

Fall 2023

PODCASTING AS A PEDAGOGY: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PODCAST USE AND CREATION IN THE CLASSROOM

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PODCASTING AS A PEDAGOGY: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PODCAST USE AND
CREATION IN THE CLASSROOM

by

Rebecca Hobby

Submitted to the School of Honors Committee

in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for University Honors Scholars

Southeastern University

2023

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2023

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Lindsay Woods for being my primary advisor and for all of her guidance and encouragement throughout the entire thesis process. I would also like to thank Dr. Tom Gollery for his aid in the data analysis. Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Kevin Weaver, Dr. Gordon Miller, Kaitlyn Brett, Amy Beatty, Molly Owens, and the School of Honors community for their support throughout my time in the Honors program.

Abstract

Podcasting is an innovative technology medium that has impacted the world with its new ideas, perspectives, and connections between listeners and hosts. While this medium has grown exponentially in many spheres, it is relatively new in educational settings. This thesis seeks to determine whether educators are ready to implement podcast listening and producing in their classrooms. It also seeks to ascertain educators' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of podcasting. A survey was conducted asking teachers and college students preparing to become teachers about their observations and understandings of podcast use in classrooms. The findings indicated that access to professional development to learn how to effectively implement podcasting correlates with a high likelihood of teachers willing to incorporate podcasts into their pedagogy.

KEY WORDS: podcast, podcasting, education, engagement, student voice, listening skills

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Introduction

Spoken words are immensely powerful. Although seemingly minor sound waves make up our speech, put together with truth and authentic voice, they transform into a beautiful means to communicate. Even though sounds disappear, departing as quickly as they arrive, they leave traces. The sounds and words we hear spark our imaginations. With the gears of our imaginations turning, we are making connections and chasing new thoughts. What we hear may shift the ways in which we think (Spinelli & Dann). Spinelli & Dann (2019) state, “There’s something about the act of listening intimately which lets the stories and voices we hear get under our skin. And podcasting certainly deploys such intimacy in striking ways” (p. x). As the host establishes a bond with the listener, the thoughts and ideas shared may follow the listener throughout their life. Podcasting is more than simply listening to a recording, audiobook, or radio; it draws the listener into the conversation with its familiarity and authenticity. Podcasting is storytelling with a genuine voice that reaches and invites the listener. Because of this appeal, podcasts have become increasingly popular. In 2021, over 82 million people listened to them (Götting, 2023). They were first introduced in 2004 and have boomed since 2014 (Berry, 2015). However, podcasting in educational settings is relatively new.

In education, students develop oral language skills from elementary to high school. Educators desire students to feel heard and to know that they have ideas and beliefs to share with the world. Podcasting is one mode of developing student voice and communication skills in the classroom. In addition, this medium has the potential to foster collaboration, listening, reading, and writing skills within schools.

Student podcasting to learn and demonstrate learning falls under the umbrella of student-centered learning and project-based learning (PBL), which both are methods

where the student is at the heart of the teaching process. In the classroom, student-centered learning looks like students writing and drawing on a poster in groups to process the material they are learning, rather than a teacher lecturing from a PowerPoint on that material.

Furthermore, it may look like a student being able to choose between writing an essay, creating an infographic, or making a short film to show their learning. PBL occurs when students participate in meaningful projects such as designing a garden, partnering with a local business to become more eco-friendly, or determining a way to reduce littering in a community. Often, student-centered learning and PBL allow students to be creative and develop critical thinking skills (*What is PBL?*, n.d.). Aligning with these teaching methods, podcasting in a classroom may look like students collaborating to write a script and record, rather than writing a paper or presenting a PowerPoint. Podcasting creates a hands-on, real-life experience for students inside the classroom. With all the power this medium holds, it has been used in few classrooms. This thesis research seeks to discover if educators are ready to implement podcasting as a pedagogy. The research also desires to ascertain how educators view it, and what its benefits and flaws are in the classroom.

Through the intimate conversations of podcasts, people are inspired, challenged, and connected by the host. Bringing this medium into schools may allow students another instrument to learn and connect with the world. Educators, with their school boards, ultimately decide which methods to use to best teach their students. This medium is already impacting the world and could have the opportunity to impact educational spheres by connecting students to the growing, enlightening world of podcasting.

Literature Review

Introduction

Podcasts became mainstream in 2005 when Apple upgraded iTunes, enabling the software to carry them, making them easily accessible to the public (Bottomley, 2015). The term podcasting was introduced in 2004 by Hammersley, merging the words “iPod” and “broadcasting” in his article praising this new, inexpensive technology. Furthermore, it became solidified as a technology medium in 2013 when Apple surpassed the one billion subscriptions mark for podcasts on the iTunes platform (Bottomley, 2015). Now, according to studies in 2021, 51% of the United States population has listened to this medium (Biber & Heidorn, 2021). Many people listen to podcasts for entertainment, education, and current events. Whether seeking new perspectives, an entertaining story, or background noise while one completes a task, this medium engages its audience with many different topics, stories, and messages.

History of Podcasting

A podcast is a digital program that can be downloaded over the internet and listened to at any time. Podcasting is the process of creating these downloadable recordings. Paving the way for podcasts, radio applied broadcasting to a diverse audience, as the listener could choose their station and connect with the announcer (Rime et al, 2022). Bonini (2022) states that the podcast is a hybrid between radio and new mediums, pulling from literature in the way the host writes the script and from theatre and performing arts in the way the host makes a text or story come alive (Bonini, 2022). Therefore, it takes aspects of radio and arts and creates its own medium.

