

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE USE OF PODCASTS IN EFL CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY AT A UNIVERSITY OF UZBEKISTAN

^{1*}Rimajon Sotlikova, ²Haerazi

¹Foreign Language and Literature Department, Foreign Philology Faculty, National
²University of Uzbekistan. Tashkent City, University Street, Tashkent 100174, Uzbekistan
English Language Education, Faculty of Culture, Management, & Business, Universitas
Pendidikan Mandalika, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author e-mail: rima.sotlikova@gmail.com

Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History Received: June 2023 Revised: July 2023 Published: July 2023</p> <p>Keywords ICT; EFL; English Podcasts; Students' perceptions; Teachers' attitudes;</p>	<p><i>Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has emerged as a significant factor in the realm of language education, yielding notable impacts. To shed light on this phenomenon, a case study was conducted to delve into the perceptions of students and attitudes of teachers regarding the utilization of podcasts in the teaching-learning process. The research problem addressed in this study aimed to explore students' perceptions toward the incorporation of podcasts in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, as well as their understanding of the limitations and impact of podcasts on their language skill development. The study recruited 40 students and 2 teachers from the National University of Uzbekistan as participants. Data collection involved the distribution of questionnaires to students and conducting interviews with teachers. The questionnaires comprised 17 statements to gauge the participants' viewpoints. The findings revealed that a majority of respondents expressed their fondness for podcasts (80.2%), strongly agreeing that the use of podcasts is enjoyable (69.9%). Moreover, the researcher observed positive attitudes from both students and teachers toward the integration of podcasts in the EFL classroom. Students believed that podcasts had the potential to enhance their listening and speaking skills. Teachers, on the other hand, perceived podcasts as an effective tool for fostering students' collaborative and cooperative work skills, as well as their creative thinking strategies. However, challenges associated with the effective utilization of podcasts in the classroom also surfaced, prompting further exploration into optimal implementation strategies.</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of education, where technology plays a pivotal role, educators and researchers are continuously seeking innovative teaching methodologies to foster student engagement and enhance language proficiency (Aqqal et al., 2017; Aşık et al., 2020). Amidst this pursuit, the integration of podcasts into English language classrooms has emerged as a compelling approach (Che, 2023; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). Podcasts, audio-based digital content typically consisting of spoken episodes, have garnered increasing popularity as a pedagogical tool. This method capitalizes on the affordances of technology to create an immersive and dynamic learning environment. By incorporating podcasts into the English language classroom, educators aim to harness the inherent strengths of this medium, such as its accessibility, flexibility, and potential for authentic language input (Alm, 2013;

Liu, 2023). Moreover, podcasts offer students the opportunity to actively engage with real-life language use, promoting the development of various linguistic skills, including listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation. As a result, the integration of podcasts stands as a promising avenue for nurturing language proficiency and fostering an interactive and engaging learning experience for students in the modern educational landscape.

Listening comprehension holds a pivotal position within the realm of language learning, and podcasts have emerged as a captivating medium that immerses learners in an engaging auditory experience (Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2009; Saeedakhtar et al., 2021). The broad appeal of podcasts is evidenced by a survey, which revealed that approximately 55%, equivalent to around 155 million individuals, have engaged with this form of audio content (Copley, 2007; Drew, 2017). When integrated into the classroom, podcasts offer notable advantages, notably in terms of flexibility concerning time and location. The Podcast Consumer report highlights that 58% of podcast listeners prefer to enjoy podcasts in the comfort of their homes, while 23% choose to engage with them during their daily commutes. This accessibility allows students to access podcasts at their convenience, facilitating the practice of listening skills and reinforcing learning beyond traditional classroom hours (Chou et al., 2022).

