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# English and Digital Literacies

Unit 4.1: Podcasts and Vodcasts in the FL Classroom

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# Podcasts (1/4)

Podcasts are:

- a new type of online media delivery.
- digital audio files distributed over the Internet.

When we create podcasts we are creating and posting an audio file to the internet. These audio files are mostly in an .mp3 file format, although they can exist in other audio file types (such as .wav, .ogg, and .aiff)



# Podcasts (2/4)



# Podcasts (3/4)

- **Available through download from websites or through a subscription feed.**
- Listen on a computer or a mobile device such as an iPod or an MP3 player.
- Podcasts can be listened to when and where the user chooses to, and they are **automatically delivered to subscribers.**



# Podcasts (4/4)

- Podcasting software ([iTunes](#), [Juice](#), [iPodder](#)) needs subscription.
- Many of these applications are available online free of charge.
- Subscriptions to podcasts are made possible by software called RSS.



# What is a podcast feed? (1/2)

The use of RSS (Really Simple Syndication) means that the user can subscribe to a podcast that will be downloaded automatically every time there is an update or new content is uploaded.



[1]



# What is a podcast feed? (2/2)

A podcast feed:

1. is a text file on the internet,
2. contains information about the podcast (e.g. title, description, etc),
3. contains a list of the podcast episodes,
4. has a web address.



# Difference from the radio

- You may think of a podcast as a user-created, online, radio program with one significant difference.
- While radio programs are scheduled and made available only at certain times of the day, a podcast can be accessed or downloaded at any time and is made available **on-demand** to the listener.



# Podcasts in Plain English



Watch the video: [Podcasting in Plain English](#)



# Podcast and images

Some podcasters produce podcasts which include images that display during play. This may be a single image which advertises the podcast provider or, in the case of enhanced podcasts, a number of images to support the audio content.



# Vodcasts

- **Vodcast:** was used to refer to podcasts with video rather than audio content, today it is known as **video podcast**.
- Video podcasts are increasingly available. These usually come in m4v format (to be played through iTunes, Quicktime, or some video portable media players), or the more traditional mpeg format.



# Why use podcasts in language teaching

- Graham Davies (2005) claims that the single piece of technology that has affected language learning most is the cassette recorder.
- The typical personal media player is no more than a Walkman with digital media files instead of cassettes.
- The delivery of media content online is not new either: audio and video on demand, either as a download or via streaming, has been popular since the 1990s.



# What's new about podcasting?

- The ease of publication, ease of subscription, and ease of use across multiple environments (Campbell, 2005, p. 34).
- its popularity which comes from:
  - the ease of access,
  - the increase of broadband users, and
  - the proliferation of portable media players.



# What they offer in ELT

- Use of authentic audio materials with EFL students.
- Encourages creativity and collaboration.
- Teaches effective communication skills.
- Engages students in active exploration, observation, processing and interpretation.
- Mobile learning.



