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DIPLOMAMUNKA

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Angoltanár mesterszak

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Pedagógiai és Pszichológiai Kar – Bölcsészettudományi Kar

DIPLOMAMUNKA

A podcastok használata nyelvfejlesztés terén

The use of podcasts for language development

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The use of podcasts for language development

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.....
a témavezető aláírása

Abstract

Today, students are surrounded with various technological gadgets, which they use every day. Therefore, it is worth investigating how some of these tools could be incorporated into the English language classroom. This study examines whether podcasts can be used for language development. Podcasts are audio files that can be downloaded from the internet and later, they can be listened to on any multimedia device. This paper intends to gain some information about whether student-made podcasts are suitable for developing learners' oral fluency and confidence. In addition, the study also looks at the potential of podcasts for raising awareness of grammatical mistakes. Similarly, it is examined whether creating podcasts is motivating for students. Twelve students were asked to create podcasts at home. Observations about the different aspects of their work were made. Each task was followed by feedback from the teacher and later, learners were asked to fill in a questionnaire. After reviewing the relevant literature and based on the observations and the findings of the questionnaire, it can be claimed that as opposed to previous results, students' confidence did not grow due to creating podcasts, but it has a positive effect on their fluency, their awareness of grammatical mistakes and on their motivation.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Theoretical background	3
2.1. What is a podcast?.....	3
2.2. Ways of using available podcasts	4
2.3. Podcasts for learners of English.....	6
2.4. Types of podcasts.....	8
2.4.1. Teacher-created podcasts.....	9
2.4.2. Learner-created podcasts	9
2.5. Benefits of podcasting.....	13
2.6. Possible problems.....	17
2.7. Summary	18
3. Research design and method	21
3.1. Research Questions	21
3.2. Setting and participants	21
3.3. Methods of data collection	22
3.3.1. Procedures	23
3.3.2. Podcast task 1	25
3.3.3. Podcast task 2	25
3.3.4. Podcast task 3	26
3.3.5. Instrument: a Questionnaire	26
3.4. Methods of data analysis	29
4. Results	30
4.1. Observations about student-made podcasts	30
4.2. Questionnaire	33
5. Discussion.....	40
5.1. Time spent on creating podcasts and hard work	40
5.2. Writing skills and students' confidence	40
5.3. The use of vocabulary and speaking skills.....	41
5.4. Grammar, accuracy and feedback	42
5.5. Motivation.....	43
5.6. Students' opinion on the tasks and their ideas for improving it.....	44
6. Limitations.....	46

7. Conclusion.....	47
References.....	49
Appendices.....	52
Appendix A – The Questionnaire in Hungarian	52
Appendix B – The Questionnaire in English	57
Appendix C – A filled-in version of the questionnaire	62
Appendix D – The first example of feedback in Hungarian	66
Appendix E – The second example of feedback in Hungarian	67
Appendix F – The first example of feedback in English	68
Appendix G – The second example of feedback in English	69
Appendix H – Students’ choices of topics	70

1. Introduction

By the twenty-first century, the different technical gadgets such as laptops, smartphones, tablets, the Internet and Web 2.0 tools have become integral parts of learners' everyday lives due to the rapid development of Information Communication Technology. Today's students are born into this world. "They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age" (Prensky, 2001, p. 1.). Since they are used to using these tools all the time, it would worth considering what tools of the wide variety could be incorporated into the education and how it could be done. In my thesis, I investigate whether podcasts are suitable for skills development and if so, what skills could be best developed with their use. I chose this topic because I assume they might have a potential in helping students develop their language skills.

Podcasts are relatively new technological tools, which are not widespread in the English language education in Hungary at all and their educational potential is still being researched in other countries, too. They are audio recordings that can be downloaded from the Internet. If one shows interest in a particular show or programme, they can subscribe to it, so they will get every new episode via RSS feed (Really Simple Syndication) automatically without having to search for it every day (Vasinda & McLeod, 2011). Thus, one of the advantages of podcasts is probably that they are downloadable and therefore, learners can listen to them anywhere anytime. Another advantage may be that listening skills are likely to develop by often listening to podcasts. Pronunciation and fluency might improve, too. Moreover, students have access to a wide range of accents on the Internet, so the material is varied as well as authentic. Furthermore, there are a lot of topics to choose from, so every student can

find something that they are fond of. For intermediate students and above, a good starting point might be BBC Podcasts at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>. In addition, podcasts are free of charge, so learners just have to take the opportunity and take some time for language development.

If we take a look at the available literature on the topic, we will find that there are four major categories of podcasts. The first is ready-made podcasts that students can download and listen to like the ones on the above mentioned website. The second category is podcasts specially made for language learners. Teachers can download these and bring them to the classroom. They usually come with the tapescript and/or a task sheet, too. Some examples of these can be found on the website of the British Council, for instance. In the relevant literature, we can find examples of podcasts made by teachers for a particular course as well. Similarly, students can make their own podcasts as an assignment.

In this thesis, my main research points are the benefits of learner-created podcasts. I would like to find out whether making podcasts helps students developing fluency and pronunciation. Likewise, it might be worth looking at whether production makes learners aware of their grammar and accuracy mistakes. Similarly, I examine whether podcast creation helps students gain confidence in speaking in front of their peers and whether they find it motivating to create podcasts. In order to find answers to these questions, I take a look at some key studies from the available literature and summarize their results first. Secondly, I outline the framework of my study; then, I present the method I used for collecting data. Afterwards, I summarize and discuss my findings. Finally, I answer my above-mentioned questions and draw a conclusion.

2. Theoretical background

In this section of the thesis, I review the available literature regarding podcasts. Firstly, I will define what a podcast is. Secondly, I will write about how to use the available podcasts for educational purposes. Then, I will elaborate on podcasts specially made for language learners. Afterwards, the types of podcasts will be discussed with special emphasis on teacher- and learner-created ones. This will be followed by the advantages of podcasts and some possible problems. Finally, I will present a short summary of the literature review.

2.1. What is a podcast?

Podcasting started to take off at about 2004 or 2005 (Campbell, 2005). Bolden (2013) defines podcasts as follows: “Podcasts are assembled packages of audio (and increasingly video) content that can be accessed through computers and digital media players” (p. 76). Schmidt (2008) defined the term similarly. According to him, a podcast is an audio file that can be downloaded from the Internet with the help of a so called podcast client automatically. The client checks whether there is a new available episode and if there is, it downloads it. Afterwards, people can listen to it whenever they want, which is one of the benefits of the technology. Campbell (2005) and Buffington (2010) mention Apple’s iTunes as an example for software, which one can manage subscriptions with. In his article, Schmidt (2008) gives a detailed description of how to use iTunes for searching for and downloading content. He found that this program is the easiest to use.

Buffington (2010) asserts that the word podcast is the result of merging the words iPod and broadcast. Campbell (2005) and Stanley (2005) express the same thing in their articles. Although the term podcasting was originally connected to iPods, now it

refers to any software and hardware combination that permits automatic downloading of audio files (most commonly in MP3 format) for listening at the user's convenience. ... It differs from broadcasting and Webcasting in the way that content is published and transmitted via the Web. Instead of a central audio stream, podcasting sends audio content directly to an iPod or other MP3 player. (*EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative*, 2005, p. 1)

Buffington (2005) also mentions that besides being audio files, podcasts can contain pictures or video excerpts, too. If someone wants to listen to a podcast, they only need a computer with Internet access and speakers. For creation, one needs a particular piece of software and a microphone to record voice. Such software includes Garage Band, Audacity or Adobe Audition, for example (Buffington, 2010). Campbell (2005) and Stanley (2005) also mention Audacity, as an example of an appropriate programme for editing audio. Apart from tools for recording and software for editing, Stanley (2005) adds that one needs a blog where they can publish their work, an RSS feed and online space for storage as well. The potential of podcasting is just being discovered; however, Campbell (2005) is of the opinion that it is not a new phenomenon, but its novelty comes from the fact that it is easy to use, publish or subscribe to it. Similarly, Schmidt (2008) points out that the novelty of podcasts lies within the technology.

2.2. Ways of using available podcasts

In the available literature, there is little written about podcasts that are ready for use and about how to use them in class. Some authors touch upon the issue, but apart from mentioning a few ideas, they do not write about the topic at great length. In their article, Schmidt (2008) and Stanley (2005) declare that podcasts can be set as

homework. Students can report on what they had heard and they can discuss it in groups or do a composition on the topic (Schmidt, 2008). Schmidt (2008) adds that podcasts can be brought to class, too. One of the task types he suggests is that students can research what is available or look for different types of programmes. The teacher and students can do research together if they have access to a language lab. In this way, educators can also monitor what students are doing and they can help them if it is necessary.

Furthermore, students can keep a journal about podcasts they listened to where they can write any questions or comments. This is what Schmidt (2008) usually asks his learners to do. Similarly, he gives students questions to answer for each episode or some writing assignments.

Other uses of podcasts include discussing a certain topic based on a podcast or making presentations (Schmidt, 2008). Podcasts can also be used to introduce an artist or a topic to students by bringing an interview to class. Similarly, a video podcast can exemplify the process of something that students are going to learn about (Buffington, 2010).

Moreover, teachers can prepare for their lessons by listening to podcasts, making their knowledge up-to-date, thereby (Buffington, 2010). Bolden (2013) and Stanley (2005) both emphasize that podcasts can be used for professional development, too. For this purpose, Bolden (2013) suggests that teachers could listen to Ted Talks, for instance. He adds that podcasts can be used as supplementary materials in schools as well. Another example for the use of podcasts is from Stanley (2005), who refers to Ed Tech Talk, which is about educational technology. Schmidt (2008) emphasizes that there are several ways of using a podcast but teachers have to familiarize themselves

with their content prior to bringing them to class in order to avoid making learners listen to something inappropriate.

2.3. Podcasts for learners of English

If we type this subheading in the search engine, one of the first hits is an article of *The Guardian* in which Dow (2015) describes her ten favourite sites of podcasts for language learners. In the description, several languages are mentioned such as English, German, Spanish, French and even Japanese and Chinese among others. This article shows that there are different podcasting websites dedicated to almost every language helping learners with grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Dow (2015) found that the content of these podcasts were engaging and motivating. Similarly, learners can find different formats from explanations to interviews (Dow, 2015).

Apart from the above mentioned list, there are several other online possibilities for listening to podcasts. First of all, the British Council also has a page for podcasts under its LearnEnglish section (<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/learnenglish-podcasts>). The audio files come with an interactive pre-listening exercise followed by several also interactive tasks that can be done while or after listening, and the learner gets immediate feedback after finishing an exercise. In addition, the transcript can be viewed as well if someone needs to check something further. Another very useful feature of the website that teachers might use is that the audio file and every task can be downloaded as a package or one-by-one. Therefore, the exercises can be brought to class even if there is no Internet connection in the classroom. The same site has a separate page for business-related podcasts, too. These exercises may complement a business English class well.

