

## **The Effects of Podcasting on Speaking Skills: An Investigation on Upper Intermediate ESL Learners in a Local University**

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In contemporary English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom, technology and language learning are two interrelated components. Language learning is encountering a shift in research area from CALL, to Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) which is defined by Moura and Carvalho (2012) as any type of language learning that takes place anywhere and anytime, supported by mobile devices (Moura & Carvalho, 2012). Podcasting is one of the mobile technologies which is increasingly used by language teachers as a tool for delivering language related resources and encouraging the learners to learn outside the traditional classroom. The primary aim of this study is to investigate the effects of podcasting in improving students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom. A total of 40 upper intermediate first year undergraduates of a local university have been investigated by assigning them into experimented and control groups. 20 students have been assigned for each group based on the random sampling method. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach was used for the control group. The treatment meetings comprised podcasts to assist the learners in addition to the given activities in their lessons. Moreover, the learners produced podcasts of their own as pairs and uploaded them into podcasting service with the intention of sharing their podcasts with the peers and refer to them throughout the treatment process. A quantitative data analysis approach was used where the analysis of the pre and post-test scores of the experimental and control groups were conducted using SPSS software with statistical techniques including mean, standard deviation, frequencies and paired sample t-tests. Both Pre and post-tests comprised an oral presentation on a given topic. The analysis of the post-test scores of the control and experimental group indicates a statistically significant difference;  $t(19) = -5.327$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . The statistical analysis of the pre and post-test scores of experimental group (within-group) depicts a statistically significant difference;  $t(19) = 9.718$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . The statistical analysis of pre and post-test scores of control group shows a slight statistically significant difference;  $t(19) = -3.688$ ,  $p = 0.002$ . Thus, the study affirms that the podcasting enhances the speaking skills of the ESL learners and the use of podcasting is identified as one of the effective MALL technologies that can be incorporated into the ESL classroom.

Keywords: Podcasting; Speaking skills; ESL learners; MALL; Technology

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