Building on radio’s foundation, podcasts add a screen element, create a more intimate connection with their audience, and have increased accessibility and less strict time restrictions. Bonini (2022) asserts that many of the aspects of podcasts such as connection to the listener,

come from radio. However, this newer medium goes further than radio by evolving with platforms, listeners, and distribution technologies. At first, the appeal of podcasting was that “downloadable radio is not subject to any programming regulations. Nor is there a shortage of airtime, previously a major constraint on aspiring radio journalists” (Hammersley, 2004, para. 14). Now, podcasts are accessible anywhere a listener can bring their phone and are available on multiple platforms. With this accessibility of a download, the podcast can intertwine the authenticity and rapport of voice creating the best experience for the listener (Hammersley, 2004). Podcasts move beyond just an audio-based method into a screen-based one as they often include logos, pictures, and videos on YouTube (Bonini, 2022). As well, Spinelli and Dann (2019) affirm that podcasting is one-to-one whereas radio is one-to-many. Radio can be intimate in listening connection; however, it is more often shared with others rather than listened to in earbuds (Bonini, 2022). Bonini (2022) makes the point that “even if a podcast is listened to by a thousand people, it will produce a sum of singular intimacies, and not a collective intimacy like the one created by the radio” (p. 10). Utilizing “personalization based in automation” propelled podcasting to the public, meaning the listener has more choice over what they listen to, so they may choose an episode on a topic that interests them or is personal to them (Rime et al., 2022, para. 15). Unlike radio, the listener must first choose what to listen to; then, the platform and host are responsible for maintaining their attention and for transferring their content to them. Podcasts also separate from radio as they go further with authentic voice and being able to listen to a niche topic (Rime et al., 2022). There is an intimacy of the listener in choosing the specific episode rather than the host showing up randomly on their radio. Through podcasts’ advancements in depicting images on screens, freedom of time constraints, audience choice, and one-to-one communication, it has moved beyond radio into its own medium.

Podcasting was slowly growing from 2004 until 2014 with small, inconsequential steps, until the release of *Serial*. A turning point in podcasting history, *Serial*'s release, a true crime podcast produced in 2014, broke the record for downloading (Rime et al, 2022). According to Berry (2015), as a result of *Serial*, this medium became a recognized media platform, rather than a narrow interest for a limited audience. *Serial* held their listeners captive, as they left episodes in suspense over what would happen next (Rime et al., 2022) and showed podcasting in a new light as a medium for narratives of creators and storytellers (Berry, 2015). *Serial* paved the way for other crime and mystery podcasts and truly all podcasts as it reexamined this technology's purpose and significantly publicized this medium.

Currently, the diversity of topics makes this means of communication popular. This assortment of podcasts can be used in several settings and has been in demand in personal, educational, and business spheres (Lin et al., 2013). In personal spheres, podcasts have been listened to for self-help, background listening, and interest as they create an intimate conversation with the listener and host. Although a public medium, Sienkiewicz and Jaramillo (2019) claim, "podcasting is also startlingly unpublic, solitary, and personalized. It is the medium of the earbud, the quiet voice nestled cozily, almost out of sight, and chosen just for you" (p. 268). Because this medium has been seen as a way to share one's opinions and even niche topics with the world, people listen to them in their personal time. The public follows podcasts created by organizations, experts in their fields, and celebrities. These hosts share stories, knowledge, and advice. In educational spheres, podcasts have been created by schools, teachers, and students to better learn, understand, and reach the world with their takeaways. For example, *Mars Patel*, an audio mystery drama, was performed by and made for middle schoolers (Mars Patel, n.d.). Upper elementary and middle school teachers have incorporated *Mars Patel* into their ELA

curriculums. Teachers can use podcasts produced by other students as models for their own creations and digital storytelling, inspiring students and promoting oral speaking skills. In business spheres, this medium has been used for professional development (PD) within companies. One of these PD podcasts, *The Mindset Mentor* is about direction, motivation, and navigating one's career for business professionals (Dial, 2015-present). In addition, internal corporate podcasts are emerging. For example, American Airlines has a company podcast called *Tell Me Why* for their team members where they invite guests and discuss the "why" behind the decisions they make (American Airlines News, 2019-present).

Podcast genres range from true crime to self-help to comedy; the most popular in 2020 was comedy, followed closely by news, crime, and sports (Götting, 2022). This medium can be set up as interviews, conversations, fiction and non-fiction storytelling, monologues, or panels. For example, monologue podcasts feature one host, giving a take on a topic or range of topics, and conversation podcasts often have two or more steady hosts who discuss specific topics (Riverside, 2023). From one of the first podcasts, *Serial*, to current popular entertainment and educational podcasts, this communication technology has educated, amused, and shaped many minds.

Impact

Podcasting has been used to entertain, teach, and inspire all from listening for a short period of time (Karneva, 2021). It shapes listening in new ways and enthralls people with new experiences (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). The thinking and imagining that takes place as people listen shift the ways in which they believe, feel, and act. This audio leaves traces as listeners are making connections and chasing new thoughts. The stories, ideas, and beliefs heard make lasting impressions on their audience (Spinelli & Dann, 2019).