Secondly, at BBC's website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>), it is possible to listen to or download podcasts of different British radio stations, for example BBC Radio 1 or 3. Students can search for programmes according to radio stations or categories like drama, sport, comedy, news or history, just to mention a few. However, most of these are longer files lasting for about 20-30 minutes or more, and they are not specifically made for language learners. Thus, these might be suitable for students with strong intermediate, upper-intermediate or advanced knowledge.

Furthermore, FluentU blog lists eleven websites for language learners who want to listen to podcasts (<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/english/esl-english-podcasts/>). The list includes BBC's podcasts, the British Council's website, Better at English, Business English Pod, and Luke's English Podcast, just to mention a few. The authors of the article help learners to choose the best site by writing a few paragraphs about each one. The list contains websites offering podcasts from absolute beginner to advanced level. Similarly, there are numerous podcasts with slower speech speed than normal but audio files with normal speech speed can be found in the list of websites as well. Podcasts with different length are also included in the list: from 3-4 minutes to about half an hour (FluentU, 2014). Some podcasts deal with vocabulary or idioms, and others with grammar. There are conversations, dialogues and lecture like explanations, too. Based on this list, it seems that indeed, several types exist; learners only have to find the one which is the most suitable for them (FluentU, 2014).

In addition to this, podcasts.inenglish.com is a website that also offers podcasts. The website has audio files in three different levels, from elementary and pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate and above. There are business English podcasts as well. Transcripts, worksheets, tasks and extra material can be found here, too, and there is a section with lesson plans for teachers as well. Nevertheless, worksheets, tasks and

lesson plans are only available for members unfortunately. Besides, membership is not free but costs about 6 euros per month. What is free of charge is listening to the audio material, and there are sample worksheets, so those who are seriously interested can take a look at them and decide whether they really want to sign up.

2.4. Types of podcasts

Stanley (2005) lists four types of podcasts in his article. The first is *authentic podcasts*. These are files that are not specifically made for students of English. Stanley (2005) argues that they can serve as valuable listening material for learners with higher level of English. Moreover, there are podcasts made by non-native speakers of English and these files may be suitable for in class use as well. The second type is *teacher-made podcasts*. Obviously, these podcasts are made by teachers for their students and aim at developing listening skills (Stanley, 2005). The third category is *student-made podcasts*. Here, students themselves make audio files that they might share with each other. Some teacher help may be needed during the production though. As the fourth category, Stanley (2005) adds that there are podcasts that teachers can use for developing their own knowledge.

If someone is about to start creating podcasts, Campbell (2005) lists a number of websites that can help beginners and give advice or guidelines on how to get started. He declares that it is important to understand the basics, but afterwards, it becomes easy. Distribution is simple; the most difficult part may be the creation itself with planning, editing and post-production (Campbell, 2005).

In the following two subsections, I will discuss two of the four types as these are the most interesting and relevant to my study.

2.4.1. Teacher-created podcasts

Teacher-created podcasts are hardly mentioned in the literature. One of the examples is Vess (2006), who created “enhanced podcasts” for her students. That means that podcasts she created contained pictures which were linked to different websites she wanted students to become familiar with. In this way, she could teach learners how to use databases, different tools on websites and the Internet. As another idea, she suggests that teachers could record feedback on students’ work as a podcast as well. It is also mentioned in the literature that in higher education, lectures or course material can be made available for students to download in the form of podcasts if they were absent (EDUCAUSE, 2005). Vess (2006) mentions that her colleagues use podcasts for distributing lectures or some necessary materials for assignments.

In a further example, Campbell (2005) recorded a series of John Donne’s poems that he read when he was teaching a seminar on the poet. He claimed that since he understood the poems better than students, he could read them in a meaningful way, which may have helped students’ understanding of the poems and helped them prepare for class. Bolden (2013) states that teachers can make podcasts themselves so as to review what has been covered in class.

2.4.2. Learner-created podcasts

There are many more examples of learner-created podcasts in the relevant literature. One of them is a project by Farwick Owens (2013). She describes a three-week-long school project in her article, in which students made podcasts based on old-time radio shows. During the first week, students got familiar with old detective stories from the radio and analyzed their features e.g. plot, scripts, character traits, music and how to make suspense. During the second week, learners wrote their own scripts and

the third week, they recorded their own stories adding special effects, too. The author found that the project was exceptionally motivating for students. Besides, students became interested in radio shows in general, and they were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of radio and TV with the elderly (Farwick Owens, 2013). Farwick Owens (2013) concluded that the project was advantageous for developing literacy skills.

Others wrote about the beneficial effects of podcasting on literacy skills as well. In their article, Vasinda and McLeod (2011) argue that combining Readers Theatre with podcasting is a powerful way of promoting reading fluency and comprehension among young learners. Readers Theatre is a way of reading a text using anything else but your voice to make the audience understand it (Martinez, Roser, and Strecker, 1999 as cited in Vasinda & McLeod, 2011). This means that “volume, intonation, pitch, and timing are critical to supporting the listener’s enjoyment, visualization, and understanding of a script” (Vasinda & McLeod, 2011, p. 487). Vasinda and McLeod (2011) claim that in order to be able to read in the above mentioned way, one needs to understand a text deeply.

Three elementary schools and altogether six classes took part in their study, in which they used a ten-week time frame. Students worked in groups of four to eight. On Monday, they got a script which they practised reading through the week; 10-15 minutes every day. Then, on Friday they recorded it with the help of a microphone and a computer. Afterwards, students’ podcasts were uploaded to a website so as to make them available for parents to listen to. The products were identified by group names, not the students’ real names. At the end of the study, Vasinda and McLeod (2011) found that the level of performance of struggling readers improved by one year on average.

They identified the following reasons for the improvement. Uploading podcasts to the internet makes them available to a wider audience. In this way, they remain permanent and accessible to anyone. This practice also makes it possible for students to evaluate their own performances later. Teamwork proved to be beneficial, too. Based on Abel and Glass (1999), and Harvey and Goudvis' (2007) work, the authors also concluded that visualisation is also crucial to expressive reading (as cited in Vasinda & McLeod, 2011). They noted that the sound waves during the recording of the podcasts helped learners in visualizing the texts or scripts. They also argued that the project would not have been beneficial without the careful match with the technology (Vasinda & McLeod, 2011). All of this could motivate students to try their best during the production.

In another example, Buffington (2010) writes about the use of podcasts in art education. In her article, there are a number of tips on how to use podcasts for understanding art. She also lists some useful formats of podcasts that students can create such as lectures, tours in a gallery, interviews with artists, simulations or interpretations of art. She found that the most interesting podcasts were the ones that contained an element of spontaneity, and they had a dialogue format or multiple speakers. Similarly, the perfect tone was casual and not too formal. In addition, the best audio files were easy to understand, because speakers used a common language. Lecture type podcasts were far less gripping (Buffington, 2010).

Buffington (2010) suggests that when creating a podcast, one should divide it into shorter sections so that listeners can skip one of them if they are not interested. Podcasts that use open-ended questions and make the audience think worked better in Buffington (2010)'s experience than just talking about facts. Participants in her study reported that making a podcast helped them to review their own work and to decide

what is relevant to the subject. Similarly, the process promoted the understanding of the material better and highlighted different approaches to it.

Buffington (2010) found that podcasts that contained only audio could make her and her students pay attention for not longer than two or two and a half minutes. If video or pictures were incorporated in the podcast, they could pay attention for a longer period of time but usually the time did not exceed five minutes. Buffington (2010) also noted that it is important to create podcasts with high quality especially if one wants to upload them to the Internet. If the quality of sound or recording is not good enough, it is easy to lose interest in the material. Loud background noises can be disturbing as well (Buffington, 2010). Buffington (2010) found that introductory music should not be longer than 5 seconds and the microphone ought to be held close in order to produce a podcast with high quality. She also pointed out that creators must learn how to use the tools and familiarise themselves with the process of creation.

In the musical field, Bolden (2013) asked his students to create a 3-5-minute podcast in which they talked about their relationship with music. The recording had to contain at least three pieces of music, too. He also created a sample piece for students and introduced software which they could edit their work with. He provided step-by-step instructions, too. Bolden (2013) mentions that students can share their creations with each other; however, teachers should be able to decide whether students are comfortable with sharing their podcasts with each other.

In her article, Vess (2006) describes how she used iPods in her university graduate history class for improving students' research and oral skills as well as promoting greater involvement in the subject. The reason for her wanting students to produce podcasts was to engage them actively in the learning process. That is why she set up a project in which students had to produce their own podcasts. Their task was to

record their oral presentations with the help of an iPod and send it to the instructor (the university presented every freshman with an iPod). Then, students had to download each other's presentations and listen to them before class, so they did not have to spend time on listening to each other in class. They only had to discuss what they had heard. After a while, students started to use iPods for creating audio notes for their assignments; they recorded short summaries or citation of articles they read. Another thing students had to do was record interviews, analyze them and then, they recorded the discussion, too.

2.5. Benefits of podcasting

There are several benefits of podcasting. First of all, Williams (2007) believes that the creation of podcasts may be useful in skills development such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, or planning. He is convinced that podcasts can be especially good for different learning styles, too (as cited in Buffington, 2010).

Secondly, Schmidt (2008) argues that podcasts serve as authentic material for improving listening skills. In his article, he writes about using them in German language classes. He states that podcasts can be used at any level and they can supplement any course. He also mentions Duke University's project in which iPods were given to first-year students in order to experiment with the use of the technology. Students claimed that the device was useful for "recording lectures, conversations, discussions, and taking audio notes during field experiments" (Schmidt, 2008, p. 186). Schmidt (2008) points out that it is worth exposing students to podcasts for an entire semester so that they can get used to listening to the target language, which is beneficial in the long run, because authentic material develops learners' listening skills. Stanley (2005) also asserts that podcasts may provide additional listening practice. Similarly, Campbell (2005) declares

that podcasts develop listening skills because students can listen to the audio files or parts of them as many times they need to understand them.

Thirdly, Farwick Owens (2013) concluded that her podcast project was advantageous for developing literacy skills. The development took place due to the fact that students spent much time on writing and practising reading so that they could produce valuable work. At the end of their study, Vasinda and McLeod (2011) also found that podcasts can improve reading skills because the level of performance of struggling readers improved by one year on average.

Moreover, Farwick Owens (2013) found that podcasting was exceptionally motivating for students. "Its popularity was based on several factors including immediacy, entertainment value, and educational merit" (Farwick Owens, 2013, p. 70). Stanley (2005) also considers podcasting motivating and beneficial. Although it can be very time-consuming, he thinks that the advantages are worth more because students might take the task more seriously since they know that anybody could listen to their work if it is published via the web. Therefore, they might work harder during the production phases, too. Family and friends listening to their work can be huge motivational factors, too (Stanley, 2005). Additionally, Bolden (2013) uses constructivist learning theory as a base when he suggests that it is beneficial for students to create podcasts. He claims that learners interact with the material much more when they create a podcast compared to a situation where they listen to an audio file made by someone else.

