The Effect of Using Podcasts on EFL Learners' Speaking Performance: A Case Study of Freshmen at the Department of English, University of Jijel

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Declaration

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "The Effect of Using Podcasts on EFL Learners' Speaking Performance" is our own work and all the sources we have used have been acknowledged by means of references. We also certify that we have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially of fully. In case any material is not documented, we shall be responsible for the consequences.

Ms   Bounab Chaima

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Dedication

With profound love, I dedicate this humble work to:

Myself first,

My beloved father, may God protect him,

I am really thankful for his love, Great support and guidance.

My dear mother for her unconditional love,

Non-stop prayers, and encouragement

My dearest siblings **Nadjoua, Walaa**, **Samir** and **Tamim**

and all my family members

To my partner" **Chaima**", for being my close friend

To my closest friends, and colleagues

To everyone who gave me strength and helped me to finish this work

Thank you all!

Aya

Dedication

Time was limited, obstacles were many, and challenges were there for us, yet with God willing, guidance and our persistence, we managed to finish this work on time.

This modest work is wholeheartedly dedicated to

"Me, Myself, and I"

My beloved parents who have been my source of inspiration, gave me strength when I thought of giving up, and continually provided their moral spiritual, emotional and financial support,

My unique sister **"Israa"** and my adorable brothers "**Ahmed and Mouhamed El Amine",**

A beloved person who has meant so much to me, although he is no longer in this world, his memories continue to regulate my life: my maternal grandfather **"Messaud"**. I still feel your presence here and I'll never forget you. May you find peace in paradise!

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Chayma

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Abstract

This research work attempts to unveil the effect of audio podcasts on the students' speaking performance and unfold the Oral Expression teachers' views about using them when teaching speaking. Accordingly, it has been hypothesized that if podcasting is used in teaching oral skills, the students' abilities in this skill will be developed. To test this hypothesis, an experimental study has been conducted on first year students at the Department of English, University of Jijel through which the experiment group were exposed to audio-podcasts in the treatment. The results obtained from the experiment showed that the experimental groups' speaking performance has been ameliorated; whereas that of the control group has not improved. In addition, a teacher questionnaire was administered to first year Oral Expression teachers to collect data about their opinions and practices in using such a tool in teaching speaking. The results of the questionnaire came to prove that the teachers believe podcasts enhance first year EFL students speaking and encourage their use in EFL speaking classes. The research hypothesis, then, has been confirmed.

Key words: Speaking, Audio-podcasts, EFL speaking classes

List of Abbreviations

ALM: Audio-Lingual method.

DM: The Direct method.

EFL: English as a foreign language.

GTM: The grammar translation method.

ICTs: Information and Communication Technologies.

IMPALA: The Informal Mobile Podcasting and Learning Adoption

Ipod: An Apple Designed Portable Media Player

LMD: Licence, Master, Doctorate.

MALL: Mobile Assisted Language Learning.

Mp3: Media Player 3

PCs: Personal Computers

RSS: Really Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary.

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

WWW: World Wide Web

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General Introduction

Introduction

The 21st century is frequently referred to as an era of technology, because technology nowadays plays a critical role in our lives. It has, indeed, become an integral part, and sometimes a major component in all the fields, as it is seen as the foundation for growth. It is apparent that technology has affected and revolutionized all life domains ; which has increased the need to adapt to its demands and requirements (Mumford, 1979, p.2). According to the most recent research on how modern students choose to use technology and how it impacts their learning, it was discovered that when learners use modern equipment, their learning and interactivity improve. The transmission of knowledge becomes very easy, convenient as well as effective.

This rapid transfer is intended to adapt learners' needs and update their teaching and learning experiences as it makes them more meaningful and authentic. Thus, teachers are required to challenge the traditional teaching and learning methods by integrating ICT media into language classes (Hassen & Hoon, 2013). There are so many technology forms that can be implemented in language teaching and learning process. One of these forms is the podcast which has not been designed primarily as a pedagogical tool for pedagogical purposes. It has rather been lately incorporated into language learning and teaching as a potent instrument for encouraging learners' autonomy and promoting their speaking abilities.

Accordingly, this research study is conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using audio podcasts on enhancing the students' speaking performance at Department of English, Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University Jijel.

1. Background of the Study

Speaking is one of the major skills required in communicating and sharing ideas and feelings .Its significance made its learning of great importance as learners of second language and foreign language are typically evaluated based on their ability to speak the language and they are considered good speakers when they are usually distinguished by their fluency and accuracy. According to Shiamaa (2006), "speaking itself represents an interactive process involving the production and receiving process to serve both interactional and transactional conversations" (p.30). In order to become good speakers , students have to practice speaking English while teachers have to give an exciting and enjoyable style of teaching speaking in order to support and help their learners maintain their motivation .

Hence, introducing an alternate medium, the podcast, could perhaps assist students in speaking effectively. A study conducted by Fernandez, Simo, and Sallan (2009) aimed at exploring the impact of podcasting use to facilitate good practice in higher education. An empirical study was carried out on an undergraduate degree course in Information Systems Management, and 13 podcasts were distributed over four months to ninety students. In this research, a permanent forum of discussion, emails, interviews and questionnaires were implemented in order to measure the students' feelings, perceptions, and reactions towards this technological tool. The results demonstrated that podcasting is a powerful tool which complements the traditional resources in a course, rather than substituting them. In addition, podcasting increased the interaction between students and their teachers as well as students' motivation. By reason of that, the implementation of podcasting into the learning process was discovered to allow for the emergence of a varied range of students' talents and learning approaches. It gives a chance to the teachers to support the students in improving their speaking skill.

Most of the investigations conducted on podcasting in pedagogy found that podcast, as a novel technological tool, facilitates language teaching and learning. The effects of using podcasts on the student's speaking skill were examined by Farangi et al. (2016) who carried out an experimental study to investigate such effects. The results of study revealed that the inclusion of podcasting in the language classrooms had a positive effect on EFL learners' speaking ability.

The preceding investigations yielded useful conclusions that shaped the course of this research and set the way for its relevance. The aforementioned studies focused on the effectiveness of podcasts on education in general, and on speaking in particular, in other countries. The present study comes to check this effectiveness in Algeria through an experimental study at the Department of English, University of Jijel and hopefully contribute to the literature existing about the topic. It also seeks to address a research vacuum by examining EFL teachers' perceptions toward the use of audio podcasts and its impact on the EFL learners 'oral proficiency.

2. Statement of the Problem

Learning a language entails learning its four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. One of the most difficult skills that EFL language learners face when learning a language is speaking, especially in their first year at university. A preliminary observation of the first year student's speaking performance in their Oral Expression classes at the Department of English at the University Mohhamed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel revealed that they are unable and unwilling to discuss different topics fluently and accurately whether inside the classroom or in other situations . In addition to that, regardless of the power of integrating technological tools in EFL classes, it has been noticed that podcasts usage is still limited in the Algerian context. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that implementing

the use of audio –podcasts when teaching speaking to freshman and exposing them to this technological tool will improve their oral performance.

3. Aims of the Study

The present research work aims are twofold. First, the study seeks to investigate the effect of using audio- podcasts on first-year students' oral performance. In other words, it particularly aims at investigating whether exposing the students to audio-podcasts in their Oral Expression sessions will ameliorate their speaking aspects represented in vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Second, the research aims at unfolding the teachers' perceptions of adopting this technological tool in their speaking classes.

4. Research Questions and Hypothesis

This research study seeks to answer the following questions:

- How does exposing first year students to audio-podcasts affect their oral performance in terms of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation?

- What are the Oral Expression teachers' views about the use of podcasts when teaching speaking?

In the light of these questions, it has been hypothesized that:

If audio-podcasting is used in teaching speaking to first year students, their speaking performance will be improved.

5. Research Methodology

In order to accomplish the research's objectives and increase the reliability and validity of its findings, an experimental design is adopted .Two research groups, an experimental group and a control group of 9 first year students in each at the Department of English, Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University took part in this study. Both groups are first tested at the level of their speaking to verify parity. The experimental group, then, is exposed to audio-podcasts during the Oral Expression sessions; whereas the control

group receives no treatment. At the end of the treatment, both groups are tested and both tests are scored according to a speaking rubric and compared to check the effect of audio-podcasts use on their oral performance. In addition to that, a questionnaire, of an exploratory nature, is used as a research tool to elicit data about the Oral Expression teachers' perception of using podcasting when teaching the Oral Expression module at the Department of English.

