

Enhancing English Oral Skills Through Student-Created Podcasts: An innovative teaching proposal addressed to 6th graders in Primary Education

Natalia Cabrero Sancho

ncabrerros@uoc.edu

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Tutor/Supervisor: Sonia Mas Alcolea

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A mi tío Pablo— como todo— siempre

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Abstract

This Final Master's Thesis focuses on the creation of podcasts by Primary Education students as a means of developing oral skills and integrating technology into the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Developing oral skills is crucial for language learning, but it can be challenging, especially for younger learners. The development of essential communication skills is impeded by the constraints of classroom time, occasional student demotivation, and a lack of confidence in expressing themselves orally.

This project emphasizes collaboration among peers and leverages technology to not only improve oral proficiency but also contribute to the development of digital literacy. The process of creating a podcast encourages students to review previously covered content while honing their oral expression skills and immersing themselves in the use of digital tools. Simultaneously, the project follows a Project-Based Learning approach, targeting a group of sixth-grade students.

By integrating language learning, collaborative work, and technology, this proposal aims to empower students to actively participate in their learning process. Through creating podcasts, students can engage in meaningful language practice, building confidence and proficiency in oral communication while concurrently developing valuable digital competencies. Consequently, this study explores the outcomes and implications of incorporating podcast creation into language education, shedding light on its potential as a pedagogical tool for oral skill development and digital literacy enhancement.

Key words: Podcast, Oral expression, technology, EFL, Project-Based Learning

Resumen

Este Trabajo de Fin de Máster se centra en la creación de podcasts por parte de los alumnos de Educación Primaria como medio para desarrollar las destrezas orales e integrar la tecnología en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE). El desarrollo de las destrezas orales es crucial para el aprendizaje de idiomas, pero puede suponer un reto, especialmente para los alumnos más jóvenes. El desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas esenciales se ve obstaculizado por las limitaciones de tiempo en el aula, la desmotivación ocasional de los alumnos y la falta de confianza a la hora de expresarse oralmente.

El proyecto hace hincapié en la colaboración entre compañeros y aprovecha la tecnología no sólo para mejorar la competencia oral, sino también para contribuir al desarrollo de la alfabetización digital. El proceso de creación de un podcast anima a los alumnos a repasar contenidos previamente tratados mientras perfeccionan sus habilidades de expresión oral y se sumergen en el uso de herramientas digitales. Simultáneamente, el proyecto sigue un enfoque de aprendizaje basado en proyectos, dirigido a un grupo de alumnos de sexto curso.

Al integrar el aprendizaje de idiomas, el trabajo colaborativo y la tecnología, esta iniciativa pretende capacitar a los alumnos para que participen activamente en su proceso de aprendizaje. A través de la creación de podcasts, los estudiantes pueden participar en la práctica significativa del lenguaje, la construcción de la confianza y el dominio de la comunicación oral, mientras que al mismo tiempo el desarrollo de valiosas competencias digitales. En consecuencia, este estudio explora los resultados y las implicaciones de la incorporación de la creación de podcasts en la enseñanza de idiomas, arrojando luz sobre su potencial como herramienta pedagógica para el desarrollo de habilidades orales y la mejora de la alfabetización digital.

Palabras clave: Podcast, Expresión oral, Tecnología, ILE, Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos

INTRODUCTION

Orality is at the heart of communication, and in the digital age, podcasts serve as a bridge between oral tradition and technology. As a well-known saying goes 'Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn'. This paper explores how the creation of podcasts can engage students, enhance their oral skills, and transform the classroom into a space of active and dynamic learning.

The need for innovative teaching approaches that combine traditional language learning with digital literacy, collaborative working and resourcefulness is paramount for language learning in the twenty-first century. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL hereafter) learning, language acquisition and oral communication skills are central to modern education. This project presents an innovative teaching proposal that involves the use of student-generated podcasts to develop oral English skills, focusing mainly on expression. According to Rosell-Aguilar (2007) the term *podcast* is a fusion of *iPod*, a prominent portable media player, and *broadcast*. However, the inclusion of the stem *pod-* can be somewhat misleading as podcasts are typically in the mp3 format, which can be played on various portable media players, computers, and stereo systems, not limited to the iPod. Nevertheless, technology has evolved but the concept keeps the same: according to Oxford dictionary (2023) a podcast is “a digital audio file that can be taken from the internet and played on a computer or a device that you can carry with you”.

This proposal has been developed for a group of 20 students in the 6th year of an elementary school who are learning EFL. They have an A2 level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The primary purpose of our project is to boost students' motivation and engagement in performing orally by enabling them to create their own English podcasts. We seek to actively promote and strengthen oral skills as a key component of our commitment to reinforcing the communicative approach to foreign language learning, emphasising the essential need for students to develop their speaking competences. This brief provides a justification for the importance of the initiative and outlines its various aspects, such as its social, educational, and theoretical value, as well as its potential effects on foreign language teaching and learning. To implement this approach, the last term of the course will be dedicated to a Project-Based learning model. The project—which will be explained in more detail later—will take place over a period of ten weeks in the third term, with a weekly session scheduled

specifically for Fridays. Students will work in groups, under the guidance of the teacher and the language assistant, to develop a series of podcasts that explore content covered earlier in the academic year. This approach not only deepens their understanding of previously studied material, but also promotes collaborative learning.

Justification

In our interconnected modern world, proficiency in the English language is imperative for effective communication and participation across diverse social, academic, and professional contexts. Language acquisition stands as a necessary aspect of education, with the ability to comprehend and articulate thoughts in a foreign language assuming vital importance. Aligned with educational objectives, this proposal aims to enrich oral proficiency among primary students while advocating for a holistic educational approach. The emphasis on oral skills in EFL education is a pivotal rationale for achieving a well-balanced language proficiency.

From my modest experience, I have observed that conventional EFL classrooms often disproportionately prioritize written language and reading, potentially leading to imbalances in language mastery. Consequently, true proficiency in any language demands the capability to engage in spontaneous dialogues, express thoughts clearly, and comprehend spoken language in various settings. The oversight of oral skills in the EFL classroom considerably restricts students' capacity to attain genuine communicative competence. Halliday (1993) observed that our society is characterized as "literate," with a considerable segment acquiring reading and writing skills through formal education. However, facilitating children's oral language development necessitates providing opportunities for them to practice at their own pace and rhythm in engaging environments. As advocated by Nunan (2005), effective teaching involves creating communicative situations imbued with genuine meaning.