In addition to their convenience, podcasts often delve into real-world issues, provide cultural insights, and facilitate thought-provoking discussions (Azizi et al., 2022; Drew, 2017). Consequently, they foster critical thinking skills and promote cultural awareness among students. Learners who engage with podcasts exhibited higher levels of intercultural competence and a greater willingness to engage with diverse perspectives compared to non-listeners (Guillén-Gámez et al., 2019; Hubackova & Golkova, 2014). This finding emphasizes the potential of podcasts as a tool for educators to promote cross-cultural understanding and establish a platform for meaningful classroom discussions that transcend linguistic boundaries (De Los Ríos, 2022). By incorporating podcasts into language instruction, educators can harness the power of this versatile medium to cultivate listening skills, encourage critical thinking, and foster intercultural competence among their students (Brooks & Pitts, 2016; Porto, 2014).

The increasing popularity of podcasts in recent years has positioned them as a valuable tool for language learning, primarily due to their accessibility and convenience. As a result, podcasts have emerged as a promising avenue for teachers to facilitate language acquisition and challenge conventional teaching approaches (Özdener & Güngör, 2010; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). In traditional English language classrooms, listening activities often receive relatively less emphasis compared to other language skills (Kenza Tacarraoucht et al., 2022). However, the integration of podcasts offers a unique opportunity for students to enhance their English proficiency. By incorporating podcasts into the classroom, teachers can expose students to a wide array of language sources, enabling them to explore authentic English listening experiences within an educational context (Alm, 2013; Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2009). This exposure to authentic content not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters language development. Additionally, podcasts provide practical benefits, such as the availability of pauses and replay options, allowing students to self-monitor their comprehension while engaging with the audio material. This feature empowers students to actively engage with the content, ensuring that they can grasp and reinforce their understanding of the language presented in the podcasts.

Evans (2008) assert that the vast array of online podcasts specifically designed for native English speakers presents English language learners with abundant opportunities to engage with authentic English in diverse contexts. These specialized podcasts cater to the

needs of learners by exposing them to genuine language usage, enabling them to immerse themselves in the nuances and intricacies of the English language (Kim, 2011; Sharbaf Shoar et al., 2011). By incorporating such podcasts into English language learning, educators can cultivate positive attitudes towards learning, foster desirable behavior, and enhance students' self-efficacy. The immersive nature of podcasts, with their real-life language examples and engaging content, contributes to a more meaningful and enjoyable learning experience (Sam, 2016; Şendağ et al., 2018). Exposure to authentic language use through podcasts not only bolsters students' listening skills but also expands their linguistic competence, enabling them to navigate various communicative situations with confidence. Moreover, the positive impact of podcasts on learners' attitudes and self-perception cannot be overlooked. Engaging with podcasts tailored for native speakers instills a sense of achievement and motivation among learners, as they witness their ability to comprehend and engage with authentic English materials.

The integration of podcasts in English language teaching presents a unique opportunity for learners to engage with homework assignments at their own pace and in an environment that fosters comfort and reduced anxiety. By incorporating podcasts into instructional practices, learners gain access to a wide range of audio content featuring native speakers in diverse communicative settings, including conversations, interviews, and speeches. The benefits inherent in using podcasts prompted the inquiry in this study, which aimed to explore two central questions: (1) What are the students' perceptions regarding the use of podcasts in the teaching-learning processes? and (2) What are the teachers' attitudes towards the use of podcasts in the teaching-learning processes?

Literature Review

The Nature of Listening and Speaking Skills

In contemporary language courses worldwide, there exists a notable emphasis on fostering the listening and speaking proficiencies of students. This emphasis is driven by the recognition that English has established itself as the global lingua franca, demanding increased competence in the language (Yao & Du-Babcock, 2023). Given the critical nature of these language skills, it becomes imperative to critically examine the prevailing beliefs and instructional methods employed in their development. The understanding of the distinct characteristics of both speaking and listening has undergone significant evolution in recent decades. While speaking has witnessed substantial influences from popular movements within the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) domain, listening has received comparatively less attention (Kenza Tacarraoucht et al., 2022; Terzioğlu & Kurt, 2022).