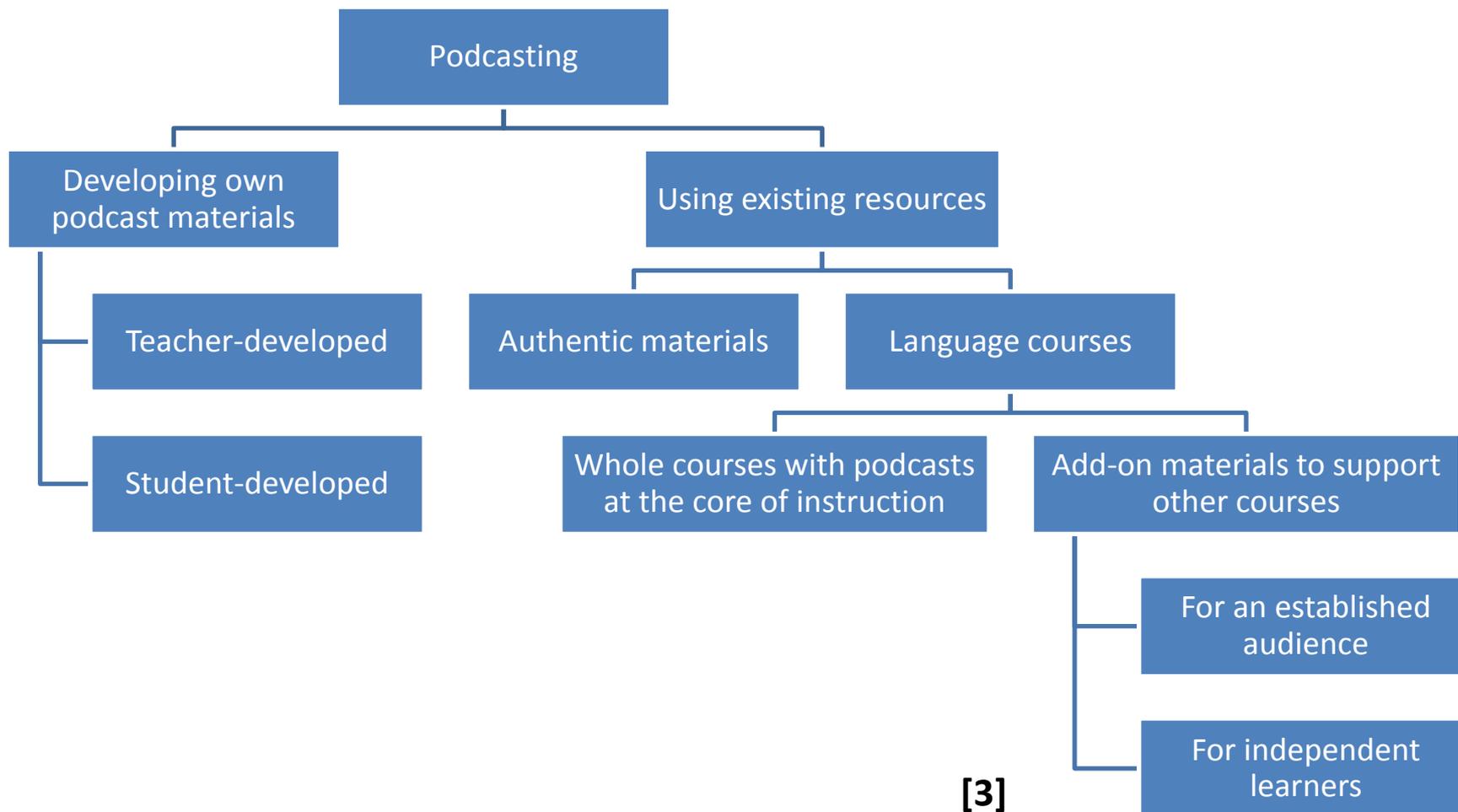
# How podcasts can be used in the FL classroom

Teachers may:

- encourage and allow for the option of students to submit assigned work as podcasts,
- explore the possibility of using podcasts as part of project research materials,
- encourage students to interview relatives and develop oral histories,
- ask students to create a podcast to meet a real need,
- create with their students an online radio.



# Types of podcasts for ELT



# Teacher-developed podcasts for ELT

Teachers may record and distribute directly to students' MP3 players:

- lessons for students,
- a short introduction about your school or class that new students or parents can listen to and learn from,
- supplementary information (beyond what is covered in the classroom),
- classroom discussions (Meng, 2005).