Increasing attention within the educational community is directed towards the potential of podcasts as a pedagogical tool in EFL classrooms. This proposal responds to the growing interest in integrating digital media and technology into language learning. The creation of podcasts provides a dynamic and authentic pedagogical method for language practice, promoting active engagement with the language, which is a crucial component for EFL students (Sporn & Meehan, 2020). The integration of podcasts into English

language teaching has the potential to cultivate positive attitudes towards learning, foster desirable behaviour, and enhance students' self-efficacy (Sotlikova & Haerazi, 2023).

As an English teacher, I recognize the increasing importance of integrating technology into the classroom to render the learning process more captivating and meaningful, while adapting language teaching methodologies to the demands of the digital age. Nonetheless, understanding students' perceptions and attitudes towards the acceptance and utilization of technology is a necessary initial step for the successful implementation of educational projects involving technology (García et al., 2018). The proposed project has the potential to contribute significantly to the theoretical and practical aspects of integrating language learning with technology by encouraging creativity and collaborative work among students. Its practical relevance lies in addressing the need for students to develop not only oral skills but also digital competence, essential for 21st-century competitiveness.

Project-Based Learning encourages students to actively engage with the material, which promotes a deeper understanding of the topics. Also, by working together in groups, students not only share their individual insights, but also learn to appreciate different perspectives, contributing to a richer and more holistic learning experience (Almulla, 2020; Bell, 2010). This project aims to achieve two objectives: to maintain the delivery of course content (That is to say, it should not hinder the progression of the didactic planning) and to engage students in a parallel practical undertaking. The intention is to keep students engaged in the subject matter by infusing the learning experience with practical, hands-on application. The project's design focuses on creating a tangible product, and the expected outcomes are aligned with this goal. This element provides an incentive for students, giving them a sense of accomplishment beyond the classroom. The tangible result is expected to not only maintain but also increase student interest and motivation in the subject. The project aims to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, providing a meaningful and engaging educational experience for students. Additionally, the creation of podcasts provides a valuable opportunity for students to apply their knowledge in a real-world context. It involves using a range of digital tools, enabling students to develop and enhance their digital skills. This process provides practical experience in selecting suitable technologies, recording, and editing audio, and presenting information in a clear and engaging manner.

By involving students in creating their own English language podcasts, this initiative responds to the demand for more interactive and student-centred language learning methods. A study at Duke University (Kim, 2011) highlighted several benefits of podcasting, including its effectiveness in supporting essential aspects of the curriculum, such as foreign language learning. Additionally, this technique has expanded the use of multimedia production tasks across various subjects, leading to increased student involvement and superior academic achievements. Furthermore, the collaborative creation of audio educational materials supports students in shaping their understanding of academic content as they interact with peers, develop social perspectives, and negotiate meaning. These critical aspects, when employed in generating student-generated podcasts, serve to motivate and empower students (ibid, 2011).

The project's pedagogical application focuses on incorporating student-produced podcasts into the EFL syllabus. The process is well-structured and includes identifying curriculum-aligned topics, researching, and collecting information, planning, and script writing, collaborating with peers for feedback, as well as incorporating technology. The use of technology is essential for creating effective podcasts. Tools such as Google Docs for collaborative script development, Audacity for recording and editing, and Canva for design contribute to a more engaging and educational podcasting experience.

This dissertation seeks to integrate traditional language learning with technology, creativity, and collaboration to develop language skills, key literacies, and digital content creation skills. The student-centred approach aims to prepare students for effective communication and success in a digital and collaborative environment. It responds to evolving educational conditions and contributes to the foreign language education sector by demonstrating the potential of student-generated content.

Our proposal aims to address the challenge of insufficient oral practice as a result of limited opportunities for oral engagement due to students' lack of motivation and of opportunities of interaction, and a key aspect of our proposal is to present the project as a dynamic concept. Our approach is based on the use of technology to engage students in interactive projects that increase their interest in oral communication. We emphasize student autonomy to enhance their sense of competence, with the aim of cultivating a positive shift in their willingness to participate in oral activities.

The evaluation of this project will be conducted comprehensively, involving both the teacher and classmates. The active participation and attentiveness of peers play a pivotal role in the assessment, aligning with Mayor's perspective (1994). Students are expected not only to be recipients but also contributors to the evaluation process, as emphasized by Patri (2002), highlighting the instrumental role of peer feedback in enhancing oral skills. The use of tools such as rubrics and other peer assessment methods, as underscored by Thomas et al. (2011), is deemed essential. This approach aims to ensure that students do not solely rely on teacher feedback, fostering a more holistic and collaborative focus on the continuous improvement of their oral abilities. In summary, this work explores an innovative pedagogical approach - the integration of student-produced podcasts into the EFL curriculum - to improve oral proficiency in English. The proposal aims to address the imbalance in language proficiency and foster true communicative competence by combining language acquisition, digital literacy, collaboration, and creativity for a holistic language learning experience.

The manuscript is structured around five chapters. Chapter 1, 'Theoretical framework', examines the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in language learning, with a particular focus on the transformative potential of podcasts and their impact on students' speaking skills. Chapter 2 describes the " Objectives and research question", which sets the stage for the following chapters by clearly defining the goals and focus of the thesis. Chapter 3, 'Methodology', offers a detailed description of the language learning context, the student profiles, and the rationale for the proposed pedagogical intervention. In the fourth chapter, "The pedagogical application", the practical implementation of the intervention is presented, explaining instruments, procedures, and the integration of technological tools. In chapter 5, 'Evaluation of the intervention', a critical assessment is made of the feasibility of the project, the added value of the selected tools, the strengths, weaknesses, and anticipated challenges, and finally the overall viability of the proposed intervention. The thesis concludes with a summary and reflections in the 'Conclusions' chapter.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The foundations of this contextual framework are based on a comprehensive review of Information and Communication Technology (ICT hereafter) in language learning. The motivational role of ICT and its benefits to the digital generation are highlighted, recognizing its importance as a tool for meeting the challenges of a globalized world. Next, it focuses on the transformative role of podcasts in language classrooms, emphasising their importance in improving speaking skills and fostering communicative competence. Furthermore, this section discusses the importance of speaking skills in language learning, highlighting the challenges faced by traditional approaches and the role of ICT in overcoming them. Lastly, collaborative, and project-based language learning techniques are explored, demonstrating their beneficial effect on overcoming obstacles and improving speaking ability in a foreign language.