Traditional approaches to speaking instruction often centered around rote repetition, dialogue memorization, and response patterns (Anabel & Simanjuntak, 2022; Assauri et al., 2022). However, these conventional methods gradually yielded ground to the communicative language teaching paradigm, which aimed to foster learners' communicative competencies, strategic abilities, and negotiation skills. Consequently, the focus shifted from passive reproduction to active engagement in meaningful communication. In order to fully grasp the nature of listening skills, it is essential to consider the input derived from speaking discourse. Abdulla et al. (2021) eloquently suggest, when individuals engage in conversation and actively listen to one another, they are involved in the discovery of novel ideas, the comprehension of different aspects of the world, or simply sharing a connection. This perspective highlights the intrinsic link between speaking and listening, underscoring the interplay and symbiotic nature of these language skills. By recognizing and harnessing this dynamic relationship, language educators can adopt instructional approaches that promote

holistic language development, embracing both speaking and listening as integral components of effective communication (Terzioğlu & Kurt, 2022).

ICT Integration and the Selection of Appropriate Podcasts in the English Classroom

The development and integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the English classroom have the potential to revolutionize pedagogical practices by leveraging the benefits of emerging technologies (Aşık et al., 2020; Guillén-Gámez et al., 2019). This shift opens up new avenues for teachers to harness the advantages offered by innovative tools and approaches. The integration of ICT empowers instructors with a diverse range of teaching techniques and methodologies, enabling them to cater to the individual needs and preferences of learners (Guillén-Gámez et al., 2019). By incorporating ICT into the English classroom, educators can enhance students' motivation and interest in language learning. The utilization of ICT tools provides learners with engaging and interactive learning experiences, thereby fostering a positive learning environment. In particular, ICT integration facilitates collaborative and cooperative activities, leveraging internet technologies to enable students to practice and apply their English language skills (Akayoğlu, 2021; Chapelle, 2012). Through collaborative online platforms, learners can engage in group discussions, exchange ideas, and collaborate on language-related projects, fostering the development of not only their language skills but also their teamwork and digital literacy. By capitalizing on the capabilities of ICT, teachers can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that promote active participation and meaningful engagement.

In the realm of internet technologies for teaching purposes, an array of options exists, among which podcasts stand out as innovative tools. Sendag et al. (2018) extensively categorize instructional podcasts into various types, including teaching-driven, service-driven, marketing-driven, and technology-driven, each catering to distinct instructional objectives. Saeedakhtar et al. (2021) emphasize the significance of podcasts in enhancing speaking and listening skills, as these audio-based resources provide authentic language input and opportunities for learners to engage with real-life language use. Building upon this, Guillén-Gámez et al. (2019) posits that learners' motivation to engage in language learning can be significantly heightened when podcasts align with their personal interests and preferences. This notion emphasizes the importance of tailoring podcasts to learners' specific areas of interest, thereby fostering a sense of relevance and increased motivation. By incorporating podcasts into language instruction, educators can tap into the potential of this technology to deliver engaging and authentic language content, which in turn promotes the development of crucial language skills and boosts learners' motivation.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The present study employed a case study design to address the research problem at hand. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods (Cohen et al., 2018). Surveys were utilized to gather quantitative data, specifically targeting students' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of podcasts in language learning. This approach allowed for the collection of numerical data that could be analyzed statistically, providing valuable insights into the overall trends and patterns of students' perspectives. Furthermore, qualitative methods, such as interviews, were employed to delve deeper into teachers' experiences, allowing for a more nuanced exploration of their students' motivations, challenges, and overall experiences with podcast-based language learning. The initial data collection instrument consisted of a questionnaire distributed to the students, followed by interviews conducted with the teachers. This mixed-methods approach enabled researchers to

triangulate the data (Cohen et al., 2018), comparing and contrasting the quantitative survey responses with the qualitative insights gathered from the interviews. By employing this comprehensive approach, researchers aimed to obtain a holistic understanding of students' perceptions and attitudes towards podcast-based language learning, while also uncovering valuable insights from teachers' perspectives.