6. Structure of Study

The dissertation in hand is divided into two chapters: a theoretical chapter and a practical one. The first chapter covers the theoretical background of the different parts that are linked to the research topic. It consists of two sections. The first section sheds light on the speaking skill, its definition, components, types and the difficulties faced by EFL students when learning this skill, while the second section tackles about podcast as being an innovative instrument to be integrated into education, its definition as stated by a number of scholars and researchers, its different types advantages, and its use in EFL classes. The second chapter, the practical part, describes the methodology followed in conducting the research work, the research instruments adopted, and an analysis and discussion of the results obtained through the data collection tools.

Chapter One: Teaching the Speaking Skill in the EFL Class Through Podcasts

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Chapter One: Teaching the Speaking Skill in the EFL Class through Podcasts.

Introduction

One of the essential objectives for most EFL students is to master the speaking skill of the target language. Therefore, speaking is also deemed a crucial skill among the other learning English skills that should be mastered by students. Despite its significance, the speaking skill seems to be neglected skill in English Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms due to the limited sessions, In order to overcome this issue, the rapid advancement of 21 century has brought fabulous technologies such as: the use of podcast to enhance speaking competency in EFL classrooms. The present chapter, provide an overview related to podcasting and its impact on developing learner's speaking competency.

1.1. The Speaking Skill

1.1.1. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is synonymous with conversing. It is not merely using words, but also expending effort to produce very comprehensive speech in order to establish a genuine alliance with people, as this gives a sense of accomplishment. Chaney (1998) defines this vital medium of communication as "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols in a variety of contexts'' (p. 13). Pertaining to this, Rebecca (2006) stated that speaking is the first mode in which children acquire language, it is a part of the daily involvement with most of people with language activities, and it is the prime motor of language change.

Speaking is similar to writing in that it is characterized as a productive skill. Nunan (2003) says that "speaking is a productive skill which consists of systematic verbal utterances that carry out a meaning" (p. 48). Inside the classroom, it is seen as a fundamentally instrumental act and an interactive process of constructing meaning which includes producing, receiving and processing information. Nilsson (2011) states that

speaking is the essential part of English lessons, because when we speak we ask for attention, share our thoughts and feelings with others and it is important for the teachers to speak as much as possible.

Speaking in its broadest sense is, in fact, the ability to use a given language appropriately in a meaningful context.

1.1.2. The Importance of the Speaking Skill

The aim of foreign language learners behind mastering English is to accomplish successful and spontaneous discussions smoothly as it is their top priority among the other skills. Their success and effectiveness in their target language is evaluated by how well they have ameliorated in their spoken language proficiency.

Nowadays, in the EFL teaching process, the oral skills are disregarded because they are hard, tiresome and takes a long time to develop their competency. According to Luoma (2004), teaching speaking is a hard task for EFL teachers due to its complex and difficult nature. Celce Murcia (2001) believes that "the ability to speak language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication" (p. 103). Accordingly, when the students are aware of how to speak the language, they will know the language. As a way of example, when asking a foreign language student, we say "Do you speak English?", but not "Do you write English?"

As long as English is a universal language, and serves as a lingua franca. Nowadays, many departments and offices look for perfect English speakers to communicate effortlessly as much as possible. Meanwhile, being a good speaker sets you out from the crowd and positions you as a valuable asset to your company and provides you with an advantage over your peers.

1.1.3. Components of Speaking

There are five components of the speaking skill to be mastered: vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, accuracy and comprehension. According to Harris (1974), four or five of these components are recognized in the analysis of the speech process. The students must practice speaking English regularly to become fluent and accurate, and in order to achieve fluency, they have to know the most essential components that affect how well an individual speaks.

1.1.3.1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is stock of words with different meanings for different purposes; one cannot speak successfully without having an adequate and appropriate vocabulary. Consequently, to develop our speaking skill we first need to know the right words for better understanding because without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. This concept was supported by Richards and Renandya (2002) who state that "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write." (p. 255). It is actually the lack of a rich vocabulary repertoire which can make the students attain less than their real potential.

1.1.3.2. Accuracy

Accuracy is the freedom from mistakes and errors. In other words, it is how learners deal with language without making any grammatical mistakes to convey veracious and understandable messages. Nunan (1989) suggests that to be successful in speaking , the involvement of appropriate conversational formula, good ability to express phonological features of language, excellence of mastering stress and acceptable degree of fluency are required. Accuracy is in fact subjective; children are not capable of the same level as adults. As for teaching accuracy, teachers adopt some activities such as grammar presentation and dialogues.

1.1.3.3. Pronunciation

Another crucial feature of speaking is pronunciation, it is the way of producing a clearer language that indicates how well is pronouncing a particular word in a proper manner. Pronunciation can be one of the most difficult parts for a language learner to master and one of the least favorite topics for teachers to address in the classroom .Additionally, it ensures that learners are able to speak effectively when they have good pronunciation and intonation , even though they have minimal vocabulary and grammar . Referring to Nation and Newton (2009), pronunciation is an individual sound which involves good articulation, and it has features of sound such aspiration, voicing, voice setting, intonation and stress.

1.1.3.4. Fluency

Speaking fluency is an important goal for almost all language learners. It refers to the quality of how well students are good in connecting their ideas together without little deliberate thought and without pausing or interruption while talking. .Yingjie (2014) explains that fluency is the capability to smoothly speak in effective speed and to produce the right words without thinking too much. Being a fluent speaker of the English language helps in obtaining a level of confidence from this proficiency, and makes an individual sound prestigious and impressive on a larger scale. When teaching fluency, typical activities encompass: role plays, speeches, and communicative activities.

1.1.3.5. Comprehension

Comprehension refers to the process of grasping what the speakers says in order to avoid misunderstanding. It formulates the representation of the meaning of sentences and its function is to help the listener easily catch the information from the speaker. Comprehension is considered a convoluted task in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) because it is not directly observable, however, it should be deduced from verbal and non-verbal responses. (Cohen et al., 2005).

1.1.4. Types Of Classroom Speaking Performance

According to many learning theories, the speaking skill can be improved via games, role plays and other activities. According to Brown (2007), there are some types of speaking performance that can help students in improving speaking. These types are the imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive

1.1.4.1. Imitative

Imitative speaking refers to one's ability to repeat or parrot back correctly and of a better quality one voice of melody, phrase, or motive stated earlier by a different voice. This category tends to establish contact between the teachers and the learner by listening and repeating, and it does not matter if the student comprehends what they are saying in a discussion. A common example of this is" repeat after me "experience in the classroom.

The purpose behind this form of speaking performance is to ensure that students are ready to achieve proper grammar. It may include different linguistic levels such as syntax and lexis in order to convey a meaning or interact in a given conversation, by taking into consideration the pronunciation as an attempt to help learners to be more comprehensible (Brown, 2004)

1.1.4.2. Intensive

Unlike the imitative form of speaking performance, intensive speaking focuses on practicing some phonological or grammatical aspects of language, usually through pair work activities such as reading aloud, completion of sentences and dialogues. This category of speaking is, according to Brown (2004), employed in contextual evaluation "(…) in the production of short stretches of oral language design to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical phrasal, lexical or phonological relationships (such as prosodic elements-intonation, stress, rhythm, juncture" (p. 141).

1.1.4.3. Responsive

Responsive performance is slightly more complex than the intensive. Thus, this category requires interaction as it lies in short replies to teachers either question or comments. These short replies are usually sufficient and meaningful to instruct and direct students as Brown's example (2004) shows:

Marry: excuse me, do you have time?

Doug: nine- fifteen. (p. 142)

1.1.4.4. Interactive

The unique features of the interactive speaking type are different from the responsive in terms of length and complexity of the interaction. There are two forms of interaction, namely transactional and interpersonal. This type is usually more interpersonal than transactional. By interpersonal it is meant that the objective of the interaction is to maintain social relationships. The interpersonal speaking performance can be in the form of interviews, role plays, discussions, and games. The following is an example of interactive speaking:

Noor: Hi, Zain, what's up?

Zain: Oh not very well.

Noor: nothing is enjoyable, right?

Zain: yeah, actually I'm kind resentful about yesterday. (Brown, 2004, p. 142)

On the other hand, the transactional interaction is for reciprocation of information and ideas. In the interpersonal language, the oral production can be more complex with the use of colloquial language, ellipsis, slang and so on.

1.1.4.5. Extensive

Extensive speaking is the last type of speaking performance. It refers to some sorts of monologues or oral production that can be used specifically with intermediate and

advanced EFL levels. Examples of extensive speaking include, but are not limited to, short speeches, storytelling, summaries and oral reports. Based on this, students are required to know at least the basics of speaking a language: pronunciation, vocabulary and language function to practice the language appropriately.

1.1.5. Approaches of Teaching Speaking in EFL Oral Classroom

During the history of teaching English, a variety of numerous teaching methods has appeared in the sphere of teaching and learning processes which are: The Grammar Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Audio-lingual Method and The Communicative Approach.