1.1. Information and communication technology (ICT) in language learning

The incorporation of ICT in foreign language education is essential to meet the challenges of a more globalised world (Torresano et al., 2020). Recognising ICT as a motivational and essential tool for language learning offers significant benefits to the digital generation (Abdu, 2018). It is difficult to find young students in today's classrooms who have never been exposed to digital technology. According to Wilkinson (2016), the concept of 'digital natives' by Prensky (2001) emphasises that these learners have grown up in a world where the internet and the World Wide Web are inherent. In addition, digital learning has become more relevant due to the need to maintain education during the COVID-19 pandemic, its adaptability and flexibility, and its ability to prepare students for the future (Chaikovska, 2020). The pedagogical significance of information technology in foreign language learning lies in its ability to create a resourceful learning environment for collaborative or individual language practice. The willingness for e-learning, which is defined as the capability to use multimedia technologies, is critical in enhancing the quality of the learning (Kaur & Abas, 2004, as cited in Rafiee & Abbasian-Naghneh, 2019). The motivational aspects of e-learning are influenced by “extrinsic goal orientation, intrinsic goal orientation, task value, control beliefs, self-efficacy for learning and performance and task anxiety” (Yilmaz, 2017, as cited in Rafiee & Abbasian-Naghneh, 2019, p. 6).

In order to optimise L2 (second language) teaching, it is necessary to increase learners' readiness and acceptance of e-learning and ensure that it is not imposed on those who are

unprepared, thus avoiding potential negative perceptions (Rafiee & Abbasian-Naghneh, 2019). Teachers can use e-learning facilities such as audio, video, text and images to convey information and increase motivation for e-learning (ibid, 2019). At the same time, it is important that the tools and technologies used in language teaching are user-friendly and not overly complex (ibid, 2019). The integration of usable technology into language teaching is essential to develop both language skills and digital literacy. A balanced mix of traditional methods and innovative approaches ensures a complete learning experience that prepares students for the challenges of the modern age.

1.1.1 The use of podcast in improving students' speaking skills

Language teaching has become increasingly reliant on the use of ICT, including podcasts. Barrios and Velásquez (2020) point out the usefulness of ICT in offering flexible learning spaces, enabling time constraints to be overcome and encouraging independent learning. Additionally, the incorporation of podcasts in the learning of English has been shown to be a powerful tool, providing students with authentic materials and enhancing their oral skills (Santiago, 2016; Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013; Alfa, 2020).

As highlighted by Phillips (2017), podcasting is increasingly emerging as a potential tool for fostering classroom interaction and collaborative learning. In the digital age, where traditional constraints such as limited class time and large group sizes hinder language production skills, technology-enhanced, learner-centred environments provide avenues for self-directed, independent learning (ibid, 2017). Also, the creation of podcasts encourages the transferable skills that are key in the contemporary professional world and increases students' creativity and their digital literacy (ibid, 2017).

Hamzaoglu and Koçoğlu (2016) further emphasize the role of podcasts in reducing speaking anxiety. They note that among various computer-mediated communication tools, podcasts allow students to practice speaking in a low-pressure environment, receive immediate feedback, and have control over their learning, which can decrease anxiety when speaking in a foreign language. In line with these findings, Shafiee and Salehi (2019) argue that podcasting can serve as a valuable tool both in and out of the classroom to develop a variety of language skills, in particular listening and speaking.

It is convenient to highlight the findings of Álvarez (as cited in Navarrete, 2018) who, in his study on podcasting for language learning, observed that students mainly improve

articulation and pronunciation rather than fluency. In terms of the importance of ICT in language education, Alkamel and Chouthaiwale (2018) stress its impact on the quality and quantity of the teaching-learning process. According to UNESCO's broader definition, ICT encompasses diverse technological tools used to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information and plays a pivotal role in both formal and non-formal education settings (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018). In addition, ICT positively influences students' attitudes towards language learning by providing authentic interactions and diverse learning resources such as images, animations, audio, and video clips, thus providing a more engaging and dynamic learning experience (ibid, 2018).

In today's globalised world, proficiency in English is essential for effective communication in the global community (Bustari et al., 2017). However, the traditional approach to teaching English, which focuses primarily on grammar and vocabulary, has often neglected the development of essential oral skills such as speaking and listening. A lack of exposure to the foreign language outside the classroom may lead to a loss of confidence and heightened anxiety among learners (Fox, 2008). ICT is a field in which computers and the Internet have a central role to play in addressing these challenges. The technological revolution of the last few decades has given learners the opportunity to access a wide range of resources, in and beyond the classroom, thus fostering a more integrated approach to foreign language learning (ibid, 2008). Furthermore, according to a study carried out by Vélez et al. (2015), the impact of ICT on education has been positive, as it has enhanced the participation of students, collaborative work and academic outcomes. In brief, the use of ICT, specifically podcasts, can improve language teaching by addressing traditional challenges, reducing speaking anxiety, and fostering essential language skills. This technological transformation is in line with the demands of a globalised world and emphasises the importance of effective English communication in education.

1.2. Transformative role of podcasts in language pedagogy

Recognised as a transformative and innovative tool for language acquisition, podcasts offer a unique opportunity for the development of communicative competence in English (Torresano et al., 2020). Fernández and Sánchez (2010) describe educational podcasts as carefully designed didactic audio files for pedagogical purposes, thus representing a paradigm change in pedagogical approaches.

Speaking skills, as outlined by Rijnan and Irwan (2020), are at the heart of language acquisition, involving not only an understanding of language features, but also the cognitive ability to process complex language structures and information. This aligns well with the broader aim of language teaching, which emphasises communicative competence as a cornerstone in the classroom.