Furthermore, Vess (2006) expressed the following advantages of her podcast project after administering a survey among students. Students became more confident in speaking in front of their peers. Also, they asserted that they recorded their podcast several times until they were satisfied with it, so they put more work into it than into a

traditional presentation. Listening to their own voice also helped students to evaluate their own work. In addition to this, learners were able to recognize mistakes in their written assignments when they read them out. Vess (2006) found that the project challenged students because they knew that their peers would hear their productions. Overall, Vess (2006) concluded that the easily accessible nature of podcasts was a positive aspect and the project had a beneficial influence on the learning environment.

Bolden (2013)'s students pointed out the reflective nature of podcasts as well, because they could go back to them any time. Similarly, in the creation phase, they could listen to the audio again and make changes in order to make sure that they say what they mean. Some students reported that orally they were able to express their opinions more easily compared to a written assignment. Interestingly, students were more willing to share audio recordings with each other than their written work. In another study, participants also reported that making a podcast helped them to review their own work and to decide what is relevant to the subject. The process of creation promoted understanding the material better and highlighted different approaches to it (Buffington, 2010).

Another advantage regarding podcasts and enhanced podcasts is that students can stop them as well as listen to them again; they are available at any time (Vess, 2006). Moreover, in-class time can be used "for discussion and higher order learning activities" (Vess, 2006, p. 483). Vess (2006) also notes that it could be useful to set a written task based on the podcasts before students go to class.

In accordance with Vess (2006), Stanley (2005), Buffington (2010) and Campbell (2005) also state that podcasts can be listened to many times and anytime when and where the user feels like it. An important feature of podcasts is that the people listening to them can leave out certain parts if they are not interested in them or they can

restart or rewind the audio file (Campbell, 2005; Buffington, 2010). Another way to benefit more from podcasts is subscribe to them. In this case, a program automatically downloads the new episodes to the computer or any device (Buffington, 2010).

As a further benefit, Campbell (2005) notes that podcasts can be downloaded and then, people can listen to them on the go, while they are preparing for the day in the morning, or while working out, driving a car, or walking. Campbell (2005) compared podcasts to newspapers because one subscribes to a newspaper, too, and then, it will be delivered to their house in the morning. He notes that it is possible to take along both if one is not finished with them before leaving home. However, a big difference is that it is impossible to do things simultaneously when reading a newspaper, but it is possible with a podcast (Campbell, 2005).

Another positive aspect of podcasting is that it is an easy-to-use technology with all the necessary technology available to everyone (EDUCAUSE, 2005). Campbell (2005) highlights that it is easy and simple to create a podcast. Schmidt (2008) also notes that anybody can create a podcast. He says that it may be difficult and time-consuming to edit a podcast for the first time. Nevertheless, the more experienced one becomes, the less time they will need, so it is worth giving it a try. If one wants to record a podcast, they will need a microphone and a special program. Schmidt (2008) lists some programmes that can be downloaded from the web free of charge. He claims that one should listen to some podcasts and analyze their structure before starting to make their own. He also points out that episodes should be planned before recording. Depending on their level and confidence students may want to write the whole script, write an outline only or take some notes before they start creating. If the teacher wants to involve more students in one project, learners can record interviews because their editing takes less time (Schmidt, 2008).

Last but not least, Campbell (2005) argues that it is worth learning how to produce digital content, because technology is an integral part of our students' lives and it gives an opportunity to provide a new learning experience to students. Moreover, teachers might be able to communicate with the IT staff of their school more effectively, too. Campbell (2005) adds that podcasts can give students a sense of community by enabling a mutual learning experience. Vess (2006) emphasizes the importance of using technology as well and puts her opinion in the following way:

the more we take advantage of the natural comfort zones students [*sic*], the more we may be able to reach them in educationally profound ways. Our teaching methods may have to adapt to these new realities. The iPod is a visible manifesto of a new kind of student, one who demands an active role in the learning process and control over when they access materials. (p. 490)

2.6. Possible problems

Beside the benefits of podcasting, those who decide to use or try out the technology may face some problems, too. Schmidt (2008) lists some difficulties that one can encounter when using podcasts in class. Firstly, content may be inappropriate. That is why teachers should always listen to podcasts before class. Secondly, accent or dialect may be difficult to understand. As a result, students might get frustrated. Moreover, during explanation or at the time of technical difficulties, students as well as teachers might use their mother tongue instead of the foreign language. Also, technical problems can occur which can hinder work. In addition, it is possible that some files lack quality (Schmidt, 2008). It is important to create podcasts with high quality especially if one wants to upload them to the Internet. If the quality of sound or recording is not good enough, it is easy to lose interest in the material. Loud background

noises can be disturbing as well (Buffington, 2010). Insufficient bandwidth can be another problem making downloading difficult. Similarly, the format of the file can sometimes cause problems, too. Being technology based audio content it is of no use for people who are hard of hearing (EDUCAUSE, 2005).

In order to avoid as many problems as possible, Schmidt (2008) suggests searching for podcasts in a language lab together with students for the first time. Similarly, he mentions that teachers should know what the audio file is about. Schmidt (2008) adds that it is useful for teachers and students to have a discussion about the different parts of the process of creation so that the project could be beneficial. He also points out that this is not a time-saving activity.

2.7. Summary

Podcasts are audio files that can be subscribed to and can automatically be downloaded from the Internet (Bolden, 2013; Schmidt, 2008). In order to be able to listen to podcasts, one needs a computer with Internet access and speakers (Buffington, 2010). To be able to publish podcasts as well, some storage space online and a website or blog with RSS feed are also needed (Stanley, 2005). Stanley (2005) mentions four types of podcasts in his article: authentic podcasts, teacher-made podcasts, student-made podcasts and podcasts for professional development.

If teachers want to use podcasts in class, there are some possibilities. First of all, podcasts can be given as homework to students (Stanley, 2005; Schmidt, 2008). Learners can give an account of what they heard or do a written task or assignment based on the podcast. Secondly, they can do a presentation or discuss the topic (Schmidt, 2008). Moreover, students can listen to a podcast in class that introduces a topic or serve as an example (Buffington, 2010). Another possibility for teachers is

using podcasts for professional development, which several authors emphasize (Buffington, 2010; Bolden, 2013; Stanley, 2005).

There are numerous possibilities if somebody is looking for podcasts specifically made for language learners. Dow (2015) and the FluentU (2014) blog both mention approximately ten websites that offer students appropriate material. It is clear from these lists that material exists for several languages at different levels and with various foci such as vocabulary, grammar or pronunciation. Also, there are websites that provide students with exercises. Such sites include the British Council's LearnEnglish site (<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/learnenglish-podcasts>) and podcasts.inenglish.com, for instance. Similarly, higher level students who wish for some challenge can try to listen to podcasts at the BBC website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>).

As for teacher-created podcasts, few examples can be found in the literature. Vess (2006) writes about distributing study material among students with the help of teacher-created podcasts. Bolden (2013) points out that teacher-made podcasts can be useful for revision, too. In addition, poems may be read out by teachers for literature classes (Campbell, 2005). It is also mentioned in the relevant literature that material could be made available for absent students in this way (EDUCAUSE, 2005).

If teachers want their students to create podcasts, the literature provides some ideas for task types. Farwick Owens (2013) and Vasinda and McLeod (2011) found that podcasting helps develop reading and writing skills by making learners repeat, practise reading and writing a story. Buffington (2010) writes that students can make interviews, lectures, gallery tours, simulations or interpretations as a podcast project. She adds that lecture type podcasts are far less interesting and engaging than any other format. Similarly, the optimal length is about 2-5 minutes in terms of concentration. Also,

Bolden (2013) asked students to create a podcast in which they talk about their attitude to music. Learners had to include some pieces in the recording as well. In addition, Vess (2006) improved students' speaking skills with podcasting by requesting recording of presentations.

Podcasts have numerous benefits. First of all, they improve listening skills. This fact was pointed out by several studies (Schmidt, 2008; Stanley, 2005; Campbell, 2005). Secondly, podcasts are able to improve reading and writing skills (Farwick Owens, 2013; Vasinda and McLeod, 2011). Podcasts are suitable for developing speaking skills as well (Vess, 2006). Moreover, creating podcasts is motivating and engaging for students (Farwick Owens, 2013; Stanley, 2005). Bolden (2013) and Vess (2006) found that students tended to work harder and were willing to make more efforts due to the motivation triggered by technology. Similarly, podcast creation promoted self-reflection (Vess, 2006; Bolden, 2013) and a more thorough understanding of the material as well (Buffington, 2010). Another huge advantage of the technology is that learners can listen to the audio file when and where they want to (Vess, 2006; Stanley, 2005; Campbell, 2005; Buffington, 2010). Similarly, Campbell (2005) and Buffington (2010) declare that students can go back to a part of a podcast and listen to it again if they need. Campbell (2005) and Buffington (2010) highlight the portability of the files, too. A further positive aspect is that the technology is simple and can be easily learnt (Campbell, 2005; Schmidt, 2008).

Nevertheless, it is advisable to look into some problems that might occur. Content needs to be checked so as to avoid inappropriateness. Some dialects or accents may also be difficult for students (Schmidt, 2008). If something problematic happens, students as well as teachers tend to use their mother tongue. Naturally, technical

difficulties might cause problems, too (Schmidt, 2008). Poor quality (Schmidt, 2008) or background noises (Buffington, 2010) can hinder understanding as well.

All in all, considering the benefits and potential problems of using podcasts in English language teaching, we can say that their use is advantageous as well as motivating and engaging for students.

3. Research design and method

In this part of the study, research questions will be enumerated first. Second, the setting and participants will be described followed by the methods of data collection including the procedure and the instrument. Afterwards, methods of data analysis will be discussed before elaborating on the results and discussing them. Next, the limitations of the study will be discussed. Finally, conclusions will be drawn based on the results.

3.1. Research Questions

The research questions of the study are the following:

Q1: Are student-made podcasts suitable for developing oral fluency?

Q2: Are student-made podcasts suitable for developing students' confidence?

Q3: Are students more aware of their grammatical mistakes when making a podcast?

Q4: Is the task motivating?

3.2. Setting and participants

I conducted the study in a grammar school specialized in sports in Budapest where I was doing my teaching practice. The participants were 16-17 year-old students enrolled in a language class. There were 8 female and 5 male students in the group. Their language knowledge was around B1-B2 level and they were preparing for the

intermediate language exam. Some of the students were very talkative and had a good command of English. Others were rather introverted and did not really like talking and there was one particular student who had quite poor performance. My overall impression of the group was that they were not particularly motivated apart from some exceptions. Sometimes it was difficult to work with them. However, I am aware of the fact that sixth and seventh lessons are not ideal for language classes. Unfortunately, we always had lessons at this time. Although, they sometimes seemed uncooperative, all of them aimed at a successful language exam in the long run.