With its fresh perspective, podcasting has created a space that has become creatively porous and allows for open sharing for its audiences on many themes and topics. It can be an art form where the host playfully shares, transforming the listener's relationship with text or content (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). Spinelli & Dann (2019) further explain the popularity of this medium from the host's open, organic talk: "The fact of producers building podcasts around their own inquiries, pleasures, and curiosities without a clear demographic in mind is often the route to astounding success in podcasting" (p. 14). Producers are able to be creative with their interests and individual pursuits to invite in listeners. With hosts' open sharing, their audience has the potential for their thoughts to be transformed and minds opened to new viewpoints.

In addition to these transformative words and ideas, podcasting has opened the door to more creative practices. These methods, not found in radio, are not hindered by a schedule allowing for various listener ideas and voices to be combined. Podcasting also has no permanent audio text, meaning the content is able to be updated and reframed. It permits a more creative means for producing interviews and advertising; it is youthful and allows for any age to take part in the creation and listening process (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). Therefore, they often appeal to younger people, and they are more likely to listen to them. This younger generation sees podcasts as a revolutionary medium. The older generation tends to see them as a form of "radio" and is less influenced to listen to them constantly. Younger people tend to listen to podcasts while doing another task or for enjoyment, whereas older generations listen to them to keep up with what is going on in the world around them (Shearer et al., 2023).

Podcasting as a platform finds its distinctive qualities through the followers' engagement and the connections that occur. It invites engagement as the follower listens and connects with the content; it develops a unique relationship that is impactful and inviting to anyone who is

involved whether it be the subjects, listeners, or creators (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). The link between the audience and producer is strengthened by the listener's choice to select a specific podcast. The mobility of listening in headphones or earbuds fosters a different relationship with sound than radio; even within public spaces, a listener controls how they hear, meaning they can rewind and listen to a podcast multiple times. Podcasting changed the way people listen and learn, as listening is within reach anywhere. They have been and are still being used to share information without geographical or temporal limitations (Lin et al., 2013). This invitation to engage anywhere is boosted by social media. There is an overlap between using laptops and phones to engage in social media and also to listen to and create podcasts (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). Within social media, this medium has the capacity to amplify engagement within their followings, as listeners share and endorse their favorite podcasts.

The host has the freedom to share and promote not only their brand, ideas, and values but also goods and items. As a listener engages with their host, they may be influenced to believe or purchase what the host recommends. Moreover, podcasts can be monetized and can influence people to purchase items and help businesses (Karneva, 2021). Because hosts address listeners specific to their niche, businesses can easily reach consumers who would be likely to purchase an item advertised by the host (Karneva, 2021). As the podcast creator promotes their personal brand, their audience listens for book, movie, food, restaurant, and workout recommendations and inspiration (Shearer et al., 2023). This may inspire their listeners to try new products or lifestyles. In conclusion, podcasts have impacted the way people listen as they gain new perspectives and ideas. As they can follow along anywhere about anything, the listener gains more access to fresh outlooks than ever before, deepening the connection between them and the podcaster.

Podcasting in the Classroom

Just as podcasting has uses in other settings, in education, the utilization of podcasts includes students listening to them, students creating them, and teachers recording them for their students (Sprague and Pixley, 2008). With both listening to and creating them, students may be more engaged, see other perspectives, and develop practical skills. Moreover, these methods allow students to participate in cross-cultural experiences. The following paragraphs give a view of how educators have used podcasting in the past.

Listening

Schools and teachers have incorporated podcast listening to individualize learning, engage students, and provide various perspectives. Included to supplement learning, podcasts created by teachers, experts in a certain field, and other students have been listened to and analyzed by students to grow their knowledge and excitement for the content. One school, the Brearley School, located in Manhattan's Upper East Side, supplements language textbooks and English, music, and drama classes with podcasts (Sprague & Pixley, 2008). With the diversity of podcasts, listening to them brings outside knowledge on content from others that reinforces the material. In this way, the Brearley School advanced their students' education with new ideas and perspectives not normally found inside their classrooms. In another school, the librarian created mini podcasts about books in her library. The purpose of these audio recordings was to exponentially interest students in reading and to involve parents in the student's reading development (Piecka et al., 2008). This librarian connected learning material with students and families along with attracting students to acquire knowledge. As students listen to podcasts, their learning becomes more thrilling and expands outside their classroom.

The portability and adjustment to student needs are two additional major advantages to students listening to podcasts. Unlike a lecture, with this technology, students are able to learn at the rate that they desire; they can listen alone, with others, and as many times as they need. (Piecka et al., 2008). Students are able to take their learning wherever they are, as long as they have a device that can play a podcast. “Podcasts are a form of personalized learning that can be tailored to learners’ individual needs and extend learning beyond the classroom” (Phillips, 2017, p. 159). To be accessible to students who are deaf and hard of hearing, transcripts can be provided. All students may benefit from reading along with a transcript while they listen.