Also, Alfa (2020) proposes the use of podcasts as an important strategy for improving speaking skills. In this regard, a pioneering study by Yeh et al., (2021) demonstrate the favourable influence of podcast production assignments on speaking proficiency, establishing open channels for collaborative, meaningful and cognitive expression in English. Beyond improving speaking skills, podcast production encourages students to participate in higher-level cognitive processes, transforming them from passive receivers of knowledge to active producers (ibid, 2021).

In fact, also in the tertiary level, podcasts have become dynamic tools for language learning, attracting the interest of teachers and students equally (Phillips, 2017). Encouraging students to actively contribute to the creation of their own podcasts is in line with the constructivist theory of learning proposed by Bolden (2013) and maximises the pedagogical potential. When used as an assessment method, student-generated podcasts stimulate collaborative discourse and enhance socio-cognitive benefits (Mathany & Dodd, 2018). When podcasts are assigned as group projects, students are challenged to move outside their academic and social comfort zones, which promotes collaboration (ibid, 2018).

Integrating podcasts into foreign language learning, as highlighted by Fox (2008), overcomes the limitations of traditional teaching methods, and provides dynamic and engaging learning experiences. Shafiee and Salehi (2019) highlight the distinct advantages of incorporating podcasts for intensive and extensive listening tasks, which significantly contribute to academic achievement, motivation, and overall learning enhancement. The versatility of podcasts allows them to be used for a wide variety of speaking purposes, such as presentations, oral reports, storytelling, debates, and radio dramas, presenting students with a challenging but enriching experience (Hamzaoglu & Koçoğlu, 2016). Further, Nunan (as cited in Bustari et al., 2017) emphasises the central role of speaking as a productive skill in communication. This is supported by Bustari et al. (2017), who examine the use of podcasts to significantly improve students' speaking

skills. The acquisition of a foreign language, as pointed out by Fox (2008), is linked to ongoing practice, highlighting the importance of continued motivation and extensive practice beyond the classroom. The podcast emerges as a valuable tool that fulfils the criteria for effective language learning. It is this intrinsic need to communicate that serves as a powerful motivator for language learning, with podcasts having a pivotal role in creating a true desire to communicate in the target language (ibid, 2008).

In current language education, podcasting is a cutting-edge strategy that promotes communication skills, collaborative learning, and learner autonomy (Loja et al., 2020). Ibid (2020) claim that podcasting in education is an innovative and transferable communication strategy in virtual environments strengthens the adaptability and relevance of podcasts in different learning environments. Furthermore, they facilitate collaborative and self-directed learning, reflecting a paradigmatic change in educational approaches. Recognised for promoting interaction, collaboration, and the acquisition of intercultural skills in foreign language learning, podcasts are a valuable and versatile resource (Diez & Richters, 2020).

Although there is limited research on the effectiveness of podcasts in enhancing pronunciation and speaking skills, their broad potential is acknowledged (ibid, 2020). When students produce podcasts with the guidance of a teacher, they significantly contribute to the improvement of their language learning skills, both expressive and receptive (Chacon et al., 2011). As well as reducing speaking anxiety, the use of podcasts increases enthusiasm and provides an original and interactive platform for learning (ibid, 2011). In fact, the positive correlation suggested by Torresano et al., (2020) between student motivation through the use of podcasts and improved communicative performance in English emphasises the motivational impact of this pedagogical tool.

Overall, podcasting provides a differentiated and multifaceted approach to language learning, helping students at different levels by improving speaking skills, encouraging collaboration and promoting independent learning. The wide variety of applications of podcasts, ranging from student-generated content to innovative speaking exercises, emphasises their value as a dynamic and versatile tool in the language classroom. Podcasts are a significant pedagogical asset, facilitating language acquisition and driving a transformative change in teaching methods that are in line with the growing needs and expectations of today's learners.

1.3. The importance of speaking skills in language learning

English speaking is often considered to be the most difficult language skill for the majority of EFL students in countries where English is not an official or widely used language, such as Spain. Within the Spanish education system, for instance, students rarely have the opportunity to communicate with others in English. Speaking skills are a core aspect of language acquisition. Nunan (2003, as cited in Bustari et al., 2017) characterizes them as productive abilities that entail consistent verbal expressions to convey meaning. Furthermore, Harmer (2001, as cited in Rijnan & Irwan, 2020) stresses the importance of speaking skills, noting that fluency involves not only language knowledge but also the ability to process information.

Oral skills are often overlooked in classrooms for several reasons. The limited time available for teaching often leads teachers to prioritise written communication. Moreover, the fear of public speaking, which is common among young students, can inhibit teachers from emphasising oral communication skills. The fear of public speaking may result in a preference for written work, where students feel more comfortable expressing themselves without the pressure of oral communication. However, this can lead to a continuous neglect that hinders the development of essential oral communication skills in the learning environment.

Building upon this foundation, the prime objective of language instruction is defined as communicative competence, which includes a range of proficiencies such as expressing ideas, conversing fluently, and making optimal use of digital tools (ibid, 2020; Macias & Cedeño, 2023). Podcasts have emerged as a valuable and innovative approach to enhance the speaking skills of students (Bustari et al., 2017). Learner-generated podcasts provide an engaging means of content interaction that significantly contributes to the development of meaningful knowledge, surpassing tradition academic practices (Bolden, 2013). Additionally, by distributing these podcasts amongst their peers, scholars can exhibit their work, ultimately enhancing the entire educational encounter (ibid, 2013). Jana and Iveta (2019) propose that learners can enhance their listening comprehension by taking advantage of pre-existing podcasts or, in turn, produce their own podcasts for the purpose of actively practising and improving their speaking skills.

Notably, podcasts assume a notable role in collaborative settings in improving students' motivation, attitudes towards the classroom, and overall proficiency in both listening and

speaking (Grisales & García, 2017). Collaborative work, as highlighted by Vygotsky (1978), fosters confidence-building through group tasks. Grisales and García's (2017) research discovered that students who created podcasts, not only gained confidence but also improved pronunciation and self-regulated their linguistic processes.