1.1.5.1. The Grammar Translation Method

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is the oldest method to teach second and foreign languages. It is often labelled the traditional and the classical method, since it was first used to teach some of the dead languages such as: Latin and Greek, then it has been applied to the teaching of modern languages. Richard and Schmidt (2002) state that the grammar translation method is " a method of foreign or second language teaching which makes use of translation and grammar study as the main teaching and learning activities " (p. 231). Besides to that this method is still used in today's classrooms due to the grammar importance which is essential part of learning a language.

GTM focuses basically on form rather than meaning as well as on reading and writing and not on speaking or listening. It is based on analysing grammar rules of the target language, with translating sentences from and into mother tongue in order to make language learning easier.

1.1.5.2. The Direct Method

The Direct Method (DM) was devised in the early 1900's objecting the Grammar Translation Method. It attempts to integrate the use of the target language as a means of

instruction and interaction into the language classroom through discussion, conversation and reading in the second/foreign language with no use of the native language.

The DM is founded on the assumption that the learner of a foreign language should learn the target language naturally and directly through interaction during the language learning process. Therefore, the task of the teacher is to explain the language, to organize language practice, and to correct the mistakes of the learner while the role of the learner is to listen, imitate, and practice the oral language.(Davies & Pearse,2000). This method highlights the four skills: speaking, and listening then reading and writing.

1.1.5.3. The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) also called the aural- oral approach, is a method of language teaching and learning originated in 1950's. The ALM is characterized by particularly teaching oral communication and listening comprehension rather than reading and writing. Furthermore, it is believed that the main doctrine of this method is the overuse of drilling and repetition techniques to form habits. Accordingly, falling in a bad habit formation, errors and mistakes should be completely avoided. The Audio-Lingual Method pays more attention to the structure rather than function. Harmer (2004) states that the purpose of audio-lingual teaching was creating habits formation through constant repetition of correct utterances, supported by positive reinforcement.

1.1.5.4. The Communicative Approach

Unlike the traditional methods and approaches of teaching and learning languages that teach language forms, communicative language teaching (CLT) has emerged to teach language functions. That is, the focus is shifted to the teaching of the purposes for which the language is used. CLT is said to be effective for both the teachers and students, for it enables learners to interact verbally with others and serves most of their needs using the second language for communication. In addition to that, this approach is used in language

classes to encourage students to use language spontaneously, and gives them the opportunities to choose a topic to be discussed. "The communicative language teaching stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching"(Howatt ,1984, p. 279).

1.1.6. The Speaking Skill Difficulties

Even though the mastery of speaking English is regarded as a preference for a lot of English learners; it is known as a familiar problem among non-native speakers. Many foreign language learners encounter various obstacles while speaking which misguide their communicative abilities. These difficulties include: vocabulary deficiency, a lack of practice, fear of making mistakes and anxiety, lack of self – confidence and shyness. Some of these factors are whether related to the level of the students themselves, or to the teaching techniques and the environment.

1.1.6.1. Vocabulary Deficiency

In most EFL classrooms, learners lack the necessary vocabulary to get their meaning across, express themselves eloquently, and therefore, they cannot keep the interaction going. The reason behind this difficulty is ascribed to the learner's poor repertoire of vocabulary. Hence, in order to overcome these issue teachers should select topics that are suitable to the student's preferences that can inspire them and make them feel comfortable to speak up and actively communicate.

1.1.6.2. Lack of Practice

Language practice is the main factor for developing the speaking skill, comparing to other assessment tasks. EFL learners need to practice the language in different ways inside and outside the classroom to get accustomed to it in order to develop their speaking abilities

in English. Richards (2008) argues that students must develop the ability to use the language in the real world rather than only to make grammatically correct sentences.

Learning a foreign language is not merely a matter of using grammar rules and theories of language, it is also a matter of producing language successfully in different situations.

1.1.6.3. Fear of Making Mistakes and Lack of Self- Confidence

Lack of self-confidence and fear of making mistakes are one of the psychological factors that badly affect the student's speaking performance. They make the learners reluctant beings who refuse to initiate classroom discussions, because they feel that their English is not good enough. In addition, they become afraid of being pinpointed by their poor speaking skills by other students or even by their teachers, which results in their choice to keep silent instead. Aftat (2008) adds that this fear is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation. Therefore, it is important for teachers to convince their students that making mistakes is not erroneous because students can learn from their mistakes.

1.1.6.4. Anxiety, Shyness and Lack of Motivation

Anxiety, shyness and lack of motivation are other barriers that obstruct the learner's speaking abilities. Hence, ameliorating oral skills in EFL classes can be strengthened only in a relaxed atmosphere where the teachers and students feel secure and comfortable. Shyness which is an emotion that many students suffer from when they are required to speak due to the fear of being laughed at by their friends because of their inability in performing English . In line with this, Baldwin (2011) further explains that speaking in front of people is one of the more common phobias that students encounter and shyness makes their mind go blank or forget what to say.

In language learning, especially when speaking motivation is vital for students. Nunan (1999) stresses that motivation is important to notice in that it can affect the students' reluctance to speak in English. In this sense, motivation is a key consideration in determining the readiness of learners for communication.

1.2. The Use of Podcasts in EFL Classroom

1.2.1. Definition of Podcast

As a result of the technological advancements, new techniques have been introduced to help both teachers and learners and to also facilitate the learning process. Podcasts are among these valuable techniques which are nowadays adopted in EFL classes.

Podcasting has been defined distinctly by numerous researchers and scholars in different ways. To start with, podcast is defined in simple words as an audio or a video file, which covers a wide range of topics that are available in a variety of formats, the most common of which being MP3. According to Rosell-Aguilar (2007) "podcast is a portmanteau word, a melting pot of the words iPod and broadcast" (p. 472). The podcast's name comes from the combination of iPod (one of the early portable audio players) and the word broadcast.

In addition, Meng (2005) defines the word podcasting as the process of capturing an audio event, song, speech, or mix of sounds to be posted on a website or blog in the RSS feed that allows these files to be automatically downloaded into an audio management program on a user's personal computer such as iTunes or Windows Media Player. The RSS feed will, therefore, alert the user each time a new episode is uploaded or sent to be listened to at the time and location most convenient for the user.

Podcasts assist learners in knowing the target language, and teachers can utilize them as useful audio material in class for exercises. Evans (2007) says that: "whilst podcasting is being utilized as a teaching tool by some educators in the secondary sector,

its use in higher education, and its effectiveness as a learning tool for adults remains to be established".(p. 491)

A podcast is a pre-recorded audio file that is uploaded to a website for users to download and listen to at any time and in any place on personal computers or mobile devices. Evans (2007) says: "Podcasting involves downloading a series of audio or video broadcasts (files) onto a digital media player, via a computer, over a period of weeks". Also, Podcasts cover a wide range of topics and are available in a variety of formats, the most common of which being MP3.

1.2.2. History of Podcasts

Audio blogging is another previously utilized term for podcasting; it started in the 1980s with the emergence of broadband internet and portable digital equipment, such as iPod. The word was originally suggested by Ben Hammersley from the mixture in English of iPod (gadget with which they became popular) and Broadcast (to spread contents). "Though Ben Hammersley is credited with the first use of the term, he did not invent the technology. The technology is accredited to Tristan Louis, Dave Winer and Adam Curry" (Schwartz, Ranlett & Draper, 2009, p. 216).

Despite the fact that at first it was necessary to have one of these devices to listen to them, "[t]he Sony Walkman was probably the first device designed for personal and portable audio listening; however, the iPod and its associated iTunes software, was the first small personal portable device provided for downloading and playing podcasts." (Salmon et al., 2008, p. 21) .Today it is no longer necessary to have one because anyone can just install any audio player in any operating system. As a matter of fact, most podcasts can be heard directly from the web. With the evolution of technology, people start to take shots of themselves and post those auditory visual records (videos) on different sites or platforms as YouTube, Spotify, etc. So the podcast has become a means to share the aural content.

1.2.3. Types of podcast

Podcasts have been categorized into different types. According to Bennet (2007), the audio or video is the most common file format for podcasting, but the files can be of any kind like photos and PDF. There are three main types dubbed: audio podcast, video podcast and enhanced podcast

1.2.3.1. Audio Podcast

Audio podcasts are the most popular type of podcasts and they are similar to the radio in containing only sounds. Audio podcasting considered the easiest one to downloaded and listen to in comparison with other podcasts, for they demand a small storage space of files and they can be chaptered. Besides that; audio podcasts are available in a variety of formats including MP3 format which can be played on any MP3 device.