Altogether 13 students were in the group whom I gave podcast tasks. One student joined the group after the first task. However, one of the students pointed out at the first task that he was not willing to do either of the podcasts. His reason was that he assumed that the task took much time and he found it difficult. He added that he preferred personal communication. Nevertheless, I had the impression that he was rather lazy and that was his real reason for not doing anything. In the end, I worked with 12 students: 8 female and 4 male. Unfortunately, only eight people filled in the questionnaire after the assignments because at the time of questionnaire completion, four students were absent.

3.3. Methods of data collection

To collect data for my study, I asked students to create three podcasts and I made observations about their work by taking notes when listening to their creations. Afterwards, I gave them individualised and written feedback followed by a short in-class discussion of the common mistakes or such points I thought were worth discussing with the whole group. Later, I asked students to fill in a questionnaire concerning the

podcast assignments. In the following subsections, I write about the procedures and the questionnaire in detail.

3.3.1. Procedures

Students had to do three podcast assignments altogether. On the first occasion, students had four days to complete the task. However, most of them spent their files after the deadline. At this point, I decided to change the deadline and give them a week next time because my aim was to get them to do it. To make them definitely do the tasks, I also gave grades for their work, which was my mentor teacher's suggestion. I did not want to deduct a grade for sending the file late, so that was another reason for changing the deadline. I wanted to give them enough time and I realized that secondary school students were not used to working to deadlines. They normally do homework the day before the lesson, so it is unlikely for most of them to deal with the English homework at the weekend whereas we only had classes on Wednesdays.

There was approximately two or three weeks between each assignment. I wanted the tasks to be neither too close nor too far away from each other. I hoped that in this way, they would not find the tasks boring or too demanding. Since I had lessons with them only once a week and I taught them for one semester only, there was no time for more than three assignments.

When I introduced the task I asked students whether they knew what a podcast was. I expected that I had to tell them about it but I was surprised that only one learner had some vague idea of it. Thus, I told them briefly what a podcast was. Then, I gave them all the information about the first exercise. For the first time, we created a mind map of one of the three topics (Life in big cities) so that students know how they could collect ideas for each topic. Then, they had to choose one from the remaining two topics

(The benefits of environmentally friendly homes; The advantages and disadvantages of settling down in a foreign country) and create a podcast about it.

In the other two tasks, students could choose from three subtopics within the topics of *health* and *transport*. Since they were preparing for an intermediate language exam, I took the topics from their language exam preparation book. I chose those topics which we had covered in class and they got the assignments only after finishing a particular topic. The possibilities were always sub-topics or were connected to a bigger one we had covered. The choices were taken from a speaking exam practice task at the end of a particular unit. I provided students with choices because I assumed that this might lighten the obligatory nature of the assignment. Similarly, I hoped that everybody could pick one topic they found fairly easy to talk about.

Students had to pick one topic out of the three given possibilities and talk about it for one and a half or two minutes, and record their speech with their mobile phones. Then, they had to send the file to me via e-mail. The reason for asking them to create 1.5-2 minute long podcasts was that in the language exam they were preparing for, there is a task that requires candidates to talk on their own for about two minutes. When giving out the task, I also highlighted the fact that they can do as many recordings as they want and they can send me the one which is the best in their opinion. I did not introduce an editing programme deliberately because I did not have much time for the experiment. I had about 14 occasions altogether to teach in their group. Although these were all double lessons, I could not count on the first and last occasions. Similarly, I needed about 4-5 lessons for trying to get to know the group and their working speed. Thus, if we subtract these numbers, there is about 6-7 occasions remaining, which is suitable for three tasks only.

After receiving the files, I listened to their recordings. While I was listening, I was taking notes as well. When I was done, I wrote feedback to each student one-by-one in Hungarian. The reason for choosing Hungarian as the language of the feedback was that I wanted learners to benefit as much as possible from the project. When giving feedback, I concentrated on task fulfilment, coherence and cohesion, grammar and accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. I started with the good things and continued with their mistakes and what to pay attention to next time. For some examples of the Hungarian feedback I gave, see Appendices D-E. For their English translations, see Appendices F-G.

3.3.2. Podcast task 1

Our first topic was places, so the three possibilities were the following:

- A. Life in big cities.
- B. The benefits of environmentally friendly homes.
- C. The advantages and disadvantages of settling down in a foreign country

(Evangelidou, M., Mamas, L., & Betsis, A., 2016, p. 11).

We talked about Life in big cities in detail in class, so they had to choose topic B or C for their first assignment. I did not let them choose topic A because we talked about it in class and if I had let them choose it, everybody would have chosen this one and did not think over the other two options.

3.3.3. Podcast task 2

Our second topic was Health. Accordingly, the speaking exam part of the book contained the following sub-topics:

- A. Organic Foods versus G.M. Foods
- B. Extreme Sports
- C. Exercise, Health & Fitness

(Evangelidou, M., Mamas, L., & Betsis, A., 2016, p. 69).

I expected that everybody would choose topic C because that seems to be the easiest one. I did not suppose that anybody would pick topic A since it was difficult for them in class when we discussed it. However, a few students were brave enough to challenge themselves by talking about it.

3.3.4. Podcast task 3

The last assignment was about Transport and the choices were as follows:

- A. Pros and Cons of bicycles
- B. Public Transport Strikes
- C. The underground system in big cities

(Evangelidou, M., Mamas, L., & Betsis, A., 2016, p. 19).

3.3.5. Instrument: a Questionnaire

To investigate students' opinion about the podcast assignments, I constructed a four-page long questionnaire, which had four parts and 24 items altogether. The paper-based questionnaire was in Hungarian in order to get reliable answers and to avoid misunderstandings and distortions that might have been caused by the use of a foreign language. For the original Hungarian questionnaire, see Appendix A. The English version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B and in Appendix C, there is a filled-in version of the questionnaire.

After the title and general instructions, there are ten multiple choice items regarding some technical details in the first part of the questionnaire. I asked how much time it took to create the three assignments separately (questions 1-3). Then, I inquired about how many times they needed to repeat the recordings in general (question 4). Question 5 asked about how many times students listened to their own recordings. I also wanted to know whether students wrote the texts for their speeches and whether they read them out (Questions 6 and 7). In question 8, I asked whether they had helpers such as parents, friends or private teachers. Their use of a dictionary was also investigated. Finally, I asked students to indicate their sex in the tenth question.

The second part of the questionnaire contained seven statements and students had to indicate the extent to which they agreed with them. They had four options: *Strongly agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree* and *Strongly disagree*. In this section, I wanted to find out whether students think that the tasks helped them to develop their fluency and reflection on their own mistakes as suggested by the relevant literature (Williams, 2007 as cited in Buffington, 2010; Vess, 2006; Bolden, 2013; Buffington, 2010). Similarly, there was a statement regarding confidence since Vess (2006) states that creating podcasts can boost students' confidence. I also wanted to know learners' attitude towards the tasks because Stanley (2005) and Farwick Owens (2013) found podcasts projects motivating. Besides, I inquired about students' opinion about pronunciation, feedback and coherence.

In the third part, there were four sentence completion items. I asked how many exercises students had done out of the three. Then, I tried to find out what they liked and what they did not like about the task with the following sentence halves:

19. The most useful in the task was (that) _____.

20. What I liked about the task was (that) _____.

21. What I didn't like about that task was (that) _____.

In the last section of the questionnaire, three short answer questions can be found. I inquired about whether the teacher's feedback was useful. I also asked students to write down their opinion about the task briefly. Similarly, there was some space for them to provide ideas for improving the task if they wanted to. Beside Dörnyei (2003), Hopkins (2008) also points out that it is useful to inquire about likes and dislikes along with suggestions for improving the task.

My reason for getting students to fill in a questionnaire was that questionnaires are "extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processable" (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 1). Similarly, Ryan (2014) notes that questionnaires can be used for collecting data of high quality. However, careful construction is necessary so as to have valuable results (Ryan, 2014; McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). Therefore, I followed Dörnyei (2003)'s guidelines when constructing the questionnaire. He highlights that questionnaires should not be too long (no more than four pages) because respondents might lose interest in the meantime which results in superficial answers. That is why I strived for a maximum four-page long questionnaire, which took 15-20 minutes for students to fill in. Dörnyei (2003) adds that layout is important in getting reliable answers, so I divided the questionnaire into four sections and separated them with suitable instructions and font styles that are also necessary beside the title and general instructions (Dörnyei, 2003). Similarly, participation was anonymous so as to avoid fear of being judged by their answers, which is a disadvantage of questionnaires (Hopkins, 2008).

Dörnyei (2003) claims that questionnaires do not usually contain actual questions. Accordingly, I used some question types he wrote about in his book. In the first part, there were multiple choice items because these are easy and quick to answer.

In the second part, I used Likert scales, in which I did not include a neutral choice, so students had to take sides anyway. I finished my questionnaire with open-ended questions, more specifically, sentence completion items and short answer questions. Sentence completion items can draw attention to a particular issue while short answer questions provide respondents with more freedom to answer or with an opportunity to elaborate on something (Dörnyei, 2003).

According to Hopkins (2008), an advantage of questionnaires is that researchers get quantifiable data. Another positive aspect is that they can be administered easily, they can be filled in quickly and they can supply feedback on various topics. Also, questionnaires make the comparison of different issues easier. Disadvantages include time-consuming preparation and analysis as well as the fact that students might be tempted to answer correctly. Also, reading comprehension problems can undermine the effectiveness of the questionnaire (Hopkins, 2008).

3.4. Methods of data analysis

I listened to students' podcasts several times and tried to make observations. I was taking notes as well while I was listening. When observing and giving feedback, I paid particular attention to fluency and the speed of their speech, coherence and cohesion as well as vocabulary and grammar mistakes.

When analyzing questionnaire data, I made statistics from the first two parts, namely, the multiple choice section and the statements which students had to agree or disagree with. Regarding the third and fourth parts (sentence completion and short answers), I collected ideas that appeared numerous times and tried to find an explanation for them.

4. Results

4.1. Observations about student-made podcasts

As I have mentioned it before, there were thirteen students in the group but one of them was not willing to take part in the experiment, so I worked with twelve students. Unfortunately, not all of them did every task. Similarly, some topics were more popular with learners than others, so two topics were not chosen by anyone. Table 1 in Appendix H illustrates the choices between topics and the number of students who did the tasks. In the following subsections, I will write about my observations of the three tasks separately.