The literature widely acknowledges the interactive nature of podcasts, which reduces speaking anxiety and boosts motivation (Chacon et al., 2011). Similarly, Diez and Richters (2020) note that podcasts are a potent tool for enhancing speaking skills in the foreign language classroom. In addressing the challenges of developing speaking skills, Phillips (2017) notes that students often struggle with self-awareness of pronunciation errors and paralinguistic aspects. Practising and rehearsing scripts through podcasting can enhance students' fluency and authenticity when speaking (ibid, 2017).

Although students may experience initial nervousness and low confidence levels while performing speaking tasks in front of the class, rigorous practice sessions are highly beneficial for enhancing their speaking skills (Bustari et al., 2017). To achieve success, it is imperative to seamlessly create and integrate conversational formulas, phonological features, stress patterns, and an acceptable level of fluency (ibid, 2017). By recognising the challenges and integrating the most effective strategies, including cooperative learning and Project-Based Learning, the development of speaking skills in a foreign language can be further enhanced.

1.4. Collaborative and Project-Based Language Learning

In the rapidly developing field of education, technology plays a central role in providing new possibilities for developing communication skills and acquiring language through a range of digital resources (Loja et al., 2020). These tools serve as a didactic tool, enabling genuine connections with the real world, fostering authenticity and collaboration among learners (Chacon et al., 2011). The advanced and interactive characteristics not only reduce stress but also boost motivation of pupils (ibid, 2011).

The incorporation of technology, particularly digital resources, is paramount for educators who aim to adjust to novel teaching methodologies and augment communication within the educational realm (Loja et al., 2020). The integration supports collaborative, cooperative, and autonomous learning, resulting in improved skills, competencies, and motivation (ibid, 2020). The acquisition of new oral communication skills is aided by

more than just technological proficiency; it also fosters innovation, confidence, and ease of understanding (ibid, 2020).

Collaborative learning comprises multiple forms of cooperative work and engagement with digital resources. Notably, it has a positive impact on psychological well-being, helping students to overcome fear, stress, and anxiety (Grisales & García, 2017). Carrero Pérez (2016) emphasizes the communicative tasks' efficacy in fostering free and spontaneous interaction among students in a foreign language. Both Yim (2009) and Chuang (2010) (as cited in Carrero Pérez, 2016) point out that collaborative learning methodologies keep students actively involved and interested in the learning process, motivating them to speak English without excessive concern for accuracy.

Collaborative learning and Project-Based Learning, integral components of language education, are notably significant in the context of L2 acquisition. Bolden (2013) posits that students benefit from sharing their work with their peers in the classroom, facilitating both the dissemination of knowledge and the promotion of cooperative learning. Additionally, producing digital content, like podcasts, can be regarded as a project-centered educational prospect. This approach provides learners with a chance to use the language they aim to master inventively and disperse their achievements with a wider group of people (Phillips, 2017).

Concerning pronunciation specifically, Al-Ahdal (2020) highlights the significance of these collaborative and project-based techniques in overcoming obstacles in EFL settings. Ducate and Lomicka (2009) (as cited in Al-Ahdal, 2020) identified that the use of collaborative and project-based methods, such as podcast creation, could be effective in improving EFL learners' pronunciation. When integrating student-produced collaborative assignments, Phillips (2017) emphasised the importance of keeping the focus on learning goals and outcomes. Although it is acknowledged that the implementation of these approaches does not offer a complete solution to the various challenges faced in language learning, it is nevertheless regarded as a versatile and captivating option for educators and learners alike in the digital era. This initiative encourages the participation in collaborative and Project-Based Learning activities (ibid, 2017). Collaborative and Project-Based Learning have shown to be particularly effective methods for enhancing speaking proficiency in a foreign language. These approaches offer learners opportunities for meaningful communication in a collaborative and

interactive learning setting (Bustari et al., 2017). Incorporating more collaborative and project-based learning into the foreign language classroom will help educators overcome some of the challenges associated with traditional approaches. By creating spaces for students to actively participate, collaborate and apply their language skills in real-life scenarios, it will contribute to a more integral and immersive language learning experience. Through these methodologies, students will not only develop their language skills, but also acquire valuable knowledge of cultural nuances and effective communication strategies, which will ultimately prepare them for successful interactions in the globalised era.

2. OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTION

The main objective of this project is to design an ICT-based intervention, focusing on podcast creation, to enhance oral skills in foreign language learning in the students of 6th year of Primary Education. This approach aims to improve oral communication, foster critical thinking, and promote digital literacy.

Specific objectives are as follows:

- To conduct a detailed review of the literature on the use of podcasts and ICT in education and their potential benefits.
- To design a teaching intervention that uses podcasts as a digital tool to improve the oral expression of students in the 6th grade in the EFL classroom.
- To develop an assessment system for the project's learning outcomes. Evaluation will be conducted by both the instructor individually and through group assessments among the students.
- To critically analyse the strengths and weaknesses of our proposal, considering the specific learning and teaching context.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter examines the language learning context and the profile and needs of learners in a systematic way. This is followed by a discussion of the design and rationale of the proposed application. The chosen methodology involves implementing a Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach, where students actively create podcasts to enhance their oral proficiency in English. This section details the importance of addressing individual student needs, the strategic timing of the project, and the challenges associated with oral proficiency deficits.

3.1. Language learning context

The present pedagogical proposal, with its main focus on the development of oral expression skills in English, will be implemented in a state school in Valencia. The proposal is specifically designed for 6th grade students in the English classroom which is made up of 20 pupils. While writing and reading skills are typically emphasized in classrooms, oral communication is often ignored. This oversight, combined with a lack of motivation due to the frequent absence of active teaching methods and the fact that students are entering the pre-adolescent stage, leads to a declining interest in learning.

The city's economic orientation towards services can be traced back to its rich heritage of historical monuments, picturesque landscapes, cultural attractions, and a favourable climate. The school's proximity to the city centre ensures convenient access and provides residents with a range of amenities, such as libraries, theatres, a sports centre, a swimming pool, and additional services. The community displays a diverse socioeconomic composition, with most families falling within the middle-income bracket, while others belong to either lower or higher-income segments.