Collecting Data and Instruments

The questionnaire utilized in this study was derived from previous research conducted by Li (2009), serving as the initial foundation for the survey instrument. Initially, the questionnaire consisted of 13 questions; however, the author of this case study made modifications to adapt the questionnaire, resulting in a revised version comprising a total of 17 questions. The aim of these modifications was to align the questionnaire more closely with the specific objectives and context of the current study. Furthermore, interview questions were carefully designed to gain insights into the teachers' interpretations of the significance of podcasts in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The interview session involved two teachers, and they were presented with three different types of questions to explore their perspectives comprehensively. To ensure a structured and quantifiable approach to assessing attitudes, perceptions, and opinions, the Likert scale was employed as a commonly used measurement tool. The Likert scale provides a framework for individuals to express their level of agreement or disagreement with given statements or attitudes, thus facilitating a structured and quantitative assessment of respondents' preferences and beliefs.

In order to capture students' attitudes towards the utilization of podcasts, a Likert scale questionnaire was meticulously designed. This questionnaire encompassed a comprehensive set of 17 statements, specifically tailored to evaluate various facets of podcast usage, including enjoyment, usefulness, and perceived impact on language learning. Participants were requested to rate each statement on a predetermined scale, indicating their level of agreement or disagreement, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Data collection was conducted through a combination of paper-based questionnaires and interview-style formats, ensuring multiple avenues for participants to express their perspectives. Descriptive statistics served as the primary analytical tool to summarize and present the collected data effectively. This statistical approach involved calculating percentages for each response category and organizing the results into a table format for concise presentation. The research aimed to examine and discuss the overarching attitudes of the participating students towards the incorporation of podcasts in their language learning journey. By systematically analyzing the gathered data and shedding light on students' perceptions, the study sought to provide valuable insights into the overall reception and impact of podcasts in the context of language education.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process in the case study adhered to a systematic and transparent approach, meticulously aligned with the research objectives. It was of utmost importance to maintain comprehensive documentation of the entire analytical process, ensuring the study's rigor and replicability (Beins, 2018). The technique employed for data analysis encompassed several distinct steps, each contributing to the overall comprehension and interpretation of the collected data. Firstly, the data was organized meticulously, ensuring the categorization and systematic arrangement of the information in a manner that facilitated subsequent analysis. This step involved establishing a clear coding system or categorization scheme that allowed for the identification and retrieval of relevant data segments. Subsequently, the data were examined to identify emerging themes and patterns that surfaced from within the dataset. This

involved a meticulous examination of the collected information to uncover recurrent elements, relationships, or trends.

Through this inductive process, key insights were derived directly from the data, enhancing the understanding of the research phenomenon under investigation. The interpreted data were then subjected to a thorough analysis, wherein the researcher sought to explore and explain the underlying meanings, connections, or explanations behind the identified themes and patterns. This involved employing analytical reasoning, drawing on relevant theoretical frameworks or literature, and substantiating interpretations with evidence from the dataset. Finally, the analyzed findings were effectively presented and summarized in a coherent manner, aligning with the research objectives. This entailed organizing the results into a cohesive narrative structure, utilizing appropriate visuals, such as tables or charts, to aid comprehension, and providing clear explanations of the key findings. Overall, the data analysis process in the case study adhered to established analytical techniques, ensuring a rigorous and systematic exploration of the research objectives, and producing meaningful insights that contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Two research questions guided the researcher to gain the research findings. These questions were posited to unravel the perspectives and attitudes of both students and teachers, shedding light on the efficacy and reception of podcasts as an instructional tool. Investigating students' perceptions provides insights into their experiences, opinions, and level of engagement when utilizing podcasts as a medium for language learning. On the other hand, exploring teachers' attitudes towards the use of podcasts elucidates their beliefs, preferences, and perceived effectiveness of this instructional approach. The close-ended questionnaire was analyzed and presented through Likert Scale. The researcher reduced the categories to reach the clarity of the result. Instead of 5 categories, the researcher decided to make them 4. Those were: (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (D) Disagree, and (SD) Strongly Disagree. It was analyzed by using a percentage formula, and the result was presented by using descriptive interpretation.