Along with this accessibility, hearing stories and content through this medium nurtures students’ listening skills. In her book, Kate Murphy (2021) the author of *You're Not Listening: What You're Missing and Why It Matters* states that listening habits degrade as time goes on if one does not utilize them with intentional hearing. She claims that “[if] you start listening to everyone as you would scan headlines on a celebrity gossip website, you won’t discover the poetry and wisdom that is within people” (2019, p. 20). While Murphy is relating this notion to conversations with people, in the same way, this point can be integrated into students listening to people sharing on a podcast; the act of listening can be regarded as a gateway to new ideas (DeMarco, 2022). Murphy (2021) further explains, “To really listen is to be moved physically, chemically, emotionally, and intellectually by another person’s narrative” (p. 8). This is what it is like to truly hear someone’s thoughts through a podcast. Murphy goes on to describe listening:

A lot of listening has to do with how you respond- the degree to which you elicit clear expression of another person's thoughts and, in the process, crystallize your own. Done well and with deliberation, listening can transform your understanding of the people and

the world around you, which inevitably enriches and elevates your experience and existence. It is how you develop wisdom and form meaningful relationships. (p. 9)

Similarly, podcast listeners' thoughts are transformed as they process and experience others' perspectives and culture, enhancing the person's life and the lens through which they view the world. The real value of teaching how to listen is in the way the audience considers other outlooks and through that experience develops empathy.

Creating

Listening to podcasts in essence is similar to educational instruction; however, the real power comes when the student is entrusted to take technology and show what they have learned through podcasting. Then, this learning can be shared with their classmates, school, community, and beyond to provide an impact that goes further than just themselves (Sprague & Pixley, 2008). This supplies meaning to students' work and connects them to the world outside of their class and school, with potential for community and global impact. When the tools to show one's learning through podcasting are placed into student's hands, they are taking ownership of their education. Sprague & Pixley (2008) claim, "Although it is too soon to know the full impact of this emerging technology, teachers who have embraced podcasts are seeing students actively involved in their own learning." Warlick (2005) remarks that allowing a student to act as a teacher while creating an episode generates a new outlet for students to be better learners. Having students teach their peers what they are learning requires them to take in what they have learned and transform and apply that information in a way that makes sense to them. They have to take ownership of what they have learned which involves deeper thinking than simply taking in information. Podcasting has often been used in classrooms to encourage students to take action in their own learning and to help supplement it with more understanding of the content.

Piecka et al., (2008) show how this medium can be used in science for students to teach themselves and others as they analyze and present knowledge. In this classroom, students participated in learning about computers and science. As they gained information, they listened to and reviewed podcasts that supplemented their learning. The students wrote scripts and practiced producing small-scale podcasts. As students created their final episodes, they revised their scripts and storyboards, conducted interviews, and documented their research. Lastly, these students shared their created audio with their fellow students and posted them online (Piecka et al., 2008). These students were able to take control of their education as they collaborated with their peers and shared their understanding with an audience inside and outside of their classroom.

In addition to students taking personal action in their learning, they can be more motivated to engage with a topic when podcasting. This technology can increase student engagement and motivation as it is a new educational tool (Phillips, 2017). In his article, Cain (2020) observed Mr. Hankins, a middle school social studies teacher, as he had students create their own studycasts (podcasts to help with studying for an exam) of narratives that reflect learned content. For example, these studycasts frequently consisted of stories based in the geographical area the teacher was covering in that unit. As students created, Mr. Hankins noted that students seemed “animated, enthusiastic, and focused” (Cain, 2020, para. 18). He also observed that these studycasts motivated students to learn history as they appealed to various interests and creativity (Cain, 2020). Overall, “these student-led, technology-enhanced activities offered multiple avenues for student engagement, and they promoted either intrinsic or extrinsic interest based on individual students’ task interests” (Cain, 2020, para. 24). Through Mr. Hawkins's use of podcasting, students were drastically more excited to learn about history as they reframed the content into stories where they applied their learning.

Educators are consistently seeking to incorporate diversity in their classrooms. With podcasting students are easily able to participate in cross-cultural experiences as they can interview someone with a different background to learn more about another culture. Podcast Bangladesh is an example of an opportunity podcasting has for students to reflect on their learning and connect with others (Piecka et al., 2008). This project enabled students to discuss and collaborate on global topics and issues, in addition to interviewing others and sharing thoughts on digital storytelling (Piecka et al., 2008). Piecka et al. summarize that this cross-cultural collaboration involves students engaging in content in an exciting way, using technology, learning with their comrades, and seeing other perspectives.

Producing this medium has also been seen to support the development of student voice. Piecka et al. (2008) claim that spoken words and stories, fundamental to communication, hold meaning unlike email. They state that storytelling is more believable than other means of communication (Piecka et al., 2008). For trust and dependability to develop, the listener needs to hear meaning through voice to detect authenticity and passion. Voice fills the empty spaces as stories that need to be spoken are expressed aloud. With podcasting, students are able to develop their voice, conveying knowledge and stories to share in their schools and globally (Piecka et al., 2008). Through creating with this technology, students are able to develop their thoughts, values, and opinions, be confident in their voice, and engage with the world. Also, students are able to experiment and be courageous with their voices. In her article, Faughey (2019) describes how she introduced a podcast project to her ninth-grade classroom completing a unit on *Romeo and Juliet*. The instructions included determining what a student found interesting about *Romeo and Juliet* and producing a three to five minute episode that shared their learning with others. Interested in the relationship between Juliet and her parents, one group of students interviewed