1.2.3.2. Video Podcast

Video podcasts, also known as vodcasts and vodcasting, are audio and video recordings that are combined into a single file, they are actually an audio visual program. According to Ellis (2017), "a video podcast, commonly referred to as a vidcast or vodcast, is a streaming or downloadable video clip, usually offered as a subscription to an ongoing program". Video podcasts require large screen devices, such as PCs, to be played .Video podcasts are more difficult, time demanding, and thus more expensive to create. MP4 is the video format in which podcasts are often available (Salmon & Edirisingha, 2008).

1.2.3.3. Enhanced Podcast

Enhanced podcasts are newer type of podcast. Also known as slidecast, they are similar to video podcast in that they combine both audio and video slides. However, this kind of podcasts contains multimedia information, such as slides, pictures, images, photographs, short videos, and chapters that help readers have a better understanding of the

subject , as well as, allowing them to skip to the area they want. Enhanced podcasts can only be played on personal media players with video capabilities or on a computer with iTunes (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

1.2.4. The Use of Podcasts in Teaching Speaking Skills

The integration of information communication technology (ICT) in teaching and learning has a significant influence on EFL learner's speaking in language acquisition settings. It facilitates the journey, especially in the contexts of the rapidly growing Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). It is undeniable, even though it cannot play the role of the teacher; it can be used as an additional tool for updating teaching methods in classrooms. The use of podcasts inside and outside the classroom has increased in the real world, it has become a major interest topic since it is easy to be accessed, and it paved the way for meeting students' needs and interest. According to Nataatmaja and Dyson (2008), thanks to podcasts, learning can occur anytime and anywhere.

Teachers, accordingly, have a responsibility to prepare students as much as possible to be willing to communicate in English out of interest and aspiration in this rapidly changing modern society. They are expected to exploit all the resources that are available and adopt a new view of their professional development for the purpose of using technology at their disposal for their benefits.

Several studies advocate that the use of ICT while teaching is indispensable. Understanding ICT and mastering its fundamental skills and concepts is now considered part of the core of education in many countries. ICT stands for information and communication technologies which are defined as a set of authentic materials and resources used to communicate, stored and manage information. These may include broadcasting technologies. Hakikur (2016) defines ICT as "technologies that provide access to information through telecommunication" (p. 147).

In teaching speaking, ICT is a source of creativity, podcasting, in particular, is still fairly new in higher education. In fact, many students who have not been earlier exposed to a new educational tool can have their motivation increased and their learning experience enhanced when they are exposed to podcasting. (Dale et al, 2009). In education, podcasts play a vital role in facilitating teaching and learning. They have transformed the way people communicate in the classroom and the way they teach, the process has become more interactive and collaborative.

To conclude, it is strongly believed that the implementation of educational technology into the EFL context as a supplementary tool provides a flexible set of technological resources to teach almost every aspect of the English language, especially the speaking skills, the adoption of such tools would leave an everlasting impression on students, and the lesson aims would be reached in much more effective and efficient way. Podcasts as one of modern technologies that can do trick, and helps students to easily interact with the teacher, and be good speakers of the target language.

1.2.5. Advantages Of Using Podcasts

Podcasting have opened new possibilities for academia. The "new technology always has a heavy impact on education, and podcasting is no different" (Gray, 2017). Arguably, this tool has resulted in several benefits.

- Podcasts is an entertaining and effective learning tool that can help to develop, improve, enhance and enrich the speaking skill especially in vocabulary and pronunciation

- Podcasts allow one to break from reading.

- Podcasts increase the learner's motivation and good attitudes about the language

- podcasts allow students to listen to real life language in order to acquire a native like pronunciation

- Podcasting makes learning easier, faster and more attractive to the learners.

- Podcasts serve as an advanced as well as an organiser tool before new topic is introduced

Conclusion

In this chapter, the focus was on the importance of oral communication generally, and on speaking specifically in the process of EFL language learning and teaching. It has been stipulated that speaking is the primary skill in evaluating learners' proficiency of English as a foreign language. As a consequence, different ICT tools to teach speaking skills have appeared in the field of education, and among them is the podcast which is used in Oral Expression to develop learners' speaking capabilities.

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

2.1. The Experimental Study

    2.1.1. The Experimental Study Rationale

    2.1.2. Population and Sampling

    2.1.3. The Pre-test Form

    2.1.4. The Treatment

Introduction

The first chapter presented the theoretical part related to this study, while this chapter is devoted to the practical part. It includes an overview of the research method adopted along with a detailed analysis of the results. The first section introduces the experimental study and its rationale, the selection of the sample, the procedure followed and the quantitative results obtained with their discussion. Section two presents the teacher questionnaire, a meticulous analysis of its results with a discussion.

2.1 The Experimental study

2.1.1 The Experimental Study Rationale

Unlike the descriptive design, the experimental design refers to any design of information gathering that includes a hypothesis and a variable that can be manipulated by the researcher, majored, calculated and compared. According to Nunan (1992), an experiment is carried out for the purpose of strengthening a casual relationship between two variables. In such case, the experimental expects the independent variable to influence the dependent variable. Accordingly, a treatment is administered to the subjects of the experiment. The latter is a combination of an experimental and a control group. In the light of a stated hypothesis, the researcher gives the experimental group the treatment under controlled conditions to later determine the observable changes that occur after the treatment. With respect to the present study, this design has been selected by the researchers because it is viewed to be the best method to actively determine the effectiveness of podcasting on speaking performance, and to produce authentic and meaningful , defensible evidence.

2.1.2 Population and Sampling

With regard to the sample of our study, eighteen participants were selected from a population of 268 first year students at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel during the second semester of the academic year 2021/2022. The aims behind choosing this population are threefold. First, freshmen have no prior university experience as far as speaking techniques adopted to improve proficiency are concerned. Second, the most difficult challenges in speaking are generally faced by students in their first year and therefore, an attempt to find a solution to their problems would be welcomed. Finally, in

introducing the students to a new technique in their early phase of learning at university can positively affect their learning in the following years.

Since randomization is a focal element of the true experimental design, it was achieved in this study through randomly using the timetable and assigning the first group to attend the oral expression session as the experimental group while the second group to attend as the control group. Each of the group includes 9 students to make up a total of 18 students. Figure1 displays the sample and population of the study.
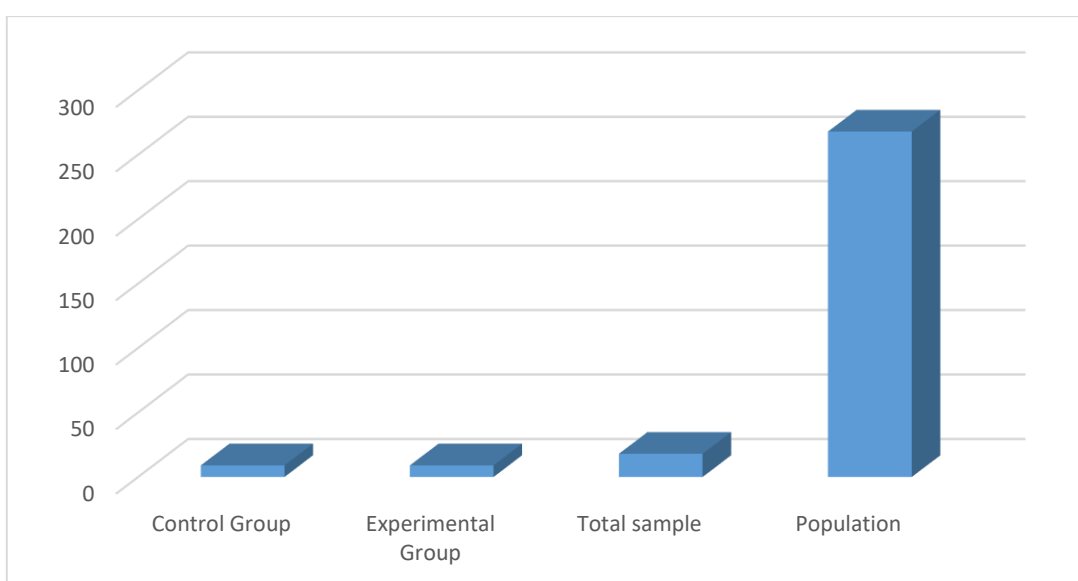
Figure1. The Sample and Population of the study

2.1.3 The Pre-test Form

In order to check the existence of parity between the experimental group and the control group before the treatment, a pre-test was used. As the researchers of the present study are interested in the participants' oral performance, the pre-test selected then was in a form of an oral test. The students were invited to answer 8 questions about the following topics: wellbeing, happiness, problems, life hacks (see Appendix 2). Before the pre- test process began, the researchers thoroughly explained all the test steps to the students to

avoid misunderstandings. The researchers recorded both the experimental and the control group answers.