# Examples of teacher-developed podcasts

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Home | Learning & Teaching | E-Learning | Podcasting | Creating and publishing a podcast episode

## Creating and publishing a podcast episode

The diagram below illustrates the stages in the process of creating and publishing a podcast. From this diagram you should note:

- It is important to start your podcast with an overall plan for its role within your teaching (see the [planning a podcast page](#)).
- The activities related to the creation and publishing of each podcast episode are cyclic being repeated for each episode.
- Once you have uploaded your first podcast episode file on the Elgg system you can then distribute or publish your podcast feed. You only need to do this once as this feed web address (URL) will then remain the same and all those who have subscribed to it will be automatically alerted to the podcast episodes you publish later.

```
graph TD; A[Plan podcast] --> B[Prepare podcast episode]; B --> C[Record audio using Audacity]; C --> D[Edit audio with Audacity]; D --> E[Upload audio into Elgg filestore]; E --> F[Distribute podcast feed URL]; F --> B;
```

[4]

# Examples of student-developed podcasts

- Student projects.
- Student radio style broadcasts.
- Digital storytelling.
- Student created content (e.g. overviews, reviews etc.).
- Conduct interviews with individuals in the community or school.



# Podcasts developed by external sources

- Authentic content provided by native speakers of English primarily to be used by them (e.g. news and radio programming).
- Information from an expert in a given field.
- Supplementary information.
- Free podcasts from universities, colleges, departments of education, and other educational material.



# Examples of podcasts developed by external sources (1/2)

Examples of this category of podcasts can be found in the webpages of:

- major television and radio broadcasters,
- broadcasters who place their radio programmes or specially recorded content online,
- performers who wish to promote their material,



# Examples of podcasts developed by external sources (2/2)

- film studios who make film trailers available to promote them (both mainstream and independent studios),
- individuals with something they want to say or share,
- educational institutions and teachers who provide learning content on many fields (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).



# Teaching English through podcasting

In the category of language courses we have teaching content specifically designed for language learning.

In this case we have stand-alone courses that strive to operate as virtual classrooms.



# Supporting materials for specific audiences

**Materials provided by teachers or institutions for their own students:** Among the first institutions to implement the introduction of portable media devices to learning were Osaka Jogakuin College in Japan, which was the first educational institution to provide iPods for its students (McCarty, 2005), and the initiative at Duke University, in North Carolina (US), to provide all first-year students with iPods. Their use of the devices was based on the provision of custom-made materials to their own students.



# Supporting materials for independent learners

Supporting materials designed for independent learners who are not enrolled on a particular course, delivered as a public broadcast.

Supporting materials for independent learning are materials provided by institutions or individuals who have no particular fixed target audience (at least not in the sense of a particular group of students in the previous category).



# British Council LearnEnglish – Podcasts and Vodcasts

The screenshot displays the British Council LearnEnglish website. At the top left is the British Council logo, and at the top right is the 'LearnEnglish' logo. A navigation bar below contains links for Home, Listen & Watch, Grammar & Vocabulary, Fun & Games, Business & Work, Writing, IELTS, and Apps. A secondary menu lists 'Elementary Podcasts', 'Big City Small World', 'Word on the Street', 'Britain is GREAT', 'Magazine', 'Overcooked', 'Stories & Poems', 'How to...', 'Talk About', and 'UK Culture'. A search bar is located below the menu.

The main content area features a 'Listen and Watch' section with a photo of a woman wearing headphones and red glasses. The text reads: 'You can listen or watch on your computer, or download audio and video files to your mp3 player.' and 'All of our audio and video materials are accompanied by language practice activities that you can do on your computer while you listen or watch, or print out and do when you want.'

Below this is a 'Recent content' carousel showing three 'Elementary Podcasts' from Series 04: Episode 02, Episode 01, and Episode 03.

