıyoruz, sonuçta bir task hazırlıyoruz bu konuşmalara başlamadan önce
- 43.** Çünkü derste işlediğimiz konularla eşdeğer gidiyor podcast konuları
- 44.** Başka insanların nasıl kelimeleri telaffuz ettiğini görüyoruz ve ona göre telaffuzumuzu geliştiriyoruz.
- 45.** Telaffuzla ilgili olarak hem online sözlük kullanıyoruz hem de birbirimizden öğreniyoruz. Örneğin, bir kelimeyi defalarca yanlış söyledim ve defalarca düzeltti arkadaşım
- 46.** En çok telaffuzum gelişti diyebilirim. Çoğu bilmediğim ya da uydurarak söylediğim kelimelerin doğrusunu öğrenmiş oldum.
- 47.** Sesimizi kaydettiğimiz için özen gösteriyoruz. O yüzden ben telaffuzuma da çok dikkat etmeye çalıştım
- 48.** Biraz da telaffuzum düzeldi. Bazı kelimeler için merak edip baktık internetten bu nasıl telaffuz ediliyor diye. Bence bayağı katkı sağladı.
- 49.** Bazen podcast yaparken telaffuz edemediğimiz kelimeler oldu, durdurduk kaydı ve internetten o kelimelerin telaffuzuna baktık, sonra onları doğru kullanmaya başladık

50. Rezil olmayalım diye kelimelerin telaffuzlarını kontrol ediyoruz bazen internetten. Tekrarlarla, konuştuğumuz geliyorsa telaffuz.

51. Bence doğru kelimeleri bulmakta. Şimdi ben konuşurken çok fazla gramerle konuşmuyorum, hep genel, geniş zaman veya geçmiş zaman kullanıyorum. Böyle çok karmaşık şeylere girmiyorum. Âmâ gerekli olan kelimeleri seçmek hem daha önemli hem buna katkı sağlıyor benim açımdan çünkü bu podcastleri biz kendimiz hazırlıyoruz, bize kimse yardımcı olmuyor, dolayısıyla kendi istediğimizi yapmış oluyoruz, çok karmaşık şeylere girmiyoruz bu nedenle gerekli kelimelerin kullanılmasına katkısı var

52. Hem telaffuzda, hem gramerde hem de kelime bilgimde çok artış sağladı

53. Kelime bilgim arttı.

54. Podcast oluştururken ben bazı kelimelerin söylenişine falan bakıyorum, online sözlükten. Ayrıca bu sırada kelimelerin anlamlarını da detaylı olarak öğreniyorum.

55. Yeni kelimeler öğrendik hem de yeni kelimeleri konuşmada kullanabiliyoruz

56. Podcast yaparken “sana katılıyorum “ya da” sen bu konuda ne düşünüyorsun?” gibi ifadeleri kullanmayı öğrendik

57. Kelime bilgisini arttırıyor. Aklımıza bir cümle geliyor mesela, onunla ilgili kelimeleri sözlükten bakıyoruz, kelime bilgisini arttırıyor kesinlikle.

58. Kelime bilgime pek katkı sağlamadı işin aslı çünkü bildiğim kelimelerle cümle kurmaya çalıştım.

59. Ayrıca yeni gramer yapıları da öğrenmiş olduk

60. En çok gramer, gramer daha çok yerleşti

61. Mesela derste öğrendiğimiz gramer yapılarını podcastte de kullanabildik

62. Mesela herkes grameri biliyor ama konuşurken birden onları konuşmaya yerleştiremiyoruz. Ona çok faydası oluyor. Ben konuşma sınavında mesela, “like” dan sonra –ing gelecek, gerund gelecek biliyorum ama önce “eat” dedim, sonra “eating” dedim. Ya da “want” dan sonra “to” nun geldiğini biliyoruz, kağıt üstünde görünce kolay oluyor ama konuşurken söylemesi zor oluyor.