2.1.4 The Treatment

The treatment of the experimental study was in a form of exposing the experimental group to podcasts as the main media during their oral expression sessions with the objective of improving the students speaking skill. The research treatment lasted for four weeks and the duration of each session was 1 hour. The researchers used different podcast talks on the following topics: wellbeing, the international day of happiness, life hack, and real life problem. The selection of the podcasts' topics was aligned with the topics of the lessons delivered to freshmen in Oral Expression sessions.

2.1.4.1 A Detailed Description of the Treatment Timeline

Week1

The audio podcast used was on the topic of looking good. It took from 3 to 5 minutes; repeated twice depending on student's request. In the first session, pre-listening activities were used such as ordering sentences, showing pictures, matching words with their definition, in which the topic was presented to check the students' knowledge and refresh their minds. . In the while-listening activities, students listened and solved different exercises related to vocabulary and grammar: fill-in the gaps, answering multiple choice questions, re-ordering sentences. Post-listening activities were: answering questions in pairs or summarizing the podcast talk (see Appendix 3).

Week2

The audio podcast used was on the topic of the international day of happiness, it took from 3 to 5 minutes; repeated twice depending on student's request. Before exposing the students to listen to a podcast, pre-listening activities were used in order to present the

topic for them such as visual materials, ordering sentences from the most happy to the less happy, matching words with its definitions and then put them in a meaningful sentences, also answering some questions in pairs. In the while-listening activities, students were exposed to a podcast talk and required to answer multiple choice questions, fill in the gaps with appropriate words. In the post-listening the students summarized the podcast's content (see Appendix 4).

Week3

The audio podcast used was on the topic of life hack. It took from 3 to 5 minutes. For pre-listening activities, pictures which show problems that people have with their clothes, shoes, etc. were used. The second activity was about matching words with pictures. After that the students listened to the podcast talk, which was repeated three times depending on students' request. They were required to choose the correct option to complete the sentences. Post-listening activities were: ordering words to make sentences about life hacks (see Appendix 5).

Week4

The audio podcast used was on the topic of real life problems. It took from 5 to 7 minutes. The podcast was played three times according to the students' request. The pre-listening activities used were matching words with their definitions, completing the sentences with the words given. After listening to the podcast talk which is divided into four dialogues, the students were requested to match the dialogues with its titles, complete the information related to the dialogue. Post-listening activities covered summarizing the podcast (see Appendix 6). Table 1 summarises the treatment timeline:

Table 1. A Summary of the Treatment Timeline

Time	Action

Week 1	- Exposing the students to podcast 1 about looking good
Week 2	- Exposing the students to podcast 2 about the International Day of Happiness
Week 3	- Exposing the students to podcast 3 about life hack.
Week 4	- Exposing the students to podcast 4 about real life problems.

2.1.5 The Post-test Form

To check whether or not the experimental group's oral performance was affected by the use of podcasts, both the experimental and the control group took a post-test. The post-test form was similar to that of the pre-test and had the objective of eliciting the same type of data. Thus, the students were tested orally and were requested to answer 6 questions about the following topics: reading, change and city. The researchers recorded both the experimental and the control group answers. (See appendix 7).

2.1.6 Calculating the Findings

For scoring the pre-test and the post-test, the researchers analyzed the aspects of speaking; vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation by following O'Malley and Pierce (1990) who proposed a speaking rubric in order to measure the student's English speaking skill mastery where each component of speaking was categorized into four band scales (see appendix 1).

For the aim of checking the hypothesis, the results of the control group and the experimental group were compared using the t-test via the SPSS software. The t-test is a reliable test for comparing between groups. The unpaired t-test formula adopted is as follows:

$$t = \frac{\overline{X}_1 - \overline{X}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{(N_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (N_2 - 1)s_2^2}{N_1 + N_2 - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2}\right)}}$$

2.1.7. The Experiment Results

2.1.7.1. The pre-test Results

The researchers analysed all the recorded answers of the control and the experimental group and marked them following O'Malley and Pierce (1990) (see appendix1). The results of the control group's pre-test are shown in Table 2. The results of experimental group are shown in Table 3 while Table 4 shows the results of both groups together.

Table 2. The Results of the Control Group Pre-test

Participants	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Overall Score
S1	2	1	1	4
S2	1	1	1	3
S3	2	2	2	6
S4	1	1	1	3
S5	2	1	1	4
S6	2	2	2	6
S7	1	1	1	3
S8	2	1	1	7
S9	2	2	2	6

Table 2 shows that the scores of the control group in the pre-test vary from 3 to 7. The highest score is 7 out of 12 while the lowest score is 3. The table also shows that 6 students scored above the average and most of the student's scores range between 3 and 4.

Table 3. The Results of the Experimental Group Pre-test

Participants	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Overall Score
S1	3	3	3	9
S2	2	1	2	5
S3	3	3	3	9
S4	2	2	1	5
S5	2	1	1	4
S6	3	3	3	9
S7	2	2	1	5
S8	2	1	1	4
S9	2	2	1	4

As far as the scores of the experimental group in the pre-test are concerned, Table 3 shows that their scores range from 4 to 9. The highest score is 9 whereas the lowest score is 4. Most of the experimental group scores, as clearly shown in the Table 3, are between 4 and 5. Table 4 displays the results of both the control group and experimental group together.

Table 4. The Results of the Control Group and Experimental Group in the Pre-test

Participants	Control Group	Experimental Group
S1	4	9
S2	3	5
S3	6	9
S4	3	5
S5	4	4
S6	6	9
S7	3	5
S8	7	4
S9	6	4

Table 4 clearly indicates that the scores of the control group and the scores of the experimental group are close to each other. In both groups, 3 students scored 4. Three students from the control group got 6 while three students from the experimental group obtained an approximate score which is 6.

2.1.6.2. Comparing the Pre-test Scores of the Control Group and the Experimental Group

To check whether or not parity exists between the control group and the experimental group in the pre-test, the researchers made a comparison between the scores of both groups which are displayed in Table 4. The researchers used the unpaired t-test because they are the scores of two different groups. The results of the test are indicated in Table 5.

Table 5. Comparing the Overall Scores of the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the Pre-test

	N	SD	Mean	Mean Difference	T	P
Pre-test: Control group	9	1.5	4.67	1.33	1.43	.085
Pre-test: Experimental group	9	2.2	6.00			

Table 5 reveals that the mean of the control group overall scores in the pre-test was 4.67, whereas the mean of the experimental group overall scores was 6. The mean difference of 1.33 was not significant. With a degree of freedom of 16 and a level of significance $\alpha=0.05$, the calculated t value is smaller than the critical value (see Sirkin, 2006 table of critical values) (1.43<1.74); therefore, the means are not significantly different. In addition, as p=.085 is greater than 0.05, this statistically means that the difference between the experimental group and the control group is not quite statistically significant. Thus, parity is achieved.

2.1.7.3 The Post-test Results

Similar to the pre-test analysis of data, the researchers analysed and scored the answer recorded in the post-test for both the control group and experimental group following the same rubric provided by O'Malley and Pierce (1990)'s rubric . Table 6 reveal the control group's post-test results and Table 7 displays the post-test results of the experimental group. The results of both groups were gathered in Table 6.

Table 6. The Results of the Control Group Post-test

Participants	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Overall Score
S1	2	1	1	4
S2	1	1	1	3
S3	3	2	3	8
S4	1	1	1	3
S5	2	1	1	4
S6	3	2	2	7
S7	2	2	2	6
S8	2	2	2	6
S9	3	2	2	7

Table 6 shows that the scores of the control group in the post-test vary from 3 to 8. The highest score is 8 out of 12 while the lowest score is 3. The table also shows that 7 students scored above the average, and most of the scores range between 3 and 6.

Table 7. The Results of the Experimental Group Post-test

Participants	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Overall Score
S1	4	4	4	11
S2	3	2	2	7
S3	4	3	3	10
S4	3	2	2	7
S5	2	2	2	6
S6	4	3	4	11
S7	3	2	2	7
S8	3	2	2	7
S9	3	2	2	7

As far as the scores of the experimental group in the post-test are concerned, Table 7 shows that their scores range from 6 to 11. The highest score is 11, whereas the lowest score is 7, most of the experimental scores, as clearly shown in the table 7 are between 6 and 7. Table 8 displays the results of both the control and experimental group together

Table 8. The Results of the Control Group and Experimental Group in the Post-test

Participants	Control Group	Experimental Group
S1	4	11
S2	3	7
S3	8	10
S4	3	7
S5	4	6
S6	7	11
S7	6	7
S8	6	7
S9	7	7

Table 8 shows that the scores of the control group and the scores of the experimental group are different from each other. The experimental group scores are clearly higher than the control group scores.