Table 1
Data of Students' Perception on Podcast Classrooms

No	Questions	SA	A	D	SD
1	I like podcast	10.1 %	80.2 %	9.7 %	0.0 %
2	I enjoy listening to podcast	20.7 %	75.1 %	4.2	0.0 %
3	I enjoy recording my voice on my own created podcast (through "Podcastle" app)	21.9 %	79.1 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
4	Podcast is easy to use	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.5 %	19.5 %
5	The content of podcast is suitable for me	0.0 %	86.3 %	13.7 %	0.0 %
6	I can improve my listening skills	88.3 %	11.7 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
7	I can improve my speaking skills	40.5 %	45.5 %	14 %	0.0 %
8	I can improve my vocabulary	8.1 %	40.2 %	47.2 %	4.5 %
9	I want podcasts to be implemented in the classroom	83.2 %	10.2 %	6.6 %	0.0 %
10	It is easy to get podcasts from the internet	0.0 %	0.0 %	76.5 %	23.5 %
11	I know how to use podcast	0.0 %	12.3 %	80.1 %	7.6 %
12	Using podcasts in language classrooms is too new for me.	0.0 %	30.7 %	45.7 %	23.6 %
13	I will continue listening to podcasts for learning English	100 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
14	I can learn through podcasts	50.4 %	49.6 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
15	The length of the podcast is appropriate	67.8 %	23.4 %	8.2 %	0.0 %
16	Using podcasts is fun	69.9 %	25.1 %	5 %	0.0 %
17	I can investigate my skills by using podcasts	77.1 %	22.9 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

The present investigation examines students' attitudes towards podcasts, focusing on their preferences and perceptions of a specific podcast-related tool called "Podcastle". In order to assess students' overall affinity for podcasts, the first question administered in the study pertained to their general liking of this audio medium. An analysis of the responses revealed a majority agreement among the participants, with 80.2% indicating a positive inclination towards podcasts. Among these respondents, 10.1% expressed a strong level of agreement, whereas only 9.7% held a dissenting opinion. These findings demonstrate a clear preference for podcasts among the student population. To further explore students' engagement with podcasts, a subsequent inquiry was posed to gauge their enjoyment of listening to this form of audio content. The tabulated data illustrates that a significant proportion, comprising 75.1% of the participants, expressed agreement with the statement, indicating their fondness for listening to podcasts. Notably, 20.7% of the learners exhibited a strong agreement, while a minor portion of 4.2% held a contrary view. These results provide additional support for the assertion that students possess a favorable disposition towards podcasts. Lastly, participants were presented with a statement concerning the novel tool "Podcastle" and were asked to assess their agreement with its utilization. Analysis of the responses indicated a high level of agreement, with 79.1% of participants expressing their endorsement of the tool. Furthermore, a notable 21.9% demonstrated a strong level of agreement, suggesting a favorable perception of "Podcastle" among the student population. Remarkably, none of the participants expressed disagreement or strong disagreement, further underscoring the generally positive reception of the new podcasting tool.

The analysis presented in Table 1 offers insights into students' perspectives regarding the accessibility and novelty of podcasts. Examining the results, it becomes evident that a majority of students (76.5%) expressed disagreement with the ease of downloading podcasts from the internet. Moreover, a significant subset of participants (23.5%) strongly disagreed with this notion. Strikingly, none of the respondents indicated agreement or strong agreement, indicating the difficulties they encountered in accessing podcasts online. Turning to the eleventh statement, which addressed the ease of using podcasts, the findings reveal a similar trend. A considerable majority of participants (80.1%) disagreed with the statement, suggesting that they encountered challenges when it came to utilizing podcasts. Notably, a subset of 7.6% expressed a strong disagreement, while no respondents indicated strong agreement. These outcomes underline the difficulties experienced by students in effectively employing podcasts as a learning tool. The twelfth statement explored the perceived novelty of using podcasts among the respondents. Notably, none of the students strongly agreed, indicating a lack of unanimous consensus regarding the novelty factor. However, a significant proportion of participants (30.7%) expressed agreement, signifying that the use of podcasts was not perceived as entirely new to them. Conversely, 45.7% of respondents disagreed, suggesting a level of familiarity with podcasts, while 23.6% of learners strongly disagreed with the notion of podcasts being too new. These results reinforce the notion that podcasts were not considered excessively novel by the student cohort.