teachers and students asking about their relationships with their parents. Faughey (2019) acknowledged that this project gave students opportunities to critically think and collaborate with their community. Faughey identified, “To create podcasts, the students had to be aware of their audience, develop a structure for their content, and create a plan for producing it” (p. 69). As students recognized their audience and built their plan, they practiced real-world skills of carrying out a project in small steps and keeping their audience in mind as they spoke. To start the podcasting process, Faughey first had her students listen to determine key characteristics of the platform. She offered media using a popular band, video game, and YouTuber as models that interested students. She then imitated what the entire recording process should look like by interviewing another teacher, creating an introduction on her phone, and uploading a short clip of a song. Students were provided with a planning sheet that included questions based on prior learning of *Romeo and Juliet*. The planning sheet was given to spur students to identify what interested them about this literary work. Lastly, she provided roles for students who chose to work in groups, and they created their podcasts (Faughey, 2019).

Through this process, Faughey (2019) noted that the students valued the chance to engage with people beyond their classroom and “cross some of the borders that so often define our learning experiences” (p. 72). She also noted that students were more expressive and animated in their communication when their voices were recognized as valuable and when they were given an opportunity to talk about their interests (Faughey, 2019). One of the most important findings was how podcasting provides an outlet for students to practice the skills they are gaining in the classroom. While creating, students are learning and applying real-life abilities including research, communication, and collaboration. Even with students who dislike writing or feel deficient in their writing skills, podcasting creates a student-centered project for them to practice

writing in a creative and engaging way (Faughey, 2019). Through a podcast project like Faughey's, students are able to cultivate their voices and communicate with a larger community.

Another educator who developed student skills through podcasting was music teacher Benjamin Bolden. In his music classroom, Bolden (2013) expressed that this medium has a huge potential as a platform for building, experimenting, and sharing musical understanding and meaning. In the following, Bolden (2013) states the numerous ways a podcast may be beneficial when learning and exploring music:

Student-generated podcasts might serve to demonstrate a student's own singing or playing, along with reflective commentary; collect together and present analysis of various performances of musical repertoire; examine the life, times, and work of a particular composer or performer; feature music that represents the student's cultural background; or present an interview with a musician, interspersed with appropriate musical recordings. (para. 8)

With these opportunities, podcasting extends the skills a student gains and practices. In Bolden's project, students were instructed to explore their personal understanding of music and describe its role in their lives. Students were required to produce a three to five minute podcast showcasing music that has significantly impacted them along with a description of their relationship with music throughout their lives (Bolden, 2013). Through this creative assignment, students were able to practice writing and using technology and editing software. This process allowed for the incorporation of actual music where writing could not (Bolden, 2013). Students were able to take their understanding of music and relate it to their lives, showing true learning.

From developing life-long skills to obtaining intrinsic motivation, the benefits of listening to and producing podcasts are available for students and teachers to utilize. While listening, other

perspectives are seen and empathy is developed as listeners understand different backgrounds. Students obtain a gateway to new thoughts and ideas as they listen. When creating podcasts, students are able to take part in a hands-on, creative action to research and exercise skills. Opportunities for global impact, experimentation, and engagement with learning are obtainable to those who participate in podcasting.

Conclusion

From the first introduction of podcasting in 2004 until the present day, this versatile medium has impacted its audiences with its diverse genres, topics, and formats. By informing and entertaining the public, podcasts have shaped the listening game. Hosts and listeners are able to connect on specific topics all around the world and at any time. This technology opens the gate to new worlds, ideas, and perspectives. In the classroom setting, when teachers have implemented podcast listening and creating, students have been more motivated, engaged, and creative with content. Students have also been able to cross borders as they communicate with people outside of their classrooms to gain insights from other cultures and lifestyles. This platform has had a noteworthy influence on media assimilation, communication, and education, contributing various benefits for both listeners and creators.

Methodology

This research seeks to determine whether teachers and students preparing to become teachers are open to implementing podcasting into their teaching methods. This study focuses on the advantages, disadvantages, and skills gained from this medium. The methodology of this research included a fourteen-question survey extended to teachers in public and private school settings and students who are majoring in education at Southeastern University. The survey was researcher-created to allow for specific questions regarding personal and educational podcast use. Using Google Forms as the data collection platform, the survey will best allow the research to be collected as anonymous participants can answer more candidly with real insight as they are currently participating in the field of education.

This study sought to determine how teachers view using podcasting in their classrooms. After receiving Institutional Review Board approval on April 6, 2023, participants were recruited through emails from the Honors College, education professors, and teachers in the surrounding community. The participants were all sent a link to participate in a fourteen-question survey through Google Forms. The education major students' and teachers' participation was voluntary. The participants were given an informed consent waiver which requires them to consent to take part and agree that they are either a teacher or student majoring in education. This survey completion time was about ten minutes.

Preserving anonymity and confidentiality throughout the survey was kept as the survey does not ask identifiable questions that may be traced back to any of the participants. Furthermore, the data will be stored on a password-protected laptop for one year before being deleted.