2.1.6.4. Comparing the Post-test Scores of the Control Group and the Experimental Group

To verify whether the use of podcasts affected the speaking performance of the experimental group, it was required to compare between the results

Table 9. Comparing the Overall Scores of the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the Post-test

	N	SD	Mean	Mean Difference	T	P
Pre-test: Control group	9	1.87	5.33	2.78	3.07	.003
Pre-test: Experimental group	9	1.96	8.11			

Table 9 shows that the mean of the control group overall scores in the post-test was 5.33, whereas the mean of the experimental group overall scores was 8.11. The mean difference of 2.78 was indeed significant. With a degree of freedom of 16 and a level of significance α=0.05, the calculated t value is greater than the critical value (3.07>1.74); therefore, the means are not significantly different. In addition, as p=.003 is smaller than 0.05, this statistically means that the difference between the experimental group and the control group is quite statistically significant. This means that the experimental group was affected by the treatment.

2.1.7. Discussion of the Experiment Results

This research study aimed at finding out whether the use of podcast media in teaching can improve the students' speaking skill. To check the hypothesis, the researchers had to verify that there is a difference between the scores of the experimental group which received the treatment and the scores of the control group which did not.

Accordingly, the researchers compared between the scores of the two groups using the unpaired t-test. The results obtained from the statistical analyses of both groups' scores showed that parity was achieved prior to the intervention. In other words, the scores of both groups were statistically proved to be similar. However, the experimental group scores were higher than the control group scores after the researchers' intervention. This means that exposing the students to podcasts in the Oral Expressions sessions helped them in ameliorating the speaking aspects represented in vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and pronunciation.

Based on the overall statistical analysis of the results, it is clear that the independent variable "applying Podcast as media" had an effect on the dependent variable "the students' speaking performance". That is to say, the results of the experiment proved that the use of podcast ameliorated the speaking performance of the freshmen and, therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed.

2. 2.The Teacher Questionnaire

2.2.1. The Questionnaire Participants

In order to check the views of teachers of Oral Expression about the use of podcasts when teaching speaking to freshmen and whether they have already used this type of media in their speaking classes, the researchers targeted all the teachers of Oral Expression who taught first year students at the Department of English, University of Jijel, during the

academic year 2021/2022. Thus, the four teachers in the department took part in answering the teacher questionnaire.

2.2.2. Description and Administration of the Teacher Questionnaire

Questionnaires are simply defined by Brown (2001) as "(...) any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (Brown, 2001, p. 6). Dörnyei (2002) stressed the importance of length and layout when constructing questionnaires. Thus, the present Teacher Questionnaire, of an exploratory nature, was carefully constructed by the researchers bearing in mind that teachers do not have much time to answer a lot of open-ended questions. The questionnaire was accordingly tailored to include types of questions that can help the researchers collect the desired answers without taking so much of the participants' time and. The teacher questionnaire (see Appendix 8) consisted of 13 questions: 10 of multiple-choice questions that involve a set of choices and the respondents are required to select one answer from the options that are offered and 3 close-ended questions that require answers with "yes" or "no" then providing a brief justification.

The first set of questions were directed to elicit some information about the teachers' background, then the teachers' were asked about their views about teaching speaking and last but not least some questions were set to elicit data about these teachers' perceptions about using podcasts in Oral Expression classes.

2.2.3. Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire Results

Part One: Background Information

Question 1: Which academic degree do you hold?

a. Master's
b. Magistére
c. Ph.D

Table 10. Teacher's Academic Background

Options	Master's	Magistère	Ph.D
Responses	2	1	1
Percentage	50%	25%	25%

Table 10 shows that most of first year Oral Expression teachers at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University hold a Master's degree (50%), one of them has a Magistère degree (25%) and the other one a doctorate dergree (25%)

Question 2: how long have you been teaching at university?

Table 11. Teacher's Experience in Teaching et University

1-5 years	6-10 years	+10 years	Total
2	2	0	4
50%	50%	0%	100%

With regard to the teachers' experience in teaching English at university, Table 11 clearly indicates that two of the teachers (50%) have taught et the Department of English for a period of 1 to 5 years, while the remaining two teachers have been teaching in the department from 6 to 10 years.

Question 3: How long have you been teaching Oral Expression?

Table 12. Teacher's Experience in Teaching in oral Expression

1-5 years	6-10 years	+10 years	Total
4	0	0	4
100%	0	0%	100%

The results displayed shows that all first year Oral Expression teachers not have a long experience in teaching speaking in EFL classes. The four teachers that represent (100%) have taught this module from 1 to 5 years.

Part Two: Teacher's View's About Teaching Speaking

Question 4: How would you describe your student's speaking proficiency in English As a foreign language?

Table13. Teacher's view of learner's speaking performance

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
0	2	2	0	4
0%	50%	50%	0%	100%

Table 13 clearly exhibits that Oral Expression teachers agreed that EFL learners' level in speaking performance is between average (50%) and good (50%).

Question 5: From your point of view, what are the major difficulties that Algerian EFL students faced in the speaking skill?

If others, please specify.

Table 14. Teacher's Views about the Major Obstacles EFL Learners Face

Vocabulary deficiency	Lack of self-confidence	Fear of making mistakes	Anxiety
3	3	3	3
75%	75%	75%	75%

From the teacher's answers, all the students find a lot of difficulties when they are speaking which are: vocabulary deficiency, lack of self- confidence, the fear of making mistakes and anxiety. Two teachers added different obstacles such as: the majority of students are not willing to speak, and learner's don't have enough ideas about the topics given.

Question 6: Which type(s) of speaking activities do you use to improve your student's speaking proficiency?

If others, please specify.

Table 15. Types of Speaking Activities Used

Role play	Short talks	Debates	Podcast-based activities
3	2	4	**3**
75%	**50%**	**100%**	**75%**

Table 15 shows that all Oral expression teachers of freshmen use debates activity (100%). Most of them (75%) use podcast-based activities and role plays when teaching

speaking while half of them (50%) use in the classroom. Some teachers added other different types of activities that are used in the classroom such as: videos, short films, storytelling, communication games, group discussions, peer teaching, and presentations.

Questions 7: Do you give your learners the chance to express themselves and show their ability to speak English?

a. Yes   b. No

Table. 16. Giving the Chance for Students to Speak in the Class

Yes	No	Total
4	0	4
100%	0%	100%

The responses to this question revealed that all the teachers give chances to their students to speak the language and express themselves in the classroom

Part three: Teacher's Perceptions of Using Podcast in Oral Expression Classes

Question 8: How often do you use technological materials while teaching oral expression?

Always/ Often /Sometimes /Rarely/Never

Table 17. Using Technological Materials While Teaching Speaking

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
2	1	1	0	0	4
50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	100%

The answers to question 8 showed that (50%) of teachers always use technological materials while teaching Oral Expression because these tools may help them to teach students the speaking skill. However, (25%) of Oral expression teachers said they often use these materials when teaching speaking and the remaining (25%) stated that they sometimes use these materials.

Question 9: What type(s) of teaching aids do you use?

 Audio aids/ Visual aids/ Audio-visual aids/All the above

Table 18. The Use of Teaching Aids

Audio aids	Visual aids	Audio-visual aids	All the above
2	1	3	1
50%	25%	75%	25%

As table 18 exhibits, it is noticed that the majority of the teachers (75%) prefer to use the audio-visual aids in the class, and (50%) of the other oral teachers use only the audio aids.

Question 10: Do you usually use podcasts in teaching oral expression?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 19. The Use of Podcasts in Teaching Oral Expression

Yes	No	Total
3	1	4
75%	25%	100%

Table 19 indicates that most of first year teachers (75%) use the educational podcasts in teaching the Oral Expression module; whereas, (25%) of the rest of the teachers do not employ them.

Question 11: Do you think podcasts are effective in improving the speaking skills of EFL learners?

a. Yes   b. No

Table 20. Educational Podcasts as an Effective Tool in Improving the Speaking Skill

Yes	No	Total
4	0	4
100%	0%	100%

The results displayed show that all the Oral Expression teachers (4) representing (100%) have stated that they find educational podcasts an effective source in improving speaking and no one denied that.

Question 12: If yes, why do you think effective?

They enhanced the vocabulary repertoire/ They improve pronunciation / They build confidence

Table 21. Reasons behind Finding Podcasts Effective

Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Confidence
4	4	3
100%	100%	75%

The results show that all teachers (4) confirm that educational podcasts help in enhancing the students' vocabulary repertoire as well as their pronunciation. Only three teachers said that such tools help in building confidence of the students. In addition, one of the teachers stated that educational podcasts help to enlarge student's lexicon and enrich their knowledge about the language while another teacher said that podcasts provide the learners with an English speaking community where they can learn and also share comments and perceptions about the topic of the podcasts.

Question 12: Which aspects of speaking do you think podcasts use can ameliorate?