63. Akıcılık sağladı, daha hızlı cümle kurmamı sağladı

- 64.** Hem daha akıcı konuşmamı sağladı yaptığım podcastler hem de Türkçe düşünüp İngilizce ye çevirmektense artık İngilizce düşünüp İngilizce konuşmamı sağladı, böylece hem daha akıcı konuşmaya başladım hem de kurduğum cümleler biraz daha mantıklı ve bağlantılı olmaya başladı.
- 65.** Akıcılık açısından aynı şekilde, ilk seferde mesela yavaş konuşuyoruz, biraz düşünerek, rahatsız oluyoruz ama ikinci, üçüncü denemelerde böyle sanki normal aklımızdan geçiyor gibi kendi dilimiz gibi konuşuyoruz. Böyle akıcılığa faydalı oluyor.
- 66.** Bence vurgu ve tonlama. Benim en çok onlarda işime yaradı.
- 67.** Konuşurken, biraz daha oyuncu gibi, native speaker lar (ana dili İngilizce olanlar) acaba nasıl konuşur bunu diye düşünerek konuşmaya çalıştık
- 68.** Mesela gossip konusunda bir olay canlandırmaya çalıştık, burada vurgu ve tonlama ön plana çıktı.
- 69.** Yok hayır. Teknik açıdan kolay bir süreç.
- 70.** Hayır, podcastler gayet kolay bir şekilde yayınlandı.
- 71.** Zaten çok kısa sürdü, zorlamadı. Kesinlikle teknik açıdan kolay bir süreç.
- 72.** Yok, hayır. Hiçbir zorluk yaşamadım, kolay, iki dakikamı almıyor bile.
- 73.** Ben karşılaştım açıkçası. Ses kayıt dosyası 1dak.6 saniyeydi, mp3'e çevirirken ses dosyasını 6 saniyesini almadı.
- 74.** Telefonlar açısından karşılaştık. Telefondan siteye yükleyemedik iki defa, sonra kullandığımız ortak grubumuz var, oraya atıp oradan siteye yükledik. Sanırım bu telefonlarla alakalıydı
- 75.** Hep yaşıyorum. Siteyle alakalı değil. Telefondan siteye atmakta zorluk yaşıyoruz, mp3'e çevirmekte bazen zorlanıyoruz
- 76.** Posccatleri oluştururken yaşadık. Şöyle, konuşurken arada gülmeler, sesler, gürültüler falan. Onun dışında yüklerken hiçbir sorunla karşılaşmadık.
- 77.** İlk başta yüklemeye ilgili sorun yaşadım, öğrendikten sonra yaptım.
- 78.** İsterim tabi ki. Podcastler derslerde kullanılmalı, İngilizce gelişimine çok katkısı var.

79. İsterim tabiki. Keşke speaking (konuşma) derslerinde bu tip podcast aktiviteleri olsa faydalı olur bizim için. Podcastler derslere entegre edilme bence. Derslerde yaptığımız speaking aktiviteleri ile bu oluşturduğumuz podcastler arasında dağlar kadar fark var. Hem daha bilinçli konuşuyoruz podcastlerde dersteki konuşma aktivitelerine göre. Hem de podcastlerin dersteki konuşma aktivitelerinden daha sistemli ve düzenli devam ettiğini düşünüyorum.

80. Evet. Bu aktiviteler bence İngilizce derslerinin bir parçası olmalı, hatta bu zorunluluk haline getirilmeli. İlk başta bana da arkadaşlarımı da bu aktiviteleri yapmak zor geliyordu ama sonra kendimi geliştirdiğimi hissettim. Bence iyi ve güzel bir şey.

81. Tabiki katılmak isterim. Beni geliştirecek her şeye katılmak isterim. Bence bütün okulun İngilizce derslerine podcastler entegre edilmeli, hatta ayrı bir ders bile olabilir. Çünkü İngilizce denince konuşma aklıma geliyor. Konuşuyorsan İngilizce biliyorsun.

82. Kesinlikle podcastler İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmeli. Mesela bunu siz bize sağladığınız için biz konuşma becerimizi bu kadar geliştirebildik ama başka arkadaşlar bu kadar şanslı değil. Bunun için sadece üniversitede de olmamalı, ilkokuldan itibaren olmalı. Artık anaokuluna indi zaten İngilizce, on yıldır ülkemizin eğitim sistemi içinde İngilizce var ama ne kadar gelişti dersiniz? Çok fazla gelişmedi. Bu podcastler hem interaktif açıdan insanların daha çok ilgisini çekebileceğini düşünüyorum.

83. On bir yılın sonunda öğrenemediğimiz İngilizceyi sanırım böyle öğreneceğiz.

84. Dördüncü sınıftan beri İngilizce görüyoruz hocam ama nasıl olurda dördüncü sınıftan beri öğrendiğimiz bir şeyi kullanamayız. Gramerde de şu an iyi değiliz oysaki aynı şeyleri bin defa gördük. Neden hala İngilizce öğrenmede zorluk yaşıyoruz? Çünkü bizim İngilizce konuşma fırsatımız olmadı. Hocalarımız otuz-kırk kişilik sınıflarda, haklı olarak, kimsenin anlamayacağını düşünerek Türkçe konuşuyorlardı, kimse bizimle İngilizce konuşmadı. Çoğumuz küçük illerden geldi, turistlerle konuşma şansımız da yoktu. Podcastler bu anlamda konuşma becerilerimizi geliştirmek için bize fırsat sağladı. Podcastler kesinlikle derslerin bir parçası olmalı

85. Normalde sınıf dışında İngilizce konuşamıyoruz ama arkadaşım ile birlikte bayağı alıştırmaya yaparak geliştirdim kendimi

86. Hem arkadaşlarımızla kaynaşmış oluyoruz, yeni insanlar tanımış oluyoruz. Bunun yanında tanımadığımız insanlarla da konuşabiliyoruz. Sonuçta biz bir yurtdışına çıktığımızda insanlara bir şeyler sormak zorunda kalacağız, bence bunda yararlı.