After agreeing to the informed consent waiver, a participant would be taken to several demographic questions on age, gender, and occupation or year of college, followed by an inquiry about personal and classroom podcast use. The inquiry also consisted of willingness to implement this medium in their classrooms. Participants were given two example scenarios of possible assignments using podcasts in the classroom and asked to note the advantages, disadvantages, and opinions of using this medium. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, and the responses will be outlined in the next section; in addition, a list of the survey questions can be found in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the degree to which educators perceive their intent to implement podcasting as a pedagogical option. An additional focus of the thesis was to ascertain educator perceptions of podcasting and its benefits and flaws in the classroom setting. A quantitative, non-experimental research design was used to address the thesis study's topic. The specific research methodology used in the thesis study was a survey research approach. Five research questions were formally stated to address the purpose of the Honors Thesis. Descriptive and Inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze thesis data.

Preliminary Findings: Descriptive Statistics

The study's demographic information was evaluated using descriptive statistical techniques. The study's demographic information was specifically analyzed using the descriptive statistical techniques of frequencies (n) and percentages (%).

Table 1 contains a summary of findings for the Honors Thesis demographic variables of study participant gender, age category, and professional status (teacher or teacher in training) (See Appendix B). Figure 1 shows a summary of participants' podcast listening frequency (See Appendix B).

Table 2 contains a summary of finding for thesis study participant perceptions of podcast frequency, podcast PD, the impact of the podcast, and podcast usage in the classroom (See Appendix C).

Findings by Research Question

Five research questions were formally posed to address this topic. The probability level of $p < .05$ was identified for use as the threshold value for findings achieved in the research questions to be considered statistically significant. The following represents the findings

achieved in the study by research question posed:

Research Question #1

To what degree did thesis study participants perceive themselves as using podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms?

The statistical significance of the thesis study participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms was addressed using the one sample t test. As a result, the finding for participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms was statistically significant ($t_{(37)} = 2.12; p = .04$). The magnitude of effect for participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classroom was considered between small and medium at $d = .34$). Table 3 contains a summary of finding for honors thesis study participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms (See Appendix D).

Research Question #2

To what degree did thesis study participants classified as teachers and teachers in training differ from perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms?

The statistical significance of the thesis study participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by status of participant was addressed using the t test of Independent Means. As a result, the finding for participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms favoring participants classified as teachers in training was non-statistically significant ($t_{(36)} = 0.50; p = .62$). The magnitude of effect for participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classroom favoring participants classified as teachers in training was considered small at $d = .16$). Table 4 contains a summary of finding for honors thesis study

participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by professional status of honors thesis study participant (See Appendix E).

Research Question #3

To what degree did thesis study participants differ in perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by gender of participant?

The statistical significance of the thesis study participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by gender of participant was addressed using the t test of Independent Means. As a result, the finding for participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms favoring male participants was non-statistically significant ($t_{(35)} = 1.58; p = .12$). The magnitude of effect for participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classroom favoring male participants was considered large at $d = .86$. Table 5 contains a summary of finding for honors thesis study participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by gender of honors thesis study participant (See Appendix F).

Research Question #4

To what degree did thesis study participants differ in perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by age category of participant?

The statistical significance of the thesis study participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by age category of participant was addressed using the t test of Independent Means. As a result, the finding for participant mean score perceptions of intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms favoring male participants was non-statistically significant ($t_{(35)} = 0.43; p = .67$). The magnitude of effect

for participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classroom favoring participants in the age category of “25 & younger” was considered small at $d = .14$).

Table 6 contains a summary of finding for honors thesis study participant perceptions of their intent to use podcasts as a pedagogic option in their classrooms by age category of honors thesis study participant (See Appendix G).

Research Question #5

Will Honors Thesis study participant willingness to engage in podcast PD predict their subsequent use of podcasts in the classroom?

Simple linear regression was used to assess the predictive ability of participant willingness to engage in PD for their subsequent intent to use podcasts in the classroom. The predictive model was statistically significant, ($F(1,32) = 13.60, p < .001, R^2 = .30$), indicating that 29.82% of the variance in participant intent to use podcasts in the classroom is explainable by their willingness to engage in podcast PD. The “Yes” category of participant engagement in PD was statistically significantly predictive of their intent to use podcasts in the classroom ($B = 1.37, t_{(32)} = 3.69, p < .001$), indicating that moving from the “No” to “Yes” category of willingness to engage in podcast PD will increase the mean value of their intent to use podcasts in the classroom by 1.37 units on average. Table 7 contains a summary of findings for Honors Thesis study participant willingness to engage in PD for predicting their intent to use podcasts in the classroom (See Appendix H).

Open-Ended Questions

Podcast Impact

The question “If you listen to podcasts, how has listening to them impacted your life?” was posed to the participants. The majority of participants answered that they listened to

podcasts to learn new information, hear current events, and see new perspectives. One participant noted, “I am able to learn about others' perspectives in a way that's almost conversational. I like listening to podcasts about religion and social issues.” Multiple participants also stated that they listened to podcasts as background noise while completing another task, for entertainment, and for self-help or motivation.

Technology

When asked about their favorite use of technology in the classroom, participants' answers varied. Responses included using Canva, Nearpod, gamification, laptops, Smartboards, Kahoot, videos, Powerpoints, and iPads.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Podcasting

The participants were given two scenario assignments before they were asked about the benefits and drawbacks of using podcasts in their classrooms. The majority of participants responded that this technology engaged students in a topic. Many participants also responded that podcasts improved students' listening and writing skills and fostered collaboration. When asked about obstacles, participants answered that students would become bored, disengaged, or distracted. They also responded that acquiring the technology to use and knowing how to use it would be an obstacle.