Podcast task 1: Places

One of the aspects I took into consideration was task fulfilment. Fortunately, most of the students did not have problems with it and they understood what to do. There were two learners who did not choose an appropriate topic so I had to ask them to do the task again, which they did. One of my observations about the first podcast task is that speeches were particularly well-structured. Students used cohesive devices such as *firstly*, *secondly*, *moreover* etc. very well and usually it was easy to follow their line of thought. There was one student only who got confused in her own ideas in the middle of her speech and it was not clear what she wanted to say.

In terms of vocabulary, there were some inaccuracies but most of the time they did not hinder understanding. I pointed out some of these in class afterwards. These included the difference between *image* and *imagine* or *accurate* and *punctual*, for example. Similarly, they did not always pick the right word like *learn food. As for grammar, students had different types of mistakes. For instance, a lot of students had

problems with subject-verb agreement, *there is/are* or the use of *a lot of* and *a number of*. In addition, some learners tended to use two verbs simultaneously like **it is gets*.

When looking at pronunciation and fluency, I noticed that most of the students spoke fluently but a bit slower than the normal speech speed. Occasionally, there were short breaks in some learners' speech but they were able to continue. There was one student whose speech proved to be quite bad in terms of all aspects. This was really surprising because he seemed to have quite a good command of English in class.

There were no problems with timing. Neither of the students' recording was shorter than one and a half minutes. In fact, on one or two occasions, students were speaking for more than two minutes. The quality of recordings was usually good. Only one learner sent a file with particularly bad quality, and it was difficult to hear and understand anything. There was some background noise in another student's recording, presumably TV or radio, but it did not prevent understanding.

Podcast task 2: Health

Although students used far less cohesive devices such as *furthermore*, *in addition*, *on the one hand* than previously, their texts were easy to follow normally in the second round of podcasts as well. Nevertheless, a few learners said some sentences that were difficult to understand. As far as their grammatical accuracy is concerned, I noticed some confusion regarding tenses, mainly Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous. Students sometimes used the first conditional and superlative inaccurately as well. Similarly to the first round, utterances like **it's helps* or **are attract* occurred. Two learners' grammar was not as accurate as previously.

What was conspicuous about the second round is students' use of vocabulary. Out of ten students who sent me their podcasts, nine made a very good use of the

vocabulary we learnt in class concerning health in general, genetically modified food and extreme sports. However, some learners did not manage to select the appropriate vocabulary from the dictionary when they checked an unknown word. For example, *overtake* and *prevent* were confused in connection with diseases.

This time, there were no problems with sound quality. Students spoke loud enough or close enough to their microphones. In general, the length of files was also acceptable except for one student who could speak for only a minute.

As for pronunciation, there were quite a lot of mistakes regarding the following sounds: /s/ ↔ /ʃ/, /ɪ/ ↔ /aɪ/. Examples include words such as *sport*, *lively*, *climb* and *ride*. Some learners had intonation difficulties as well. However, I was very happy to notice that some students took my advice and successfully improved the structure of their text, their fluency and accuracy of grammar though one student's fluency, who managed to improve his grammar significantly, decreased a little.

Podcast task 3: Transport

Students' podcasts were well-structured this time as well. Most of the learners used cohesive devices appropriately as in the previous tasks. One student whose thoughts were difficult to follow previously was able to structure her speech in a very good way in the third round.

Concerning vocabulary, some learners used very nice expressions connected to health and transport such as *keep fit* and *exhaust fumes*. However, most of the students used everyday vocabulary. As in the second round, selecting the proper word caused difficulties for some learners, for instance *offer* was confused with *recommend* and *channel* with *tunnel*.

In general, the grammar students used was much more accurate than in the previous two tasks. In fact, some students' grammar was surprisingly good. Nevertheless, subject-verb agreement problems occurred and learners sometimes used Present Simple and Present Continuous improperly and interchangeably. For instance, *I'm not really often ride a bike. The use of the verb *depend on* was problematic as well.

It was really nice to hear that students' fluency got significantly better. Out of the seven learners who did this task, only one was particularly slow. There were less pronunciation mistakes as well. A difficult word to pronounce was *variable*. Intonation was usually fine, too, except for one particular case.

There were no problems with background noises or sound quality this time either. All of the students spoke loud enough and their speech was understandable. The length of the podcasts was between one and a half and two minutes, which suits the requirements of the language exam they were preparing for.

4.2. Questionnaire

Unfortunately, only eight students out of the twelve were present when I asked them to fill in the questionnaire. Among the respondents, there were five females and three males (question 10).

Part 1

The first part of the questionnaire contained ten multiple choice questions. In the first question, I asked about the time they spent on creating the first podcast. Opinions vary in this respect. Three students wrote they spent about half an hour on the task for the first time. Two learners do not remember how much time they spent on it and one person ticked the following three options: fifteen minutes, 20-25 minutes and more than

half an hour. In the second round of creating podcasts, five respondents stated that they spent 20-25 minutes on the task while two respondents do not remember and one person indicated half an hour. As for the third task, four students marked that they spent 20-25 minutes on the task. Three learners indicated 15 minutes and one person wrote more than half an hour. It seems from the answers that students needed 20-30 minutes to create a podcast generally and this time did not really decrease during the three tasks.

Question 4 inquired about how many times learners normally repeated recording their podcast. Four of them said they repeated it three times generally. Three students normally recorded their podcast twice and one person four times. It can be seen that all of the students recorded their podcast at least twice.

To question 5, i.e. how many times they listened to their own recordings, three learners answered once as well as twice. One person chose the option three times and another one said four times. I was wondering whether some of the students wrote the transcript of their podcasts in advance, so I asked how many times they did this (question 6). All eight learners reported having written a transcript. Three students wrote their texts in advance three times out of the three occasions. Four of them wrote it twice and one of them only once.

When listening to students' audio files, I had the feeling that some of the learners might have read out their pre-written texts. To see whether my assumption was true, I asked them about it in question 7. Half of the students (four people) answered that they had never read out their texts. Two learners indicated that they had read out their transcripts all three times. One person marked twice as well as once.

There was one student whose performance in class was particularly weak. However, her podcasts were exceptionally good grammatically. My mentor teacher told me that she probably had some help such as his father or a private teacher. Therefore, I

included question 8 about helpers in the questionnaire. The majority of students indicated that nobody helped them but one person marked the option: my private teacher. Probably, she was the weakest student. Two learners chose the *other* option and wrote Google Translate there. However, Google Translate is not a person, so it cannot be considered a real helper.

Since there were some problems with selecting the right word in some cases, I wanted to know whether students used a dictionary (question 9). Every learner indicated using a dictionary for checking meaning. One person wrote in the *other* option that he used Google Translate. The tenth question was about the proportion of participants' sex, which I have already mentioned at the beginning of this section.

Part 2

In the second part of the questionnaire, students had to indicate on a Likert scale whether they agreed with seven statements concerning their pronunciation, fluency, confidence and coherence among others. Question 11 asked whether students agree that creating podcasts helped them develop their pronunciation. All of the learners marked that they agree with it. With the question whether the task helped them speak more fluently in English, the majority of students agreed. Three learners said *strongly agree*, and four of them indicated they agree. Only one person disagreed with this statement (question 12). One student marked that he agrees with the statement that creating podcasts helped him become more confident when speaking in front of others (question 13). The vast majority of learners did not agree. Five students marked *disagree* and two of them disagreed strongly.

More learners stated that the task helped them notice their grammatical and accuracy mistakes. Two of them strongly agreed and four agreed. However, two people

disagreed with this statement (question 14). Question 15 was about the usefulness of teacher feedback. All of the students considered it useful. Six learners agreed strongly out of the eight. While one person did not think she was able to think over the structure of her speech better due the task, all of the other students agreed strongly with it (question 16). Most of the learners did podcast tasks with pleasure because six students marked *agree* and one answer showed *strongly agree*. There was one student who disagreed.

Part 3

In the third part, students had to complete four sentences about what they found useful, what they liked or disliked. In the first sentence, I asked how many tasks they did out of the three. It turned out at this question when I was looking at their answers that some students were not honest. I have a list of students' names and of the tasks they did. I also remember the students who were present at the completion. The two lists do not correspond unfortunately.

At the other three sentence completions, every student pointed out a different aspect of the task. In question 19, they had to specify what was the most useful in the task. One thing that one of the students mentioned was that he could hear himself and he could get to know how he speaks English. Another learner wrote that it was useful because she had to concentrate fully on what she said and how she put her thoughts. Somebody considered it helpful that they could work on it at home and not in school. One student stated the following: "The most useful in the task was that speaking was easier for me in this way than when having to talk to a teacher". Pronunciation practice was also mentioned as the most useful aspect of the task. Another valuable point was for a learner that they could notice their own mistakes when listening to their

recordings. One student wrote that the task was helpful because “it made me speak”. Another learner asserted that the most useful for him was teacher feedback.

In question 20, I wanted to find out what they liked about the tasks. Students emphasized the following things. They could practise for the oral part of the language exam and they considered the topics good. It was a new type of task beside the usual and monotonous ones. One of the students considered the task useful and liked that she could develop her pronunciation and speed of speech. It was a positive aspect for a learner that every guideline was given. A student noticed the following: “What I liked about the task was that a successfully-done task boosted my confidence”. Two learners liked that it was a home assignment and they had the opportunity to prepare for it and to think it over as opposed to a spontaneous speaking task in school.

Question 21 was about what they did not like. Three students did not write anything here. Three learners, however, mentioned the deadline. One of them just simply did not like the fact that there was a deadline. One of the other two considered the one-week deadline too short and the other person thought it was too long. Another student wrote that “What I did not like about the task was that it took me a lot of time to think over what I wanted to say”. The last person here would have liked if we had discussed their podcasts personally.

Part 4

In the last section of the questionnaire, students had to provide their opinion on three things: feedback, the task and they could write ideas for improving the exercise. Question 22 required students to write down whether they considered the teacher’s feedback useful and if so, why. All of the learners thought that it was useful. Several students declared that in this way, they could see what was correct and what was

incorrect. Similarly, they learned what kind of mistakes they made regularly. They also liked that the task gave a chance for improvement and they could correct their grammatical as well as spelling mistakes if they wrote their speech in advance. Learners' another reason for considering feedback useful was that they got to know what they should improve, pay more attention to next time or at the language exam. One of the students pointed out that she considered feedback useful because I must have wanted to help them improve their knowledge. One student wrote the following: "I liked that we got a fairly long analysis in the feedback and if you liked something you pointed it out as well not just our mistakes. It could be seen that you put a lot of work in the feedback".