Dealing with teachers' attitudes, Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the attitudes exhibited by teachers in relation to the utilization of podcasts as an instructional tool. This table serves as a valuable resource for understanding the perspectives and beliefs of teachers regarding the integration of podcasts into their teaching practices. The data presented in Table 2 encapsulates a range of dimensions related to teachers' attitudes, shedding light on their perceptions, preferences, and overall receptiveness toward incorporating podcasts in the classroom. By examining the findings presented in this table, researchers and educators gain insights into the various factors that shape teachers' attitudes, such as their perceptions of the benefits and challenges associated with podcast usage, their level of confidence in

incorporating podcasts effectively, and their overall enthusiasm towards embracing this innovative instructional approach. The insights gleaned from Table 2 contribute to the broader understanding of how teachers perceive and approach the integration of podcasts, informing the development of effective strategies and practices that promote the optimal use of this technology in educational settings.

Table 2
Data of Teachers' Attitudes on Podcast Classrooms

No	Questions	SA	A	D	SD
1	I apply podcasts in my class	10.1 %	80.2 %	9.7 %	0.0 %
2	I enjoy teaching using the podcast	20.7 %	75.1 %	4.2 %	0.0 %
3	I provide students with my voice on my own created podcast (through "Podcastle" app)	21.9 %	79.1 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
4	The podcast is easy to use	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.5 %	19.5 %
5	The content of the podcast is suitable for my students	0.0 %	86.3 %	13.7 %	0.0 %
6	Podcasts can facilitate my students of listening skills	88.3 %	11.7 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
7	Podcasts can facilitate my students of speaking skills	40.5 %	45.5 %	14 %	0.0 %
8	Podcasts can improve vocabulary	8.1 %	40.2 %	47.2 %	4.5 %
9	I want podcasts to be implemented in the classroom	83.2 %	10.2 %	6.6 %	0.0 %
10	It is easy to get podcasts from the internet	0.0 %	0.0 %	76.5 %	23.5 %
11	I know how to use podcast	0.0 %	12.3 %	80.1 %	7.6 %
12	Using podcasts in language classrooms is too new for me.	0.0 %	30.7 %	45.7 %	23.6 %
13	My students continue listening to podcasts for learning English	100 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
14	My students can learn through podcasts	50.4 %	49.6 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
15	The length of the podcast is appropriate	67.8 %	23.4 %	8.2 %	0.0 %
16	Using podcasts is fun	69.9 %	25.1 %	5 %	0.0 %
17	I can investigate my students' language skills by using podcasts	77.1 %	22.9 %	0.0 %	0.0 %

The findings presented in Table 2 indicate that teachers hold positive attitudes toward the integration of podcasts in their classrooms. The data suggest that teachers perceive podcasts as a valuable resource that can effectively enhance their students' speaking and listening skills. By incorporating podcasts into language instruction, teachers can provide their students with opportunities to actively engage in speaking activities and emulate the language patterns and intonations of native speakers. This immersive experience facilitated by podcasts enables learners to refine their pronunciation, intonation, and overall oral proficiency. Furthermore, podcasts offer a platform for students to practice speaking in a context that mirrors authentic language use, thereby bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-life communication. The positive attitudes expressed by teachers towards the use of podcasts underscore the potential of this medium as an effective tool for promoting language acquisition and fostering communicative competence among students.