Table 22. Aspects of Speaking that Podcasts can Ameliorate

Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation
4	2	4
100%	50%	100%

The results indicate that all oral teachers (4) agreed that the use of podcasts can improve vocabulary and pronunciation, while the remainder ensured that podcasts can progress students' grammar.

2.2.4. Discussion of the Teacher Questionnaire

It is clear from the aforementioned results that the teachers of Oral Expression sampled for this study believe that the use of ICT tools such as podcasts is successful in generating positive attitudes and improving the students' speaking skill. The analysis of the

first part of the questionnaire demonstrated that half of the first year Oral Expression teachers at the English Department at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University hold a master's degree (50%), one has a Magistère and the other one a PhD. This shows the variance existing in the teachers' level. Also, their teaching experience at the university varied from one to more than ten years (1 -10 years), while they have been teaching Oral Expression module from just one to five years (1-5 years). That is to say, they can be deemed novices with regard to teaching speaking.

The analysis of the second part of the questionnaire gave us insights into the teachers' views about teaching speaking. All the Oral Expression teachers who took part in the present study agreed that EFL learners have an average to good level of speaking performance. This might be ascribed to the fact freshmen are not willing to speak and are less motivated due to the traditional teaching methods which generally lead to disconnecting learners' attention from the course content, especially that the questionnaire also demonstrated that debates activity is the most used activity by Oral Expression teachers to improve student's speaking competency. In addition, the results showed that, indeed, students face some obstacles while they are speaking such as the lack of vocabulary, anxiety, lack of self-confidence and the fear of making mistakes. The results obtained from the third part which is about teachers' perceptions of using podcast in Oral Expression classes showed that half of teachers (50%) said that they always use ICT tools while teaching speaking and the other teachers said that they sometimes or often use these materials and they rely mostly on audio-visual materials (75%). Furthermore, all the teachers find podcast an effective way for teaching speaking as it can help learners to enhance the vocabulary repertoire, to acquire correct pronunciation and to build confidence. The use of podcasts can benefit the students and help them develop several aspects of speaking such as: vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.

To sum up, from the results obtained from the teacher questionnaire, it is deduced that teaching speaking to freshman requires the use of podcasts. EFL teachers believe that podcasts have a great impact in enhancing the EFL learner's speaking skill and greatly encourage using them in Oral Expression sessions.

2.3. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations

While investigating the usefulness of using audio podcasts to improve first year EFL learners speaking skills, this study ran into several blocks and obstacles. Among these blocks:

- First, we have to mention time constraints which forced us to conduct the experiment in no longer than four weeks (7 sessions) which justifies the number of podcasts used during the experiment.

- Due to the limited time we could not explore participants use and impressions after receiving the treatment, as it was supposed that researchers observed the progress of the students speaking skill in the classroom. The unexpected holidays were an obstacle to do an observation.

- We encountered some problems during the experiment, particularly in the month of Ramadan, the sample was limited to only 18 students, because most students were absent from the speaking classes.

- The researchers also faced some technical problems because of the damage of some laboratory devices.

- Furthermore, this study was also postponed due to the student's strike we were obliged to delay sessions.

2.4. Pedagogical Recommendations

The main focus of this study was actually to prove the effectiveness of using ICT such as podcasting in improving the speaking abilities of freshmen students. Hence, for the purpose of integrating podcasts in EFL teaching and learning at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, the following recommendations need to be taken into consideration:

- It is recommended that teachers involve each students in every speaking activity, students should ameliorate their level and so that the activities can enable them to use the language to communicate fluently

- The oral expression sessions should be taught exclusively inside the language laboratories, which should be well equipped to guarantee good sound quality.

- Integrating electronic learning tools within the curriculum is required and the teachers need to be train on how to use E-tools particularly podcasts

- Teachers should motivate and encourage the students to use podcasts not merely inside the classroom but also outside the classroom.

- Since the researchers could not conduct the study in a longer period of time with a larger group of students due to the aforementioned limitation, the researchers are encouraged to conduct a similar study in the future without such constraints to obtain more comprehensive results .

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the research design, it presented a clear idea about the objective of this research work and the research tools used by the researchers to collect data from both EFL students and Oral Expression teachers. The chapter also set forth an analysis of the data gathered through the methods adopted, the experimental design and the questionnaire that took place at Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia, the results

obtained revealed the crucial benefits of the audio podcasts and its positive impact on enhancing EFL student's speaking performance.

General Conclusion

First year EFL students generally face difficulties in developing their speaking performance. Hence, teachers and researchers are continually investigating methods on how to improve these students' performance, especially using technological tools because their role in modern education is immense. Since podcasts are a dynamic approach of the digital with its unique features, simplicity and accessibility, the present research work aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using this technological tool in developing the speaking skill. In this research it has been hypothesised that exposing first year students to audio-podcasts when teaching them speaking will develop their oral performance. The study also aimed at exploring the views of teachers of Oral Expression module about implementing audio-podcasts in their speaking classes.

This dissertation is composed of two chapters. The first chapter covered the review of literature, while the second chapter was devoted to the practical part. The research study yielded positive results. In the experimental group's oral performance was ameliorated and particularly their speaking aspects: vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation and, therefore, the research hypothesis has been confirmed. The teacher questionnaire results also revealed that the Oral Expression teachers at the Department of English are in favour of employing audio-podcasts in the Oral Expression sessions and also agreed on the effectiveness of this method in improving freshmen's speaking proficiency.

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Appendix1: Speaking Rubric Proposed by O'Malley and Pierce (1990)

Aspects	Score	Criteria	Indicator
Vocabulary	1	Poor	Uses only basic vocabulary and expressions
	2	Fair	Uses limited vocabulary and expressions
	3	Good	Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions, but makes some errors in the word choice
	4	Excellent	Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions and almost never makes some errors in the word choice
Grammar	1	Poor	Uses basis structures and makes frequent errors
	2	Fair	Uses a variety of structures with frequent errors, or uses basic structures occasionally
	3	Good	Uses a variety of grammatical structures, that makes some errors
	4	Excellent	Uses a variety of structures with only occasional grammatical errors
Pronunciation	1	Poor	Makes frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation
	2	Fair	Pronunciation and intonation are sometimes not clear or accurate
	3	Good	Pronunciation and intonation are clear or accurate
	4	Excellent	Pronunciation and intonation are almost always clear and accurate

Appendix 2: The Pre-test

Answer the following questions.

1. What does happiness mean to you?

2. When was the happiest moment for you? When? Where?

3. What does well-being mean to you?

4. Does social media affect our well-being?

5. What's the worst problem you have ever had?

6. Is there anyone who is always ready to help you with their problems?

7. What do life hacks mean to you?

8. Do life hacks lead to a happier life?

Appendix 3: Treatment1

1. Warm up

Looking at pictures related to the main idea (different ways to keep fit and healthy).

2. Listening

- Listen to the Looking Good Podcast and choose the best option to complete the sentences.

a. Amanda owns a chain of fashion / fitness / yoga studio.

b. Well-being means feeling happy and healthy / relaxed / beautiful.

c. The presenter goes to the gym once a week / month / day.

d. The presenter used to swim / run / cycle a lot.

- Listen again and write the missing words in the gaps. The first letter is given to you

a. I want to start by a ……… you to define well-being.

b. We hear a lot a ……….well-being these days, and it simply means feeling healthy and happy.

c. I always avoid g ……….to the gym

d. Many of the people who work with e ……….exercising if they can be outside**.**

3. Practice:

- Write a short paragraph in which you summarize the podcast's content.

Appendix 4: Treatment2

1. Warm up

Look at the following activities and think of what makes you the happiest. Put them in order from 1 (most happy) to 6 (least happy).

• working in the garden

• going to the beach

• chatting with my family over dinner

• watching a film with my friends

• passing an exam

• helping someone

2. Focus on Vocabulary

1. promote (v)	a. a group of people who are born around the same time
2. spokesperson (n)	b. an important idea in, for example, a book, a film, a speech
3.theme (n)	c. a person who speaks to represent an organisation or group of people.
4. inequality (n)	d. a situation when people are poor over a long period of time
5. poverty (n)	e. a situation when some people have less money or opportunities
6. generation (n)	f. to make something more popular or better known than others.

3. Comprehension

• Listen to the recording and answer the following questions.