The school facilities include one classroom for each group, comprising six classes for Primary Education and three for Infant Education. There are versatile classrooms, meeting rooms, an audiovisual room, a laboratory, a gym, a computer room, a staff room, and two courtyards. Concerning the school's physical infrastructure and architectural components, it satisfies the minimum standards set forth by the Royal Decree 132/2010, issued on February 12th.

Regarding languages, the Valencian Community promotes a principle of multilingualism whereby students are expected to achieve proficiency in both co-official languages

(Spanish and Valencian) of the Valencian Community and enhance their ability to interact in a foreign language, specifically English. The acquisition of communicative competence in both official languages and, at least, one foreign language is a key objective of the Valencian educational system, organized through a Plurilingual and Intercultural Education Program.

The Law 4/2018, which regulates and promotes multilingualism in the Valencian educational system, serves as the normative reference that structures the teaching and vehicular use of curricular languages. According to this law, all publicly funded institutions must implement the Plurilingual and Intercultural Education Program. The program stipulates the minimum time allocated to curricular content in each language, with English accounting for between 15% and 25%. Furthermore, Decree 106/2022, which regulates the primary education curriculum in the Valencian Community, specifies in Annex IV that 270 minutes per cycle and week are designated for foreign language instruction. This translates to three weekly sessions of 45 minutes each.

In terms of resources, the classroom is equipped with standard primary school items such as desks, chairs, textbooks, papers, and markers. With the implementation of the Centre's Digital Plan, there is increasing access to various digital devices, interactive whiteboards (PDI), and the teacher's computer. Each student has a Chromebook, enabling them to participate in interactive language learning apps, engage in online discussions, and collaborate on digital projects. The Centre's Digital Plan (PDC) serves as an instrument to promote and facilitate the use of digital media in teaching, learning processes, as well as in the school's management and communication, with the goal of contributing to the comprehensive development of the students.

3.2. Students' profile and needs

The group is composed of 20 students, 12 of them girls and 8 boys, aged between 11 and 12. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, this group of students has an A2 level of proficiency. This means that they are considered basic users of the language, who are able to communicate in everyday situations using common expressions and elementary vocabulary.

Furthermore, it is necessary to mention that they are in the concrete operational stage according to Piaget (1975). During this stage, they are enhancing their ability to think

logically and concretely. Their cognitive development allows them to comprehend concepts with greater logic and understanding. Although children at this stage may not have fully developed their abstract thinking skills, it presents a valuable opportunity to stimulate their curiosity and motivation. Being aware of this, we can better adjust to their needs.

Most students at the school are native speakers of Valencian, as the school is located in an area where Valencian predominates over Spanish. However, it is important to note that all students have a similar level of proficiency in both Valencian and Spanish, with Spanish being considered their second language (L2). In addition, we have the presence of three foreign students, two from South America and one of German origin, who has a level of English beyond A2.

Such diversity brings a different perspective to the learning environment, fostering cultural exchange and a broader global understanding. The collaborative setting of the classroom, coupled with the high level of technical skills of the students, contributes to a more profitable context for learning. In it, our students may have various specific needs:

- **Oral Skills:** Students need to develop comprehension and oral expression skills in English. This involves delivering messages with correct pronunciation, accentuation, intonation, and rhythm, as well as engaging in conversations on diverse topics.
- **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Group activities are essential for children to learn how to divide tasks and work collaboratively to achieve an objective, such as presenting a topic in class.
- **Digital Competence:** In the current digital era, it is crucial for students to enhance their digital competence. This may involve using information and communication technologies to research information, create content, and communicate in English.
- **Fostering Artistic and Creative Abilities:** Students may benefit from opportunities to cultivate their artistic and creative abilities within the context of learning a foreign language.
- **Lack of motivation:** Motivation is essential in the teaching and learning process, particularly in the English subject. According to Rost (2006), motivation is the often-overlooked heart of language teaching. In this regard, in his book *Neurociencia para educadores* (2017) Bueno-Torrens explains that motivation is the engine that drives learning. In the brain, positive emotions and curiosity are

the fuels that ignite the flame of knowledge. When students feel emotionally engaged and motivated in the classroom, their ability to acquire and retain information is greatly enhanced. Moreover, according to the article 1 of the Organic Law of Education of May the 3rd (LOE) with the modifications of the LOMLOE, motivation is one of the principles of education (g).

The following sections present a proposal that responds to the identified needs, ensuring a coherent and effective approach to improving oral skills, fostering collaboration, promoting digital literacy, and sustaining the motivation that is central to our students' successful learning of English.

3.3. Design and justification of the application

To implement this proposal, students will create a podcast using the Project-Based Learning (PBL) methodology. PBL focuses on learners acquiring knowledge and skills by working over an extended period to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge. By promoting activities that involve communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills, students can practice and improve their oral proficiency in the target language. Furthermore, participating in projects and presentations offers students a platform to express themselves verbally, contributing to the development of their fluency and confidence in oral expression (Karyawati & Ashadi, 2018).

This approach is closely linked to the communicative approach to language teaching, which emphasises interaction as the means and goal of study. Students not only learn the language but also use it to communicate in real-life situations. To implement it effectively, it is important to address several important aspects to ensure the success of the application. Firstly, it is essential to have a detailed understanding of the student to better tailor the activities to their specific needs and demands. This project is scheduled for the third trimester, which coincides with the conclusion of the academic year. It also marks the transition of sixth-grade students from primary to secondary education in the upcoming academic year.

In spite of the increasing use of active methodologies, motivational strategies and the integration of technology in the classroom, the persistent visibility of poor oral skills among students remains a challenge. The podcast creation initiative aims to mitigate this problem, while at the same time increasing students' motivation and confidence in public

speaking. Another important aspect considered in the project's planning is the fact that the students are entering adolescence and tend to be more individualistic, which could be a hindrance to collaborative and team-based work. For this reason, the project relies heavily on collaborative learning as a fundamental element.