In question 23, students were asked to provide their opinion on the task. The majority of the students (five of them) reported that they liked the task because it helped them improve their speaking skills, pronunciation and speed of speech. They emphasized that the task encouraged them to speak even if they made some mistakes. Similarly, other students considered positive that they did not have to speak in front of their peers. One student mentioned that this task is especially good for those who are shy. Learners also stated that they could think over what they wanted to say and in this way, they could use their ideas next time at a similar topic if they remembered. One student asserted that she liked that positive things were mentioned in the feedback as well. Another learner highlighted that they could also develop their writing skills if they wrote a transcript. One student wrote, "I think this is a good task at last that is enjoyable in the 21st century". As for disadvantages, three things were mentioned. One of them was the deadline that one person considered short. Also, this person indicated that maximum two minutes for talking about a topic was brief, too. The other negative aspect was that a learner had difficulties in thinking of ideas about some topics.

In the last question, I asked students whether they had some ideas for improving the task. One student did not write anything here and another one said that she liked it in this way. Two learners expressed that it would be useful to listen to some of the podcasts in class, for example the best and the worst, and to analyze them together. One student wrote that it would also be good to create dialogues and not just monologues. Another learner would have liked it if we listened to his podcast and discussed it together. One of the students was of the opinion that they could sometimes do a podcast without a pre-given topic because they would have a chance to talk about their interests and it might foster performance. One of the learners said that the task is good for now in this way, but later students should be tested orally in class because in her opinion, most of her classmates read out their texts and did try to talk about the topics by heart. She also highlighted that together with oral testing in class, it would be a good language exam preparation task. Other ideas included increasing the allowed length of podcasts, giving a longer deadline and doing this kind of task regularly.

To sum up, students were of the opinion that creating podcasts did not boost their confidence. Nevertheless, they thought it helped them develop their fluency and pronunciation. The observations also showed that learners' fluency gradually improved during the three tasks. They also claimed that the task was helpful on reflecting their own work. Indeed, students' accuracy developed as well based on the observations. Answers also indicated that learners had more opportunities to think over the structure of their speeches, which could be seen when listening to their work. Among the things they found useful was the fact that they could work at home. Similarly, they liked the topics and that they could practise speaking and pronunciation. They considered feedback useful as well. What they did not like was the deadline and also, that the task took a lot of time.

5. Discussion

5.1. Time spent on creating podcasts and hard work

According to Stanley (2005), creating podcasts can be very time-consuming. Indeed, students spent quite a lot of time on creation. They reported that they normally needed approximately 20-30 minutes for each task. This time can be considered much but it might have been even more if an editing program had been introduced. Learners also stated they recorded their podcasts maximum three times and they usually re-listened to them once or twice. These answers refer to the fact that they spent either half or two thirds of their time on planning, and this suggests that they put a lot of work into the tasks and they probably paid more attention to trying to avoid mistakes. Stanley (2005), Vess (2006) and Bolden (2013) also emphasized that learners might work harder during these kinds of tasks. Much time on planning also explains my observation that the structure of their speeches was really good. Similarly, most of the students agreed with sentence 16 strongly, i.e. the task provided them with possibility to think over the structure of the text more thoroughly than during spontaneous speech. Therefore, this indicates that the creation of podcasts help students plan and structure their thoughts as Williams (2007) argued (as cited in Buffington, 2010).

5.2. Writing skills and students' confidence

All of the learners wrote transcripts for their podcasts at least once but usually twice or all three times. One student argued that in this way, they could improve their writing skills as well. In connection, Vasinda and McLeod (2011) and Farwick Owens (2013) found that the creation of podcasts is beneficial for literacy skills including writing skills. Thus, podcasts seem to have some positive effects on learners' writing skills. The above-mentioned authors also stressed that podcasts are useful for

developing reading skills. Those students' reading aloud skills may also have developed who always or occasionally read out their transcripts. Possible reasons for reading out transcripts are that these students may be more anxious about their performance, they may lack confidence or they just chose the easier way because they might not like speaking in a foreign language.

In connection with being anxious and lacking confidence, one person indicated that her private teacher helped her make podcasts. I assume that she was the student with weak performance and the teacher helped her write transcripts. The fact that this student's podcasts were particularly good even language-wise seems to justify my assumption. In addition, I noticed that she became more communicative in class during the project. She was also more willing to participate in the lessons and answer my questions. She dared to express her opinion voluntarily as well. Therefore, she might have been the only one student who agreed that podcasts helped her gain confidence when having to speak in front of her peers. Nevertheless, the vast majority of students either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the potential of podcasts for boosting confidence. Consequently, this study cannot reinforce Vess (2006)' findings that creating podcasts boosts confidence.

5.3. The use of vocabulary and speaking skills

Most of the time there were no serious problems with students' vocabulary except for some cases. In the second task and sometimes in the third as well, learners had a nice range of vocabulary. However, they did not manage to select the proper vocabulary item every time. The answers to question 9 show that every learner used a dictionary; one of them indicated the use of Google Translate. I suppose that most of the students searched in an online dictionary or in this one because these are easy to use and

they are also easy to reach or install on every smartphone. The problem with bilingual online dictionaries is that they do not provide as detailed meanings of words as their printed counterparts or as monolingual online English language dictionaries. The use of an inappropriate dictionary may have caused the selection of the wrong items.

With reference to speaking skills, Vess (2006) as well as Williams (2007) (as cited in Buffington, 2010) argue that podcasts can be useful for developing oral skills. In accordance, with this, most of the learners agreed that making podcasts helped them become more fluent in English. Indeed, when I was listening to their podcasts, I noticed that most of the students were able to speak more fluently at the third time compared to the first one. Their gradual development could be seen. Similarly, all of the learners said that the task also helped them improve their pronunciation. Moreover, when I asked about their opinion, five out of eight students reported that they considered the task useful because it aimed to improve their speaking skills, pronunciation and speed of speech and they felt that it did. Learners also asserted that the task encouraged them to speak and it was good for even shier students. Therefore, it can be claimed that creating podcasts is beneficial for speaking skills and fluency.

5.4. Grammar, accuracy and feedback

One of the reasons for most of students' grammatical and accuracy mistakes I observed such as problems with tenses and subject-verb agreement may be that they have learnt these inaccurately. Another possible explanation is that they were concentrating on another aspect of their speech not grammar. However, most of the students except for two people agreed that creating podcasts helped them notice their own grammatical mistakes. Probably, the reason for this is that they listened to their audio files at least twice or three times before sending them to me, which could also

help them realize some of their mistakes. In addition, I noticed in the last round of podcasts that students' grammatical mistakes decreased considerably. This may have been caused by the fact that they became more conscious of what kind of mistakes they usually did. Similarly, I always strived for pointing out most of their mistakes in the feedback and explaining these to them so that they could understand what was wrong. In connection with this, there are some studies that highlight the fact that podcasts can promote self-reflection among learners (Vess, 2006; Buffington, 2010; Bolden, 2013). Hence, based on the relevant literature and the findings of this study, it can be concluded that podcasts can be used to foster students' evaluation of their own work.

With regard to feedback, all of the learners considered it useful. They emphasized several aspects of it when giving reasons. They declared that feedback was necessary even if they made mistakes. They also mentioned that they could get to know their regular mistakes along with what to pay more attention to next time. As a result, they had a chance to improve their performance. Similarly, one of the students liked that they received a fairly long and detailed feedback. Indeed, the aim of feedback was to make students aware of their grammatical and structural mistakes and to help them improve their performance in the long run. It seems from learners' answers that feedback achieved its objectives.

5.5. Motivation

According to Stanley (2005) and Farwick Owens (2013), creating podcasts is highly motivating for students. However, my observations showed the opposite. Learners were not really keen on the tasks when I announced them in class. At the third time, they expressed their dislike clearly and this was the task that the least students did. That is why it was particularly interesting to read that the majority of students indicated

in the questionnaire that they agreed with statement 17, which said: “I did podcast tasks with pleasure”. Only one learner expressed his or her displeasure regarding the task.

I can imagine the following possible explanations. Students might not have liked the fact that the task was time-consuming because they were not used to longer home assignments probably. This may have triggered the negative reactions in class. It can also happen that students had to learn particularly lot or they had to write some tests when I gave them the tasks though they never mentioned either of these possibilities. There is also a chance that in the meantime, learners realized what the task was for, what its aims were and what they could practice with it. This would mean that they recognized that the task was designed so that they had an opportunity to practise for the oral part of the language exam. Their answers to the questions what they liked and what they considered useful along with their opinion on the task show that they understood and became aware of the above mentioned aspects eventually. Thus, students’ written answers prove Stanley (2005) and Farwick Owens (2013) right in terms of podcasts being motivating.

5.6. Students’ opinion on the tasks and their ideas for improving it

Students mentioned several aspects of the tasks they considered useful and what they liked. At least half of the learners appreciated the opportunity for speaking practice. They also liked that they could hear themselves and they could prepare for the task at home. They considered feedback useful as well because it contained their strengths, too. There were chances to improve writing skills and the task lightened the pressure that was normally on students when speaking in front of their peers. Learners’ feedback seems to suggest that they considered the tasks advantageous overall.

If I ever give this task to one of my groups again, I will certainly take into consideration students' ideas for improving or changing it. One of the suggestions was that students could make dialogues as well not just monologues. This is a good idea but the nature of the task needs to be taken into account. In this case, I chose the monologue format because this is one of the language exam requirements they were preparing for. Nevertheless, dialogues are definitely an idea that is worth considering. Another suggestion was to listen to the best and the worst podcasts in class and analyzing them together. I know students often analyzed the best and worst aspects of different compositions or tasks with my mentor teacher. Indeed, it may be very useful and instructive for learners. However, I consider showing a learner's particularly poor performance in class very risky that may offend the student.

Testing students orally about the topics they had to make podcasts about was another idea. In the beginning, I would not do this but later when learners are already used to creating podcasts, oral testing in class might be a tool for making them learn or talk about any topic that was prepared in the form of podcasts. Another suggestion was about extending the deadline for more than a week. Nevertheless, I do not think that a longer deadline would help them do the task more thoroughly. If students told me they had to learn for a particular test and they would not have time for recording, I would extend the deadline but in my opinion, a one-week long deadline should be enough. As the last thing, one learner expressed the need for discussing the podcasts in person. However, it is not likely to work with a larger group. Although I told students they can ask me if they had any questions or queries, I might not have stressed it enough, so I would put more emphasis on this next time.

6. Limitations

One of the limitations of the study is the small number of students I worked with. Twelve learners created podcasts as assignments but not all of them did all the three tasks. Also, the questionnaire was filled in by only eight out of the twelve students due to the absence of four people. I am aware that the result could not be generalized but they are specific to this group only. It would have been better to involve more students in the study as it would have helped me gain a deeper understanding of the benefits of podcasts.

The second limitation was time, which was too little. I had only two lessons with the group and they were on the same day. Unfortunately, the double lesson was in the sixth and seventh lessons, which sometimes made it difficult to work with students because they were often tired and a little reluctant to cooperate. In addition, I could teach them for approximately three months. If there had been more time, more tasks and several task types could have been given to students so as to make the study more accurate. Similarly, an editing programme could have been introduced to give another dimension to the tasks.