Discussion

When educators endeavor to integrate English podcasts into their instructional practices, it is paramount to give careful consideration to the practical implications that arise from their utilization. One key practical implication centers on the process of selecting and adapting podcast content (Kim, 2011; Sharbaf Shoar et al., 2011). To optimize the effectiveness of English podcasts, teachers must thoughtfully consider factors such as their students' language proficiency levels, individual interests, and learning goals. By aligning the selection of English podcasts with these crucial parameters, educators can ensure that the content is appropriately challenging and engaging, thereby fostering enhanced language development

among their students. Selecting podcasts that are suitable for the students' proficiency level ensures that the content is comprehensible and accessible, promoting meaningful learning experiences (Özdener & Güngör, 2010). Additionally, taking into account the individual interests of the students serves to enhance motivation and engagement, as the chosen podcasts are more likely to resonate with their personal preferences. Furthermore, aligning podcast selection with the students' learning goals allows for targeted language practice and skill development. By selecting English podcasts that align with specific learning objectives, educators create a purposeful and focused learning experience (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). Considering these practical implications in the selection and adaptation of podcast content empowers educators to leverage the potential of English podcasts as a valuable tool for language instruction, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and relevance of their teaching practices.

In addition to careful content selection, another significant practical implication that arises from the use of English podcasts in educational settings pertains to the establishment of active listening strategies. Listening to podcasts necessitates active engagement on the part of the learners, and it is crucial for educators to equip students with effective listening strategies that can optimize their learning experiences (Alm, 2013; Rahimi & Katal, 2012). By providing explicit instruction on active listening strategies, teachers empower students to actively process the podcast content and enhance their listening comprehension skills. Strategies such as note-taking, predicting, summarizing, and inferring are introduced and reinforced to facilitate active engagement and a deeper understanding of the podcast materials (Saeedakhtar et al., 2021; Şendağ et al., 2018). Teaching students how to take effective notes while listening enables them to capture key ideas, important details, and supporting examples. Predicting encourages students to make informed guesses about upcoming content, promoting anticipation and engagement. Summarizing aids in consolidating understanding by requiring students to distill the main points or themes of the podcast. Inferring prompts students to draw conclusions or make connections based on the information provided, fostering critical thinking skills.

The integration of podcasts into language teaching practices in real-life settings necessitates careful consideration of technology integration and accessibility. In this study, instructors ensure that their students have the necessary devices, internet connectivity, and suitable platforms for accessing and listening to podcasts. This ensures that all learners have equal opportunities to engage with the podcast materials and benefit from the language learning experience (Evans, 2008; Özdener & Güngör, 2010). To gather additional insights and support the findings obtained from the questionnaire, the researcher conducted interviews with two English teachers from the National University of Uzbekistan. The purpose of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' perspectives on the use of podcasts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching.

The first interview question focused on student engagement while using podcasts. The teachers reported that podcasts had a motivating effect on students due to their careful selection based on students' needs and interests. This aligns with the findings of Saeedakhtar et al. (2021) who emphasized the importance of podcast-based resources aligning with learners' desires to enhance engagement and motivation. Furthermore, another research study highlighted that teachers can effectively utilize podcasts as engaging and productive revision tools (O'Bannon et al., 2011; Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2011). This underscores the potential of podcasts not only as a source of authentic language input but also as a versatile resource for revision and consolidation of language skills. By conducting interviews with experienced English teachers and drawing on existing research, the researcher enriched the study's data with valuable insights from practitioners. These additional perspectives contribute to a more

comprehensive understanding of the benefits and implications of incorporating podcasts in EFL teaching, emphasizing their motivational impact and their potential for effective revision activities.

Teachers affirmed that the integration of podcasts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction holds the potential to enhance both listening and speaking skills among learners (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007; Şendağ et al., 2018; Sharbaf Shoar et al., 2011). As part of the instructional approach, students engaged in interactive activities where they interviewed each other and recorded their conversations using the "Podcastle" application as a tool. The author of the study observed that students exhibited a strong inclination to improve their pronunciation and intonation, as evidenced by their persistent efforts to re-record their voices until they were satisfied with their performance (Bilki et al., 2022; Xu & Zhou, 2020). This iterative process compelled learners to focus on key aspects of language production, including phonology, grammar, and presentation skills.