Other perceptions

When asked about any other perceptions of podcast use in their classrooms, the participants noted that they liked the creative element, the opportunity to practice writing skills, and the chance for collaboration. One response noted, “I think it will promote students to have their own voice in the classroom. Not only that, it will build communication and writing skills while increasing engagement on the topic of study.” Other responses mentioned that it requires

the student to become the teacher as they have to have a deeper understanding of the knowledge before they can talk about it and teach it to others. Some participants had hesitations about student behaviors that might arise from boredom or distraction; however, other teachers mentioned that they may simply need to implement clear structure and guidance for it to run smoothly. Lastly, teachers expressed that they loved its creativity and ability to address several learning styles.

Podcast use

When asked “How have you used podcasts and/or students creating podcasts in your classroom?”, the majority of participants responded that they have not used podcasts in any capacity. However, one responded that they have given students the option to create a podcast as a presentation option. Another respondent answered they allowed their gifted students to present a book report in a podcast format.

Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to determine whether educators are ready to implement podcasting in their classrooms. In addition, this research sought to find teachers' and students preparing to become teachers' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of using podcasting. The demographic data expressed those who participated in the survey were ages 19 to 63. 42% of the participants were education majors at Southeastern University and 58% of the participants were current teachers in the surrounding areas. Of the education majors who participated in this survey, 12% were freshmen, 19% were sophomores, 31% were juniors, and 38% were seniors.

Findings

The findings of the study correlate with the findings of other studies conducted using podcasting in classrooms. From the survey data, this medium is seen to be beneficial in engaging students in topics, developing writing and listening skills, and encouraging collaboration. Although educators noted worries about student boredom, confusion, and distraction; this could be aided with clear guidelines and procedures and incorporating student interest. Even though many teachers do not currently use podcasting in their classrooms, many noted that this technology would allow students to be creative, motivated, and engaged, especially if they were provided with PD opportunities. The relationship between teachers' willingness to take PD to learn how to implement podcasting and teachers' likelihood to incorporate podcasting into their pedagogy led to a novel discovery.

Limitations

One limitation of this study was its small sample size. This survey had thirty-eight responses from teachers and college students preparing to be teachers. Although the study had participants of a range of different ages, this survey was only sent to teachers and education

majors in the surrounding area. Therefore, the findings are not representative of teachers outside Lakeland, Florida, and college students outside of Southeastern University. Additionally, the small sample size resulted in some non-statistically significant results of the data analysis.

Future Studies

Considering the limitations, conducting a study with a larger, more diverse population would allow for additional opportunities for significant results. With the statistically significant finding that educators who are willing to participate in podcast PD are more likely to implement podcasting, further research could be conducted on incorporating PD in schools. Educators, administrators, and curriculum coordinators' use of PD, specifically podcasting could be analyzed. Another area of future research would be to look at the relationship between teacher age and willingness to implement new technologies such as podcasting into their classrooms. Common perceptions of podcasting with older generation versus younger generation educators could be evaluated. Lastly, further studies could evaluate how student voice is being developed in the classroom, exploring whether podcasting is one of the best ways to advance student voice. Student perception of whether their voice, thoughts, and ideas have been developed throughout their education could be investigated.

Summary

In conclusion, from the findings, podcasting clearly builds real-world skills, excites students, and makes school-wide and global connections. Teachers, administrators, and schools can harness the power of this medium to equip and educate students. Although this study encompasses limitations and a few insignificant findings, giving educators opportunities for podcasting PD to promote podcast use is statistically significant. With PD, educators may be

ready to include this technology within their pedagogies. As a ticket to innovative and diverse instruction, podcasting is a dynamic instrument in the educational toolbox.

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Appendix A

Survey Questions:

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. Are you a current teacher or a current student majoring in education?
4. If you are a student, what year are you? Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior, N/A I am not a student
5. How often do you listen to podcasts? (Podcasts are audio episodes that often have hosts that conduct discussions, interviews, or tell stories on a particular topic.)
Every day, once a week, once a month, a few times a year, or never
6. If you listen to podcasts, how has listening to them impacted your life?
7. What is your favorite use of technology in your classroom?

Below are two example assignments using podcasts/podcasting that a teacher could use in their classroom:

- A middle school English teacher assembles their class into 4 groups of 5 students. The students are producing a podcast about a poet of their choosing during a unit on poetry. Student roles in the podcasting process would include scriptwriters, speakers, and editors. In the podcast, the students would give a biography of their chosen poet. Each group would be able to produce their podcast in their unique style and in an interview, conversational, or storytelling format.
- In an elementary classroom, students will write or draw on a worksheet while they listen to a podcast. This will be during a unit on space for a listening center while students are rotating through their literary centers. Students will listen to a podcast on NASA and

space exploration, and students will be taking note of the main points of the podcast.

Before the centers, students would have learned about space, stars, and astronauts.