1. What is the purpose of the International Day of Happiness?

   a. to promote international awareness of mental health issues

   b. . to promote happiness in all countries around the world

   c. the promotion of the idea that happiness is a human right

2. Which song was live-streamed for 24 hours to celebrate the first International Day of happiness in 2013?

   a. My Happiness by Andy Williams

   b. Happy by Pharrell Williams

   c. Roar by Katy Perry

3. Which of the following themes have been used for the International Day of Happiness?

   a. the key to a good life

   b. how to be happy

   c. happiness and the community

4. What are the main causes of feelings of happiness?

   a. being healthy and having children

   b. having a good job and a supportive community

   c. having goals and positive relationships

5. According to the speaker, what health problems are happy people less likely to suffer from?

   a. stress and depression

   b. heart-related issues

   c. colds and flu

6. What is the main focus of the International Day of Happiness?

   a. conserving the environment for the future, bringing poverty to an end, and reducing inequality around the world

   b. reducing poverty, ending global inequality, and improving mental health awareness

   c. ending poverty, raising awareness of inequality, and supporting the care of children in the future

Appendix 5: Treatment 3

1. Warm up

  Match this problems with the pictures

A) My shoes are too tight.   B) I've lost a button.

 C) My shoes smell bad.   D) My clothes have wrinkles.

 E) My white trainers look dirty.   F) My trainers always get wet in the rain.

G) My zip is stuck.   H) I've lost a sock in the washing machine.

• Which three problems do you think are the most serious? Why?

 • Can you suggest solutions to any of these problems?

2. Listening

Listen to the podcast and choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

1. Keep your socks together in the washing machine by / with placing them in a mesh
    bag.

2.   Mark, to stopping / stop buttons falling off your clothes, you can paint the threads
    with clear nail varnish.

3.   Vicky, in order to / that get a stuck zip moving again, you should use a candle or
    pencil.

4.   About / For wrinkle-free clothes, put ice cubes in the dryer

5. For super-white trainers / clean, put toothpaste on an old toothbrush and use this to
    clean your shoes.

3. Practice

    Can you think of some life hacks that you have faced every day?

Appendix 6: Treatment 4

1. Warm up

- Match the different types of mistake with their correct definitions.

1. mix-up   a. a mistake in a computer programme

2. typo   b. a mistake that confuses somebody to believe that one thing
                                      is something else

 3 . fault   c. a small, accidental mistake in a text made when it was
                                      typed on a computer

  4. gaffe   d. a small mistake

  5. slip-up   e. a social mistake made in speaking or behaving

  6. bug   f. part of a machine that isn't working properly

2. Key Words

- Complete the sentences with the words below:

misplace   nuisance   off   ongoing   refund

1. If a problem is ………….; it continuous to exist
2. If you ……………. something , you lose it temporarily because you have forgotten where you have put it
3. If someone is a …………….., he or she annoys or causes trouble for another person
4. If food or drink is ………….., it is no longer fresh or good to eat because is too old
5. If you are not happy with something you have bought, you can usually go back to the shop and ask for a …………..

3.Listening and Practicing

- Listen to four dialogues and match them to each situation below

    Trouble at work: ……. Poor service:……… Poor quality:…… Personal difficulties

    Listen again and complete the information:

    Dialogue 1 Complaint: an employee is late for work again

    Explanation: . . . .

Result: . . . .
 Dialogue 2
Complaint: . . . .
Explanation: . . . .
Result: . . . .
 Dialogue 3
 Complaint: . . . .
 Result: . . . .
Dialogue 4
Complaint: . . . .
Result: . . . .

- Listen again and complete the following key expressions from the dialogues:.

 1. Can I have a ?
 2. Oh, I'm really about that.
 3. You , there are some major road works in my area.
 4. I'm to leave earlier from tomorrow.
5. Oh, I'm sorry to that. 6. I'll what I can out.
 7. Please with me a moment....Right, sorry to you waiting.
 8. It that the driver misplaced your address.
 9. I'm afraid that's just not .
10. I really don't why I have to come back to your store twice

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Appendix 7: Post-test

Answer the following questions.

1. Do people read more nowadays?

2. Do you read before going to bed?

3. Do you think change is good?

4. What are some of the major changes that occur to people throughout their lives?

5. In your opinion, what makes a city a good one to live in?

6. What are the advantages of living in a city?

Appendix 8: Teacher Questionnaire

University of Jijel
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

Teacher Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire, which is only part of our Master's dissertation, was designed to collect data about the correlation between the use of podcasts in the EFL class and speaking competency. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the questions below, and we would like to thank you, in advance, for being collaborative.

I. Background Information

1. What is the highest degree that you hold?

a) Master's ☐   b) Magistère ☐   c) PhD ☐

2. How long have you been teaching at university?

1-5 years ☐   6-10 years ☐   +10 years ☐

3. How long have you been teaching Oral Expression?

1-5 years ☐   6-10 years ☐   +10 years ☐

II. Teacher's Views' about Teaching Speaking

4. How would you describe your student's speaking proficiency in English as a foreign language?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Poor   Average   Good   Excellent

5. From your point of view, what are the major difficulties that Algerian EFL students face in the speaking skill?

- Vocabulary deficiency ☐
- Lack of self-confidence ☐
- The fear of making mistakes ☐
- Anxiety ☐
- If other, please specify.

……………………………………………………………………………………………………….
……………………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….…
………

6. Which type(s) of speaking activities do you use to improve your student's speaking proficiency?

- Role play ☐
- Short talks ☐
- Debates ☐
- Podcast-based activities ☐
- If other, please specify.

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7. Do you give your learners the chance to express themselves and show their ability to speak English?

Ye s ☐   No ☐

II. Teachers' Perceptions of Using Podcast in Oral Expression Classes

8. How often do you use technological materials while teaching Oral Expression?

- Always ☐
- Often ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Never ☐

9. What type(s) of teaching aids do you use?

- Audio aids ☐
- Visual aids ☐
- Audiovisual aids ☐
- All the above ☐

10. Do you usually use podcasts in teaching Oral Expression?

Yes ☐   No ☐

11. Do you think podcasts are effective in improving the speaking skills of EFL learners?

Yes ☐ No ☐

12. If yes, why do you think they are effective?

- They enhance the vocabulary repertoire ☐
- They improve pronunciation ☐
- They build confidence ☐
- If other, please specify.

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………

13. Which aspects of speaking do you think podcast use can ameliorate?

- Vocabulary ☐
- Grammar ☐
- Pronunciation ☐

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche tente de dévoiler l'effet des podcasts sur la performance orale des élèves ,et de dévoiler les points de vue des enseignants d'expression orale sur leur utilisation lors de l'enseignement de l'expression orale. En conséquence, il a été émis l'hypothèse que si le podcasting est utilisé dans l'enseignement des compétences orales, les capacités des élèves dans cette compétence seront développées . Pour tester cette hypothèse, une étude expérimentale a été menée dans laquelle un groupe expérimental d'étudiants de première année du Département d'anglais de l'Université Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia de Jijel a été exposé à des podcasts audio dans le cadre d'un traitement, tandis qu'un groupe témoin n'a reçu aucun traitement. . Les résultats obtenus à partir de l'expérience ont montré que les performances orales du groupe expérimental ont été améliorées ; alors que celle du groupe témoin ne s'est pas améliorée. L'hypothèse de recherche est donc confirmée. De plus, un questionnaire destiné aux enseignants a été administré aux enseignants de première année d'expression orale afin de recueillir des données sur leurs opinions et leurs pratiques d'utilisation d'un tel outil dans l'enseignement de l'expression orale. Les résultats du questionnaire ont prouvé que les enseignants pensent que les podcasts améliorent l'expression orale des étudiants de première année et encouragent leur utilisation dans les cours de langue étrangeres .

Les mots clés : Podcast , compétence orale, apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère

ملخص

يحاول هذا العمل البحثي الكشف عن تأثير البودكاست الصوتي على أداء التحدث لدى الطالب ويكشف عن اراء اساتذة   التعبير الشفوي حول استخدامها عند تدريس التحدث. وفقًا لذلك ، تم الافتراض أنه إذا تم استخدام البودكاست الصوتي في تدريس المهارات الشفوية ، فسوف تتطور قدرات الطلاب في هذه المهارة. لاختبار هذه الفرضية تم إجراء دراسة تجريبية حيث تم أولاً عرض مجموعة تجارب من طلاب السنة الأولى بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى جيجل لملفات صوتية في العلاج بينما لم تتلق المجموعة الضابطة أي علاج . وأظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من التجربة تحسن أداء التحدث للمجموعات التجريبية. في حين أن المجموعة الضابطة لم تتحسن. ثم تم تأكيد فرضية البحث. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، تم تقديم استبيان لاساتذة التعبير الشفهي في السنة الأولى لجمع البيانات حول آرائهم وممارساتهم في استخدام مثل هذه الأداة في تدريس التحدث. جاءت نتائج الاستبيان لتثبت أن الاساتذة يعتقدون أن البودكاست يعزز تحدث طلاب السنة الأولى من اللغة الإنجليزية و يشجعهم على استخدامها في اقسام التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.