Another issue regarding limitations might be that it is impossible to check whether the respondents of the questionnaire gave honest answers (Dörnyei, 2003). At question 18 (18. Out of the three podcast tasks I did _____), I could see from the results that some students lied when answering because all of them declared they did all three tasks. However, I have a list of students' names and of podcasts that they did, which indicates that not every learner did all three podcasts. Unfortunately, I could also spot a few misunderstandings of some questions when analyzing questionnaire results, so it can only be hoped that there were not too many of them.

7. Conclusion

In my study, I investigated the use of podcasts for language development. I aimed to discover what language skills can be improved by using podcasts in class. To find answers to my research questions, I consulted the relevant literature and I asked a group of students to create podcasts about different topics and to send their files to me via e-mail. After I got the files, I listened to them and I gave students feedback. Similarly, I took notes and I made observations about their work. The creation of podcasts was followed by a questionnaire I constructed about various aspects of the task. At the end of the experiment, I compared my findings to the results of previous studies.

My first research question was whether student-made podcasts were suitable for developing oral fluency. Previous studies showed positive results in the literature. Accordingly, the majority of the students reported that they felt creating podcasts helped them develop oral fluency. I also observed improvements when I listened to their podcasts. Besides, students pointed out on several occasions in the questionnaire that this task was good for improving speaking skills in general because it made them speak. Nevertheless, it would have been worth examining students' fluency before and after the task in order to get a more accurate picture about this question. Unfortunately, there was no possibility for this within the frame of this study. Overall, the findings of my study support the fact that making podcasts is suitable for developing students' oral fluency.

My second research question was the following: Are student-made podcasts suitable for developing students' confidence? Despite the fact that the relevant literature listed positive examples of this question, most of my students disagreed. Except for one learner, students did not feel that their confidence had increased due to the task when

having to talk in front of their peers. Indeed, I only saw one student become braver in class. Based on students' opinion, the literature cannot be reinforced in this respect.

With my third research question, I would have liked to examine whether learners are more aware of their grammatical mistakes when they make a podcast. Students tended to agree that the task helped them notice their mistakes. They highlighted that listening to their own voice was really useful. Similarly, they mentioned that the teacher's feedback was very helpful in correcting their grammatical as well as structural mistakes. In the relevant literature, researchers also argued that creating podcasts enhances self-reflection among students. Since learners felt in this way as well, it seems that creating podcasts is indeed beneficial for awareness of grammatical mistakes.

In my last research question, I asked whether creating podcasts is motivating as the relevant literature claims. Despite the visible signs in class, students admitted enjoying the task and doing it with pleasure. Several learners stated in the questionnaire that they liked the task as it was. One of them even mentioned that finally, it is an enjoyable task in the 21st century. Thus, making podcasts proved to be motivating for learners as the literature suggests.

In conclusion, creating podcasts turned out to be beneficial in many respects such as oral fluency and noticing grammatical mistakes, but it is also motivating for students. Besides these aspects of the task, students mentioned several others that they liked or considered useful. Nevertheless, the small number of participants makes the results relevant to this group only. Further examinations involving a larger group of students would be necessary in order to gain additional information about the benefits of podcasts.

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Appendices

Appendix A – The Questionnaire in Hungarian

A podcastok használata a nyelvfejlesztés terén

Kedves Diákok!

Pék Alexandra vagyok, az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem angoltanár mesterszakos végzős hallgatója. Diplomamunkámban azt vizsgálom, hogyan lehetne a podcastokat nyelvfejlesztésre használni. Ehhez kérem a segítségeteket. A kitöltés név nélkül történik, az adatokból a személyazonosságra nem lehet következtetni. Kérem, hogy őszintén írjátok le a véleményeteket, nincsenek jó vagy rossz válaszok!

Köszönöm a segítségeteket!

I. Olvasd el a mondatokat, majd válassz egyet a felsorolt válaszlehetőségek közül!

1. Az **első** podcast házi feladat elkészítéséhez (kb.) _____ volt szükségem.
 - kevesebb, mint 10 percre
 - negyed órára
 - 20-25 percre
 - fél órára
 - több, mint fél órára
 - nem emlékszem, hogy mennyi időre

2. A **második** podcast házi feladat elkészítéséhez (kb.) _____ volt szükségem.
 - kevesebb, mint 10 percre
 - negyed órára
 - 20-25 percre
 - fél órára
 - több, mint fél órára
 - nem emlékszem, hogy mennyi időre

3. A **harmadik** podcast házi feladat elkészítéséhez (kb.) _____ volt szükségem.
 - kevesebb, mint 10 percre
 - negyed órára
 - 20-25 percre
 - fél órára
 - több, mint fél órára
 - nem emlékszem, hogy mennyi időre

*Olvasd el a mondatokat, majd válassz **egy**et a felsorolt válaszlehetőségek közül!*

4. A felvételeket általában _____ ismételttem meg.
- egyszer
 - kétszer
 - háromszor
 - négyszer
 - ötször vagy ötnél többször
5. A saját magam által készített felvételeket általában _____ hallgattam vissza.
- egyszer
 - kétszer
 - háromszor
 - négyszer
 - ötször vagy ötnél többször
6. A felvételen elmondott szöveget előre megírtam.
- Mind a három alkalommal
 - Kétszer
 - Egyszer
 - Soha
7. Az előre megírt szöveget felolvastam.
- Mind a három alkalommal
 - Kétszer
 - Egyszer
 - Soha
 - Nem írtam meg előre a szöveget.
8. A feladatok elkészítésében (a) _____ segített(ek).
- senki sem
 - szüleim
 - magántanárom
 - barátom/barátnőm
 - egyéb: _____

*Olvasd el a mondatokat, majd válassz **egy**et a felsorolt válaszlehetőségek közül!*

9. A feladatok során szótárt használtam a _____ ellenőrzésére.

- kiejtés
- szavak jelentésének
- egyéb: _____

10. Nemem:

- férfi
- nő

II. A következő részben állításokat találsz. Húzd alá, hogy mennyire értesz egyet ezekkel!

11. A podcast feladat segített a kiejtésem fejlesztésében.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

12. A podcast feladat segített abban, hogy folyékonyabban beszéljek angolul.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

13. A podcast feladat segített abban, hogy mások előtt magabiztosabban beszéljek angolul.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

14. A podcast feladat segített abban, hogy jobban észrevegyem a saját nyelvtani hibáimat.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

Húzd alá, hogy mennyire értesz egyet az állításokkal!

15. Hasznosnak találtam a tanár által adott e-mailbeli visszajelzéseket (mi volt jó és mi nem).

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

16. Jobban át tudtam gondolni a szöveg felépítését, mint spontán beszédnél.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

17. Szívesen készítettem el a podcast feladatokat.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek	Inkább egyet értek	Inkább nem értek egyet	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

III. Fejezd be a mondatokat!

18. A három podcast házi feladat közül megcsináltam _____.

19. A leghasznosabb a feladatban az volt, hogy _____
- _____

20. Az tetszett a feladatban, hogy _____
- _____

21. Nem tetszett a feladatban, hogy _____
- _____

IV. *Az utolsó részben rövid kifejtős kérdéseket találsz. Őszintén írd le a véleményedet!*

22. Röviden indokold meg, hogy miért, vagy miért nem voltak számodra hasznosak az e-mailbeli visszajelzések!

23. Kérlek, írd le röviden, mi a véleményed a feladatról!

24. Ha van ötleted, hogy mivel lehetne javítani a feladaton, kérlek, írd le!

Appendix B – The Questionnaire in English
The Use of Podcasts for Language Development

Dear Students,

My name is Alexandra Pék. I am a last year student of the English Language Teaching MA programme at Eötvös Loránd University. In my thesis, I investigate how podcasts could be used for language development. I would like to ask for your help in this project. The questionnaire is completely anonymous; you cannot be identified from the collected data. There are no right or wrong answers. Please, provide your honest opinion.

Thank you for your help!

*I. Read the sentences and choose **one** option from the list.*

1. For the creation of the **first** podcast homework I needed (about) _____.
 - less than 10 minutes
 - 15 minutes
 - 20-25 minutes
 - half an hour
 - more than half an hour
 - I don't remember how much time

2. For the creation of the **second** podcast homework I needed (about) _____.
 - less than 10 minutes
 - 15 minutes
 - 20-25 minutes
 - half an hour
 - more than half an hour
 - I don't remember how much time

3. For the creation of the **third** podcast homework I needed (about) _____.
 - less than 10 minutes
 - 15 minutes
 - 20-25 minutes
 - half an hour
 - more than half an hour
 - I don't remember how much time

Read the sentences and choose **one** option from the list.

4. I usually repeated the recordings _____.
- once
 - twice
 - three times
 - four times
 - five times or more than five times
5. Normally, I listened to the recordings of my own voice _____.
- once
 - twice
 - three times
 - four times
 - five times or more than five times
6. I wrote the exact text I told in the recordings.
- In all the three occasions.
 - Twice
 - Once
 - Never
7. I read out the pre-written texts.
- In all the three occasions.
 - Twice
 - Once
 - Never
 - I did not write the texts beforehand.
8. In the creation of the tasks, I had the following helpers: _____.
- nobody
 - my parents
 - my private teacher
 - my friend(s)
 - other: _____

Read the sentences and choose **one** option from the list.

9. During the tasks, I used a dictionary to check the following: _____.

- pronunciation
- the meaning of some words
- other: _____

10. Sex:

- male
- female

II. *In the following section, you will find some statements. Underline the extent to which you agree with them.*

11. Podcast tasks helped me develop my pronunciation.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

12. Podcast tasks helped me speak more fluently in English.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

13. Podcast tasks helped me become more confident when speaking in front of others.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

14. Podcast tasks helped me notice my own grammar and accuracy mistakes better.

Teljes mértékben egyetértek Inkább egyet értek Inkább nem értek egyet Egyáltalán nem értek egyet

15. I found the feedback the teacher gave me useful (what was good and not so good).

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Underline the extent to which you agree with the statements.

16. I could think over the structure of the text much more than at the time of spontaneous speech.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

17. I did the podcast tasks with pleasure.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

III. Complete the sentences.

18. Out of the three podcast tasks I did _____.

19. The most useful in the task was (that) _____

20. What I liked about the task was (that) _____

21. What I didn't like about that task was (that) _____

IV. *In the last section, you will find short answer questions. Please, write down your honest opinion.*

22. Please, write down briefly whether or not the feedback the teacher gave you via e-mail was useful.

23. Please, write down briefly what you think about the task.

24. If you have some ideas for improving the task, please, write them down.

Appendix C – A filled-in version of the questionnaire

A podcastok használata a nyelvfejlesztés terén

Kedves Diákok!