Additionally, since podcast creation requires not only oral proficiency and technological competence but also creativity, it provides an excellent opportunity to develop these skills in students. The Needs Analysis is an essential preliminary step before designing activities, units, or learning scenarios. Conducting comprehensive research is necessary to precisely determine the educational requirements of students. This enables us to develop a strategy and organise the essential tasks they have to accomplish. (Long, 2019). Understanding students' requirements is fundamental, as without this knowledge, teaching may not translate into meaningful learning.

Aligned with the LOMLOE, which emphasises the need to educate in competencies and equip students to tackle 21st-century challenges, the podcast creation activity promotes communicative competence. By addressing contemporary issues, the aim is to meet the challenges of the 21st century by providing students with content that not only facilitates their own learning, but also enhances listening comprehension as they engage with the creations of their peers.

When developing content and evaluation criteria for primary education, it can be challenging to strictly adhere to the descriptors outlined by the Common European Framework of Reference for English proficiency levels. However, these descriptors are valuable guides that can help shape the learning experience for students.

After having gained an understanding of what we want to achieve through the project and identified the needs we want to address, we need to choose the topic we will work on. The content for the podcasts must be carefully chosen, considering the students' proficiency level, age, and interests. Each group of four students will create one of the five podcasts. Each podcast will correspond to an episode, resulting in a total of five episodes. The duration of each podcast will be between 8-10 minutes (so each student should talk about 2 minutes). The topics covered will align with each of the units addressed throughout the course up to the beginning of the project. In this way, we ensure

that the content they work on is in line with the basic knowledge established by Decree 106/2022.

The next step is to schedule the production of the podcasts during the Friday sessions, considering that our class is from 13:10 to 14:00, a time when motivation levels tend to decline. Each group will be provided with vocabulary and grammar to use for podcast development, which will have already been studied and worked on at that time. On the final day of the project, all podcasts will be reviewed and evaluated by both the groups and the teacher. It is important to note that continuous support and assistance will be provided by the support teacher and conversation assistant throughout the entire process. In accordance with Decree 165/2023, dated September 29, issued by the Consell, outlining the special regulations governing the direct awarding of subsidies to foreign language assistant teachers, the language assistant will play a significant role in ensuring the success of these activities.

4. THE PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATION

This chapter explains the implementation of the project, highlighting key technologies such as Google Docs, Canva and Audacity. The timeline, starting after Easter, includes stages such as presentation, script writing, recording, and editing. The importance of integrating English communication and writing skills is emphasised. The project aligns with educational competencies, and its objectives and methodology are outlined.

4.1. Instruments and procedures

Students will primarily use Google Docs to collaboratively craft the script for their podcast. Although traditional methods such as pen and paper can be used, we argue that enabling students to independently use technology increases motivation, especially in tasks such as writing, which may not usually engage their interest. Furthermore, students will use the Canva tool to create a logo or cover to present their podcast to peers after completing the recording. With Audacity, students can edit their podcast recordings in an intuitive and easy way. Students are already familiar with this application, having used it in previous courses to assist their teachers in editing the annual radio programme that each class produces for the school. This enhances not only linguistic competencies, but also fosters creativity.

For the podcast recordings, students will use voice recorders provided by the school. Consequently, students will be responsible for transferring the recorded content from these devices to computers for subsequent editing and formatting. To prevent voice overlap from different groups during recording, it will be held in separate classrooms, preferably in the soundproof music room. Although the technical aspects of this task may seem challenging, the three adults present in the classroom will always provide guidance and support, enabling the pupils to overcome any challenges that may arise. This task is highly motivating and will result in a final product that students can be proud to share with anyone they choose.

4.2. Implementation

The project will begin when students return from the Easter break, which marks the beginning of the third and final term. There will be three 45-minute sessions per week on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. The Friday session of each week will be dedicated to working on this project, while the other two days will be used to continue with the unit

content and corresponding learning activities. If required, an arts and crafts session can be used to contribute to the project.

The presentation and explanation of the project will take place on the 12th of April. On the same day, each team will be assigned the theme for the episode they will record. The students will present their creations to their classmates on June 14. With a total of 10 sessions, we anticipate that this project can be completed without excessive pressure on students, giving them enough time to work effectively and showcase their best work.

The topics for the episodes are as follows:

1. Television and cinema: Students can discuss vocabulary related to the unit and talk about TV shows or movies they enjoy.
2. World Cuisine: This topic is designed to engage students in expanding their vocabulary pertaining to food and cuisine from various countries, while also providing an opportunity for them to share any relevant personal experiences.
3. Wonders of the World: Students will explore fascinating landscapes worldwide, not limited to our planet. They can focus on specific national or international landmarks.
4. People and Professions: This diverse theme allows students to choose topics like the school or hospital staff or explore fewer common professions.
5. Space Exploration: In this unit, vocabulary related to space is covered, a topic often intriguing for many students. It provides an excellent opportunity for them to research recent discoveries, NASA missions, and more related to space exploration.

By providing these diverse themes, we aim to engage students in meaningful discussions and encourage them to explore various aspects of language and content.

For explaining the instructions of the podcast-creation project, the teacher will show a presentation (see this [link](#)) in which there is a visual explanation of the different steps students need to follow. In it, there is an example of what a good podcast would be (created by the teacher) and an example of what is not a podcast. By doing so, we offer the students a visual aid that will help them to complete the project in the most successful way possible. Furthermore, this presentation will be uploaded to the virtual classroom, enabling students to access it from their devices as needed. This will facilitate their active

participation and provide them with access to the information at any time. The *project timeline* and the project *overview and implementation details* can be found in Appendixes [A](#) and [B](#).

5. EVALUATION OF THE INTERVENTION

This chapter evaluates the feasibility of the proposed 6th-grade podcast project. It considers its collaborative initiation, integration of language skills, and multiple assessment methods. The project focuses on language learning and digital literacy using Google Docs, Audacity and Canva. Strengths of the project include technology integration and collaborative skill development. Potential challenges, such as technical issues and diverse learning needs, are also noted. The Viability Assessment confirms that the project has a realistic structure aligned with the end of the trimester, which fosters collaboration. However, it highlights the lack of real-world application in existing literature, indicating the project's unique contribution at the primary level.