8. Based on the two example assignments, what benefits do you see in incorporating podcasts into your classroom? (check all that apply)
 - Improves students' listening skills
 - Develops students' voice
 - Engages students in the topic
 - Motivates students to learn more about the topic
 - Develops real-life skills
 - Improves students' communication skills
 - Improves students' writing skills
 - Is accessible to many students
 - Can be individualized to different students
 - Fosters collaboration
 - Other
9. Based on the example assignments, what obstacles do you see in incorporating podcasts into your classroom?
10. What are your thoughts on students creating their own podcasts within your class?
11. How have you used podcasts and/or students creating podcasts in your classroom?
12. If you have had your class (as a whole group or individually) listen to podcasts, how did that add to the learning experience for your students?

13. If you have not used podcasting in your classroom, would you be willing to take professional development to learn how to use podcasting in your classroom? Yes, No, or N/A I have already used podcasting
14. How likely are you to incorporate podcasting into your pedagogy? (Pedagogy means the methods and practices a teacher uses when giving instruction) Likert scale of 1-5 (Definitely, probably, possibly, probably not, or definitely not)

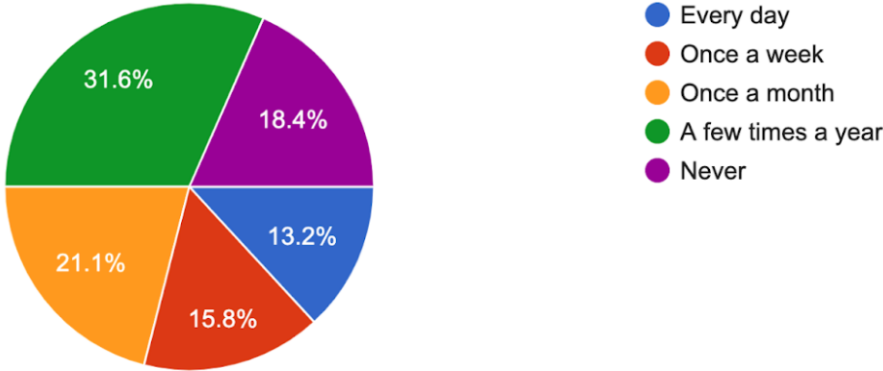
Appendix B**Table 1**

Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Demographic Variables (Gender; Age Category & Professional Status)

Demographic Variable	<i>n</i>	%	Cumulative %
Gender			
Female	32	84.21	84.21
Male	5	13.16	97.37
Missing	1	2.63	100.00
Age Category			
25 & Younger	19	50.00	50.00
26 & Older	18	47.37	97.37
Missing	1	2.63	100.00
Professional Status			
Teacher in Training	16	42.11	42.11
Teacher	22	57.89	100.00
Missing	0	0.00	100.00

Figure 1

Frequency of podcast listening



Appendix C

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Frequency of Podcast Listening; Willingness for Podcast PD; Impact of Podcasts; & Podcast use in Class)

Response Variable	<i>n</i>	%	Cumulative %
Podcast Listening			
Never	7	18.42	18.42
A few times per year	12	31.58	50.00
A few times per month	8	21.05	71.05
A few times per week	6	15.79	86.84
Every day	5	13.16	100.00
Missing	0	0.00	100.00
PD for Podcasting			
No	6	15.79	15.79
Yes	28	73.68	89.47
Missing	4	10.53	100.00
Podcast Impact			
Minimal or no impact	6	15.79	15.79
Positive impact	23	60.53	76.32
Missing	9	23.68	100.00
Podcast Use in Class			
No	27	71.05	71.05
Yes	4	10.53	81.58
Missing	7	18.42	100.00

Appendix D**Table 3***Summary Table: Evaluating the Degree of Participant Intent to use Podcasts in the Classroom*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	μ	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Intent to use Podcasts	3.34	0.99	3	2.12	.04*	0.34

Note. Degrees of Freedom for the *t*-statistic = 37. *d* represents Cohen's *d*. **p* < .05

Appendix E**Table 4**

Summary Table: Comparison of Perceptions of Intent to Podcasts in the Classroom by Status of Honors Thesis Participant

Variable	Teacher Prep			Teacher			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>			
Intent to use Podcasts	3.44	1.21	16	3.27	0.83	22	0.50	.62	0.16

Note. N = 38. Degrees of Freedom for the *t*-statistic = 36. *d* represents Cohen's *d*.

Appendix F

Table 5

Summary Table: Comparison of Perceptions of Intent to Use Podcasts in the Classroom by Gender of Honors Thesis Participant

Variable	Female			Male			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>			
Intent to use Podcasts	3.2	1.0	3	4.0	0.7	5	1.58	.12	0.86
	5	2	2	0	1				

Note. N = 37. Degrees of Freedom for the *t*-statistic = 35. *d* represents Cohen's *d*.

Appendix G

Table 6

Summary Table: Comparison of Perceptions of Use of Podcasts in the Classroom by Age Category of Honors Thesis Participant

Variable	25 & Younger			26 & Older			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>			
Intent to use Podcasts	3.4	1.1	1	3.2	0.8	1	0.43	.67	0.14
	2	2	9	8	9	8			

Note. N = 37. Degrees of Freedom for the *t*-statistic = 35. *d* represents Cohen's *d*.

Appendix H**Table 7**

*Predictive Model Summary: Willingness to Engage in Podcast PD
Predicting Participant Intent to Use of Podcasts in the Classroom*

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95.00% CI	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	2.17	0.34	[1.48, 2.85]	0.00	6.43	< .001
Podcast PD (Yes)	1.37	0.37	[0.61, 2.13]	0.55	3.69	< .001