Through repeated practice, learners gradually honed their language production abilities, attaining a higher level of proficiency. This pedagogical approach fostered a sense of personal accountability among the learners, as they assumed greater responsibility for their own education. This heightened sense of ownership manifested through various avenues, such as the setting of self-created challenges and actively engaging in cooperative and collaborative activities with peers (Al-Rawahi & Al-Mekhlafi, 2015; Özdener & Güngör, 2010). Learners actively took charge of their learning journey, embracing opportunities for growth and development through self-directed efforts and collaborative endeavors. By highlighting the benefits of podcast integration in the EFL classroom, specifically in terms of improving listening and speaking skills, the study sheds light on the transformative impact this instructional approach can have on learners' language proficiency. Moreover, the observed increase in personal accountability among learners underscores the value of empowering students to take ownership of their education and actively engage in self-directed and collaborative learning processes.

In the implementation of podcasts in the English teaching context, English teachers encounter various challenges related to the process of downloading, registering, and effectively utilizing podcasts. These challenges present significant demands on teachers' time and efforts, particularly when it comes to providing detailed instructions on the technical aspects of using podcasts (Sharon & John, 2019; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). The interview data collected in this study further corroborated the findings obtained from the questionnaire, underscoring the prevalence of these challenges and their impact on the instructional process. The challenges faced by English teachers in relation to podcasts encompass multiple dimensions. Firstly, downloading podcasts may require navigating through various platforms, websites, or applications, each with its own set of procedures and requirements (Kidd et al., 2020; Şendağ et al., 2018). This process can be time-consuming and complex, demanding additional guidance and support from teachers to ensure that students can access the intended podcast materials effectively. Secondly, registering on podcast platforms or applications may pose difficulties for both teachers and students. The registration process often involves creating accounts, providing personal information, and adhering to specific guidelines (Hubackova & Golkova, 2014; Hurst, 2016). Such procedures can be cumbersome and may require additional explanations and assistance from teachers, further adding to their workload. Additionally, using podcasts in the classroom effectively necessitates familiarity with the technical functionalities of the chosen platform or application.

Teachers need to be proficient in navigating through the podcast interface, managing playlists, accessing specific episodes, and utilizing additional features or tools provided. This proficiency requires time and effort for teachers to acquire and develop, impacting their

instructional planning and delivery. The interview data provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by English teachers, supporting the findings obtained from the questionnaire responses. By triangulating these multiple data sources, the study strengthens the credibility and reliability of the identified challenges, providing a comprehensive understanding of the practical obstacles encountered when integrating podcasts in English teaching contexts. These findings emphasize the need for ongoing teacher support, training, and professional development to effectively address the technical challenges and ensure the successful integration of podcasts into language instruction.

CONCLUSION

The author of the article investigated the utilization of technology as a pedagogical tool in the provision of appropriate instruction through the use of podcasts in EFL teaching. It aids educators in understanding the value of computer-assisted language learning for efficient instruction. The aim of the case study was to know students' and teachers' perceptions of using podcasts as a tool for learning. There were 40 students and two teachers who participated in this study. The findings of the research are positive. The teachers and students stated their positive insights about using the podcasts in the EFL classroom. They considered that it could enhance speaking and listening skills because the contents of the podcasts were chosen based on the learners' interests and needs. Students stated that it was fun to use podcasts since they could not only improve their skills but also learn about topics of their interest through listening to podcasts. While using the "Podcastle" application, they could develop not only their pronunciation but also their presentation skills. Podcasts give them more opportunities to learn. Therefore, they wanted to continue listening to podcasts and investigate their learning process. Some challenges also identified in this case study relate to using podcasts as a tool. The author took them into consideration for further studies. In conclusion, podcasts offer a unique and efficient way for English language learners to improve their listening and speaking comprehension skills.

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