Pék Alexandra vagyok, az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem angoltanár mesterszakos végzős hallgatója. Diplomamunkámban azt vizsgálom, hogyan lehetne a podcastokat nyelvfejlesztésre **használni**. Ehhez kérem a segítségeteket. A kitöltés **név nélkül** történik, az adatokból a személyazonosságra **nem lehet következtetni**. Kérem, hogy **őszintén** írjátok le a véleményeteket, nincsenek jó vagy rossz válaszok!

Köszönöm a segítségeteket!

I. *Olvasd el a mondatokat, majd válassz egy a felsorolt válaszlehetőségek közül!*

1. Az **első** podcast házi feladat elkészítéséhez (kb.) _____ volt szükségem.

- kevesebb, mint 10 percre
- negyed órára
- 20-25 percre
- fél órára
- több, mint fél órára
- nem emlékszem, hogy mennyi időre

2. A **második** podcast házi feladat elkészítéséhez (kb.) _____ volt szükségem.

- kevesebb, mint 10 percre
- negyed órára
- 20-25 percre
- fél órára
- több, mint fél órára
- nem emlékszem, hogy mennyi időre

3. A **harmadik** podcast házi feladat elkészítéséhez (kb.) _____ volt szükségem.

- kevesebb, mint 10 percre
- negyed órára
- 20-25 percre
- fél órára
- több, mint fél órára
- nem emlékszem, hogy mennyi időre

4. A felvételeket általában _____ ismételt meg.

- egyszer
- kétszer
- háromszor
- négyszer
- ötször vagy ötnél többször

1

Olvasd el a mondatokat, majd válassz egy a felsorolt válaszlehetőségek közül!

5. A saját magam által készített felvételeket általában _____ hallgattam vissza.

- egyszer
- kétszer
- háromszor
- négyszer
- ötször vagy ötnél többször

6. A felvételen elmondott szöveget előre megírtam.

- Mind a három alkalommal
- Kétszer
- Egyszer
- Soha

7. Az előre megírt szöveget felolvastam.

- Mind a három alkalommal
- Kétszer
- Egyszer
- Soha
- Nem írtam meg előre a szöveget.

8. A feladatok elkészítésében (a) _____ segített(ek).

- senki sem
- szüleim
- magántanárom
- barátom/barátnőm
- egyéb: _____

9. A feladatok során szótárt használtam a _____ ellenőrzésére.

- kiejtés
- szavak jelentésének
- egyéb: _____

10. Neme:

- férfi
- nő

II. A következő részben állításokat találsz. Húzd alá, hogy mennyire értesz egyet ezekkel!

11. A podcast feladat segített a kiejtésem fejlesztésében.

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

12. A podcast feladat segített abban, hogy folyékonyabban beszéljek angolul.

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

13. A podcast feladat segített abban, hogy mások előtt magabiztosabban beszéljek angolul.

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

14. A podcast feladat segített abban, hogy jobban észrevegyem a saját nyelvtani hibáimat.

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

15. Hasznosnak találtam a tanár által adott e-mailbeli visszajelzéseket (mi volt jó és mi nem).

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

16. Jobban át tudtam gondolni a szöveg felépítését, mint spontán beszédnél.

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

17. Szívesen készítettem el a podcast feladatokat.

Teljes mértékben
egyetértek

Inkább egyet értek

Inkább nem értek
egyet

Egyáltalán nem
értek egyet

III. Fejezd be a mondatokat!

18. A három podcast házi feladat közül megcsináltam háromat.

19. A leghasznosabb a feladatban az volt, hogy beszédre készítetett

20. Az tetszett a feladatban, hogy je témákat kaptunk

21. Nem tetszett a feladatban, hogy —

IV. Az utolsó részben rövid kifejtős kérdéseket találsz. Őszintén írd le a véleményed!

22. Röviden indokold meg, hogy miért, vagy miért nem voltak számodra hasznosak az e-mailbeli visszajelzések!

En hasznosnak találtam őket, hiszen a tanári nyelvű
segíteni szeretni volna ezzel, hogy fejlődhesen az angol tudásom
és oda figyeljek azokra a hibáimra amiket vettem

23. Kérlek, írd le röviden, mi a véleményed a feladatról.

Szerintem ez egy jó gyakorlati forma a beszélgetés
fejlesztésére, és, hogy megjünk megszólalni, meg ha nem is vagyunk
abban biztosak, hogy felelősek a nyelvtanunk

24. Ha van ötleted, hogy mivel lehetne javítani a feladaton, kérlek, írd le!

Nincs ötletem, nekem ez így tetszett!

Appendix D – The first example of feedback in Hungarian

Note. The student's name is a pseudonym. This is an example of feedback from the first podcast task.

Kedves Eszti!

Jól oldottad meg a feladatot, érthetően beszéltél és használtál nagyon jó kifejezéseket (firstly, a number of, furthermore stb.) Nem tartottál hosszú szüneteket, szépen folyékonyan mondtad. Volt azonban néhány nyelvtani hibád és nem mindenhol volt egyértelmű számomra, hogy pontosan mire gondolsz, a gondolatmeneted nem mindig követhető. Volt egy ilyen mondatod: „The retired people can detachment from the world in an unpopular island for example”. A *detachment* egy főnév, nem ige. Itt nem pontosan értem, hogy mire gondolhatsz. Úgy éreztem, hogy kicsit csapongtál a nyugdíjasok, tinédzserek és az általános előnyök és hátrányok között. Próbáld meg legközelebb ezeket úgy csoportosítani, hogy elmondod először általánosságban, hogy miért jó vagy nem jó költözni, aztán példaként felhozhatod, hogy a tiniknek és a nyugdíjasoknak miért jó.

A nyugdíjas a *pensioner*. Az *a number of* után többes számba kell tenni a főneveket, tehát *a number of teenagers*. A gyakorolni egy nyelvet: *practise your language skills* vagy fejleszteni a nyelvet: *develop your language skills*, nem *exercise*. A *share*-nek az a vonzata, hogy *share something with somebody*. Az, hogy sok előnye van annak, ha valaki külföldön él így hangzik: *Living in a foreign country has several advantages and disadvantages*, azért mert ilyenkor szó szerint azt mondjuk, hogy a külföldön élésnek (living) vannak előnyei. Az *-ing*-nek van *-ás/-és* képző funkciója is. Valamint azért *has* és nem *have*, mert ez egyes számú, megszámlálhatatlan alanynak számít.

Erre most 4-est adok, de ügyesen dolgoztál, legközelebb picit jobban figyelj ezekre!

Kellemes szünetet!

Üdv:
Pék Alexandra

Appendix E – The second example of feedback in Hungarian

Note. The student's name is a pseudonym. This is an example of feedback from the first podcast task.

Kedves Dávid!

Nagyon szépen összefoglaltad a biciklizés előnyeit és hátrányait. Jól használtad a linking words-öket, amivel követhetővé tted a gondolatmenetedet és a szöveg felépítését. A kiejtés és az intonáció is rendben volt. Egy szót ejtettél rosszul: variable (veöriöbl). Ezen kívül csak pár apróság volt. A környezetbarát az *environmentally friendly*, nem *environmental friendly*. Azt, hogy ajánlasz valakinek valamilyen tevékenységet, azt a *recommend*-del mondjuk, nem az *offer*-rel: I ~~offer~~ **recommend** this activity to my friends. Az *offer* inkább felajánl-t jelent pl. They offered me the job. Azt, hogy nem kell sétálnod a megállóig, én inkább úgy mondanám, hogy „You don't have to walk to the station”. Azért nem *shouldn't*, mert a *should* a *kellene*, a *have to* pedig a *kell*.

Szép munka volt, 5-ös!

Kellemes ünnepeket!

Üdv:
Pék Alexandra

Appendix F – The first example of feedback in English

Note. The student's name is a pseudonym. This is an example of feedback from the first podcast task.

Dear Eszti,

You solved the task well, your speech was understandable and you used some nice expressions (firstly, a number of, furthermore etc.) There were no long breaks in your speech and you were speaking quite fluently. However, you made some grammatical mistakes and it was not always clear what you thought of. I could not always follow your line of thought. You said this sentence: "The retired people can detachment from the world in an unpopular island for example". The word *detachment* is a noun not a verb. I do not really understand what you might think of. I felt that you let your thoughts wander from pensioners and teenagers to advantages and disadvantages of moving in general. Try grouping these next time in a way that first, you talk about the advantages and disadvantages in general. Then, you can say examples such as why it is beneficial for teenagers and pensioners.

A retired person is a *pensioner*. You have to put the noun after *a number of* in a plural form, i.e. *a number of teenagers*. If you want to practise speaking a language, you can say that *practise your language skills* or *develop your language skills*, but not exercise. The preposition of *share* is *with*: *share something with somebody*. If there are a lot of advantages of living abroad, you can say that "Living in a foreign country has several advantages and disadvantages", because you can create a noun by using the -ing form of the verb. Similarly, it is *has* not ~~have~~, because it is uncountable.

I give you a 4, but it was nice. Next time, please pay more attention to these.

Have a nice break!

Best wishes,

Alexandra Pék

Appendix G – The second example of feedback in English

Note. The student's name is a pseudonym. This is an example of feedback from the third podcast task.

Dear David,

You summarized the advantages and disadvantages of riding a bike very well. You used the linking words nicely, which made your line of thought and the structure of your speech easy to follow. Your pronunciation and intonation was good as well. There was one word only you did not pronounce correctly, it was *variable*. Except from this, you made only small mistakes. The right expression is *environmentally friendly*, not environmental friendly. If you tell somebody that something is good or useful, you *recommend* something, not *offer*: I ~~offered~~ **recommend** this activity to my friends. If you say that you are willing to do something for somebody or give something to somebody, you *offer* something: They offered me the job. It is better to say "You don't have to walk to the station" than "You shouldn't walk". The latter indicates that you think something is inappropriate or not right. "You don't have to walk to the station" means that you do not need to walk there.

Nice work overall, it is a 5.

Have a nice holiday!

Best wishes,

Alexandra Pék

Appendix H – Students’ choices of topics

Table 1	
Students’ choices of topics	
<u>Topics of podcast 1</u>	<u>N of SS</u>
A. Life in big cities	-
B. The benefits of environmentally friendly homes.	0
C. The advantages and disadvantages of settling down in a foreign country.	9
<i>N of SS altogether</i>	9
<u>Topics of podcast 2</u>	<u>N of SS</u>
A. Organic food vs. G.M. food	2
B. Extreme sports	4
C. Exercise, health & fitness	4
<i>N of SS altogether</i>	10
<u>Topics of podcast 3</u>	<u>N of SS</u>
A. Pros and cons of bicycles	3
B. Public transport strikes	0
C. The underground system in big cities	4
<i>N of SS altogether</i>	7
<p><i>Note.</i> Students were not allowed to choose topic A in the first podcast task. N of SS refers to the number of students who chose the particular topic and who did the task.</p>	