87. Konuların seçimi çok önemli. Konuların konuşulabilir olması ya da ilgi alanı olması çok önemli, bazı konular insanın ilgisini çekmiyor hiç konuşası gelmiyor. Konular öğrencinin ilgisini çekecek tarzda olursa olabilir. Katılım da fazla olur diye düşünüyorum.

88. Şimdi grupta çok fazla kişi olacağı için karmaşa olabilir. Tek kişi de hani eğer arkadaşla çalışmada olduğu kadar fayda sağlamaz. Arkadaşla çalışmak daha mantıklı.

89. Herkes bir arada yaşamadığı için grup çalışması zor olur biraz. Ama ikili çalışma daha güzel oldu, tartışma fırsatımız oldu, birlikte düşündük, hem de eğlenceli oldu. Benim için pair (arkadaşla çalışma) daha iyi.

90. Bence grup daha iyi. Çünkü grupta iki kişiye göre daha çok fikir ortaya çıkabilir.

91. Bence kişisel çok iyi olduğunu düşünmüyorum, grupla daha iyi olduğunu düşünüyorum. Tek başıma yaptığımda kendim anlatıyorum. Biri ile çalıştığımda yeni düşünceler yaratmak zorunda kalıyorum karşımdaki kişinin düşüncelerine göre. Rahatlık açısından ikili çalışma daha iyi ama daha çok kişi ile çalışırsak daha iyi öğreniriz.

92. Hepsi de iyi ama ya iki kişi ya da grup olarak konuşmak daha iyi. Günlük hayatta daha çok karşılıklı konuşuyoruz iletişim için o nedenle ikili ya da grup çalışması en güzeli.

93. Ki kişi ya da grup konuşunca bence daha etkili olur.

94. İkili çalışınca iletişim daha kolay oluyor. Grubu organize etmek daha zor, biraz daha zaman alır. Bireysel olan en kolayı, zaten kendin konuşuyorsun.

95. Bence hepsi kullanılmalı. İlk başta yaptığımızda tek çalışarak kendimizi tanıtmamız çok faydalı oldu. Sonrasında arkadaşımızla çalışması da çok faydalıydı. Hepsi belli bir sıra içinde olmalı.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Kişisel Bilgiler

<i>Adı Soyadı</i>	Arzu Koçak
<i>Doğum Yeri</i>	Sivas
<i>Doğum Tarihi</i>	20.05.1980

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<i>Lise</i>	Prof.Dr.Necati Erşen Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi/Sivas.	1998
<i>Lisans</i>	İngiliz Dili Eğitimi/Hacettepe Üniversitesi	2003
<i>Yüksek Lisans</i>	İngilizcenin Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğretimi/Bilkent Üniversitesi	2010
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<i>Çalıştığı Kurumlar</i>	Hacettepe Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu/Ankara	2010-
	Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu/Sivas	2003-2010

Akademik Çalışmalar

Yayınlar (Ulusal, uluslararası makale, bildiri, poster vb gibi.)

1. Attending 16th National Science of Education Congress with a verbal report-Comparing Education, Teaching and Examination Regulations of Faculties of Education (5-7 September 2007, TOKAT)
2. Attending the 2010 TESOL Graduate Student Forum in Boston, Massachusetts, USA (March 24, 2010) and presenting a paper titled "Students' and Teachers' Attitudes Towards Online Reading"
3. Attending the 44th Annual Convention and Exhibit Boston, Massachusetts, USA (March 24-27, 2010)
4. Attending IATEFL ESP/EAP SIG Conference at Bilkent University, Ankara (June 18-19, 2010) and presenting a paper titled "Needs Analysis of Students of English Language and Literature".
5. Attending Ankara 2nd National ELT Symposium "How to Cope with Digital Bees: E-learning Practices in Secondary Education" at Çankaya University (April 16, 2011) and presenting a paper titled "Integrating Internet-based Reading Tasks into the ELT Classroom".
6. Attending the 15th International INGED ELT Conference: "Taking it to the limits" at Hacettepe University, Ankara (October 20-22, 2011) and presenting a paper titled "Students' Perceptions of Using Online Corpus (COCA) to Develop Their English Vocabulary".
7. Attending the The European Conference on Arts and Humanities 2013 & The European Conference on Language Learning, 2013, presenting a paper titled "Students' Perceptions of Using Wikis to Develop Their Writing Skills".
8. Attending the 1st International ELT Conference at Gazi University, Ankara and presenting the paper titled "Recognition of Compound Complex Sentences for Fossilized Errors in Teaching Writing", 2013.

9. Attending the 12th ODTÜ International ELT Convention, May. 25-26, 2015, Turkey and presenting the paper titled “Teachers’ Attitudes towards Using Online Corpus (COCA) to Develop Students’ English Vocabulary”.

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