On the right side, there is a 'your comments' section with three comments:

- Kirk Spain:** Hello Mohammed, I'm afraid that our... (read comment)
- Kirk Spain:** Hello Daria, The Elementary Podcasts could be really useful for you. I'd recommend you... (read comment)
- daribando Poland:** Hello. Im Daria. I was born in Poland, but now i'm living in Engalnd in Canterbury. I'm 20 years... (read comment)

[5]



# BBC Podcasts

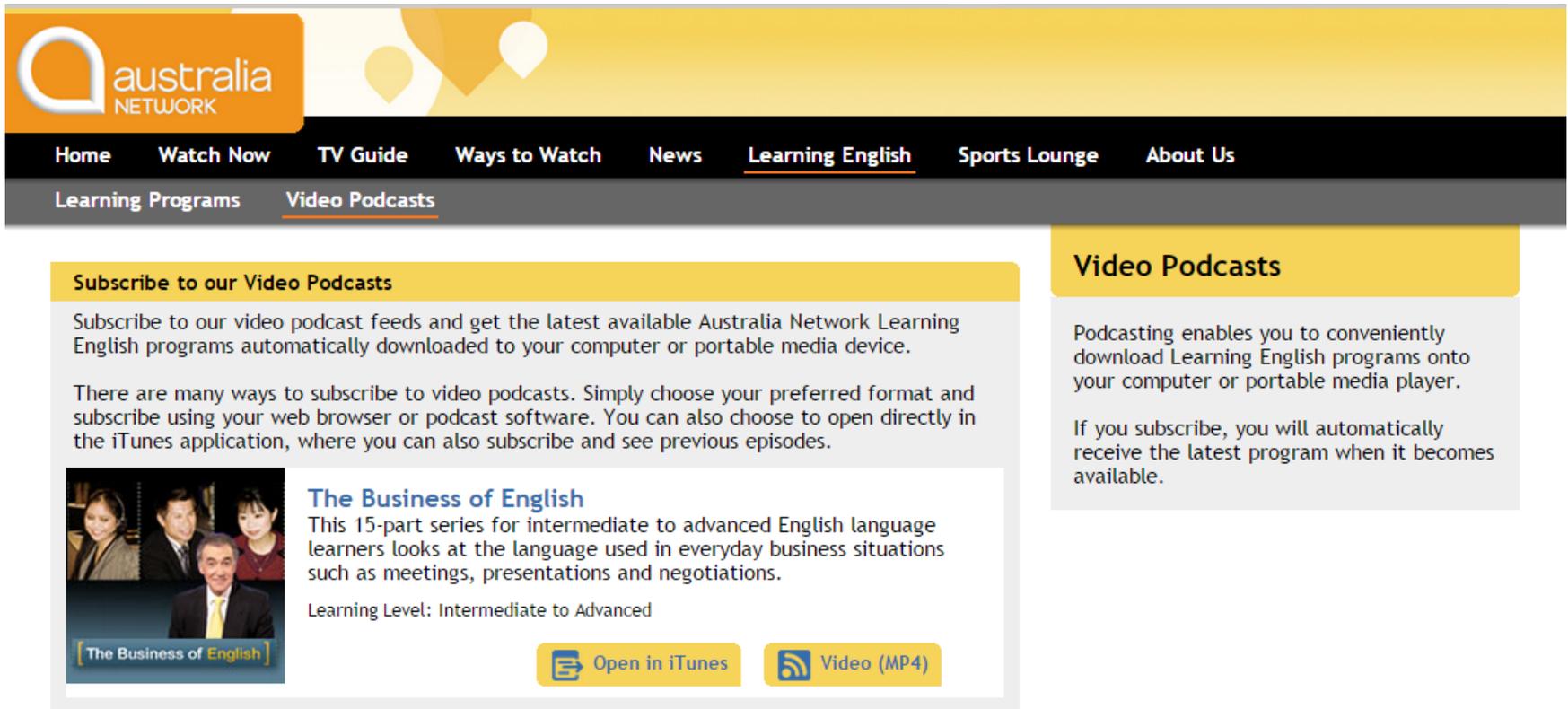
The screenshot shows the BBC Player Radio website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a 'Sign in' button, and links for News, Sport, Weather, Shop, Earth, and More. A search bar is located on the right. Below this is a dark navigation bar with the 'Player Radio' logo, another search bar, and links for Stations, Categories, Schedules, and Favourites. The main content area features a large green heading 'PODCASTS & DOWNLOADS' with a 'Help' button. Below the heading are three tabs: 'Highlights' (selected), 'At the movies', and 'Questions and Answers'. Three podcast cards are displayed in a row:

- Podcast 1:** BBC RADIO 3 | MUSIC. Title: **Kiri's 20 Favourite Voices**. Description: Dame Kiri selects her 20 favourite voices, including not only...
- Podcast 2:** BBC RADIO 5 LIVE | ARTS, CULTU... Title: **Mark Kermode and Simon Mayo's Film Reviews**. Description: Sir Ian McKellan in...
- Podcast 3:** BBC RADIO 3 | CLASSICAL. Title: **In Tune Highlights**. Description: Featuring 'Singers on...

[6]



# Australia Network Vodcasts



The screenshot shows the Australia Network website's 'Video Podcasts' page. At the top is the Australia Network logo and a navigation menu with links for Home, Watch Now, TV Guide, Ways to Watch, News, Learning English (underlined), Sports Lounge, and About Us. Below the navigation is a sub-menu with 'Learning Programs' and 'Video Podcasts' (underlined). The main content area has a yellow header 'Video Podcasts' and a section titled 'Subscribe to our Video Podcasts'. This section contains text about subscribing to video podcast feeds and a list of ways to subscribe. Below this is a featured podcast card for 'The Business of English', which includes a thumbnail image of the cast, a description of the 15-part series, the learning level (Intermediate to Advanced), and two buttons: 'Open in iTunes' and 'Video (MP4)'. To the right of the main content is a grey box with the text 'Podcasting enables you to conveniently download Learning English programs onto your computer or portable media player.' and 'If you subscribe, you will automatically receive the latest program when it becomes available.'

**Subscribe to our Video Podcasts**

Subscribe to our video podcast feeds and get the latest available Australia Network Learning English programs automatically downloaded to your computer or portable media device.

There are many ways to subscribe to video podcasts. Simply choose your preferred format and subscribe using your web browser or podcast software. You can also choose to open directly in the iTunes application, where you can also subscribe and see previous episodes.

**The Business of English**  
This 15-part series for intermediate to advanced English language learners looks at the language used in everyday business situations such as meetings, presentations and negotiations.  
Learning Level: Intermediate to Advanced

[Open in iTunes](#) [Video \(MP4\)](#)

**Video Podcasts**

Podcasting enables you to conveniently download Learning English programs onto your computer or portable media player.

If you subscribe, you will automatically receive the latest program when it becomes available.

[7]



# Voice of America Podcasts



VOA Voice of America | LEARNING ENGLISH  
Learn American English and More

HOME | NEWS / TOPICS ▾ | SHOWS IN SPECIAL ENGLISH ▾ | THE CLASSROOM ▾

November 09, 2012 20:01 UTC



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The VOA Mobile Wordbook puts American English on your iPhone! Every word has: audio, the definition, word usage, a dialogue and sample sentences so you can hear how each word is used as well as the correct pronunciation.



[8]



# Need to evaluate EFL podcasts

Podcasting can provide access to a large amount of authentic input, as well as to teaching materials of varying quality that have different approaches to language learning behind them (depending on the content provider): from behaviourist to cognitive constructivist and communicative approaches, situated learning, and lifelong learning.



# References

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- Rosell-Aguilar, F. (2007). Top of the pods—In search of a podcasting “podagogy” for language learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 20(5), 471-492.



# Financing

- The present educational material has been developed as part of the educational work of the instructor.
- The project “Open Academic Courses of the University of Athens” has only financed the reform of the educational material.
- The project is implemented under the operational program “Education and Lifelong Learning” and funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and National Resources.



Notes

# Note on History of Published Version

The present work is the edition 1.0.



# Reference Note

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