5.1. Implementation proposal and assessment

The podcast project will take place in a 6th-grade classroom, but it can be adapted for higher-grade levels. This approach is an effective way to engage students in a project that covers a whole process and emphasises oral skills, an aspect that is often difficult to address in a regular classroom setting. In this classroom environment, students will work together to create podcast episodes, fostering a collaborative language learning experience. Groups will be established, and each will follow the structured timeline to develop scripts, conduct research, and record their podcasts. The project integrates key language skills, including listening, speaking, and writing. Technological tools such as Google Docs, Audacity and Canva will be used to collaboratively write scripts, record, and edit audio and create visually appealing logos. The project will begin with a detailed explanation by the teacher (accompanied by the aforementioned presentation), followed by group formation and topic assignment.

Assessment will be carried out in a variety of ways, covering both individual and group performance. Students will be evaluated based on their active participation in group activities, the quality of their scripts, the clarity and creativity of their podcast presentations, and their ability to incorporate relevant vocabulary and language structures. Additionally, a rubric will be developed to assess technical aspects such as audio quality, proper use of tools, and overall podcast coherence. Peer assessment will also be incorporated to encourage collaboration and feedback between students (see the rubrics in [Appendix C](#)). The teacher's assessment will be more detailed and precise, focusing on

linguistic and technical aspects. This will include an in-depth analysis of language proficiency, technical skills, and adherence to project guidelines (80% of the final mark). In contrast, peer evaluation will be more subjective, capturing the overall impression and collaborative spirit of the presentation. It will highlight the team's commitment, creativity and how well they conveyed the intended message (20% of the final mark). Both evaluations are important in providing comprehensive feedback to ensure a well-rounded assessment of the students' podcast projects.

5.2. Added value of using the selected tools

The tools carefully chosen for this project help to create a dynamic and participatory environment for language learning. Using Google Docs, a collaborative writing platform, provides a virtual workspace where students can work together to create and develop their podcast scripts. This encourages not only teamwork, but also effective communication between group members as they work together in real time, sharing ideas and improving their content.

With Audacity, an audio editing software, students can engage in real-world recording and editing activities. As well as developing their technical skills, students will be able to showcase their creativity as they manipulate audio elements to improve the quality and appeal of their podcasts. This practical involvement promotes a better understanding of the role of technology in effective communication.

The project also adds an artistic dimension using Canva, an easy-to-use tool for graphic design. The students can create visually appealing logos that represent the essence of their podcasts. Not only does this enhance the overall presentation, but it also allows students to visually express their creativity. The integration of Canva helps students to think beyond the audio aspects of the project, thus fostering a complete approach to content creation. Each of these tools has been specifically chosen not only to meet specific language learning objectives, but also to contribute to the wider development of digital literacy and creativity. By using them, students will not only improve their language skills, but also acquire valuable expertise in using technology as a means of effective communication, collaboration, and expression.

5.3. Identification of strengths, weaknesses, and anticipated challenges

The project has several remarkable strengths that contribute to its overall success. The first is that the integration of technology enriches the learning experience by allowing

students to gain a practical understanding of how to use digital tools for communicating effectively. Not only does this meet the project's language learning objectives, but it also prepares students for a world that is technologically driven. In addition, the emphasis on collaborative skills is a significant benefit. Through group work, students develop interpersonal skills, and learn to manage group dynamics and communicate effectively, which is decisive for real-world language application. The collaborative character of the project promotes an environment in which students can learn from each other, which enhances all aspects of their linguistic skills. Moreover, it caters for different learning styles. The use of different tools and activities allows for different preferences and strengths of the students. This ensures that every student can contribute to the project in a meaningful way, fostering a sense of inclusivity and diversity.

Although the project has several strengths, there are some challenges that need to be considered. One possible weakness is the risk of technical difficulties. As the project relies heavily on digital tools, technical issues may occur and affect the smooth functioning of the project. Another critical factor is teacher guidance. It is essential to ensure that students have adequate support and guidance from the teacher to manage the technological aspects of the project without any problems. This task involves providing clear instructions, solving technical problems, and offering help when needed. Predictable challenges may arise in coordinating group work. Some students could become disengaged and to overcome this challenge, it is necessary to implement strategies to maintain involvement and responsibility within the groups. To prevent disengagement, each day, groups must complete a daily log. The log (see [Appendix D](#)) should document the tasks performed, specifying the individual contributions of each team member. Additionally, groups should indicate if all members actively collaborated, ensuring a fair and transparent process.

Lastly, addressing individual learning needs within a collaborative environment is a potential challenge. Students may have different levels of ability and comfort with technology. Differentiating support and ensuring that all students can actively participate will be a high priority. By acknowledging and actively planning for these potential challenges, the intention is to maximise the project's strengths while minimising potential barriers and ensuring a rich and rewarding learning experience for all students involved.

5.4. Assessment of the viability

The evaluation of the project's feasibility shows that, although it has not yet been implemented, it is a realistic and well-structured plan, suggesting potential success if implemented. Although a task-based learning approach could have been considered, the decision to implement PBL is because, as mentioned above, this project marks the final trimester for the students in the school, symbolising the end of an educational stage. The main aim of producing these podcasts is to improve students' oral skills, review the material covered in the first and second trimesters of the academic year, and promote a collaborative atmosphere. This collaboration is intended to ensure more success in subsequent stages of education. The project presents an opportunity to integrate digital tools beyond typical classroom applications, moving towards a more comprehensive approach.

The weekly nature of the project avoids monotony and prevents students from losing interest in the task. This approach has several advantages as it avoids continuous and intensive work, which is in line with the understanding that students tend to be more excited and have shorter attention spans on Fridays, especially in the last lesson. Also, the nature of podcasting, which does not require memorisation or repetition of textbook exercises, makes it an engaging option. Additionally, it eliminates the need for attending explanations that might otherwise be perceived as tedious by the students. To conclude, although existing literature on podcasts tends to focus on higher-grade levels and listening comprehension, little research has explored the beneficial potential of creating podcasts to address content learning and oral language skills at the primary level. Therefore, this project aims to fill this gap by recognising the unique benefits of using podcasts as an educational tool for younger learners.

CONCLUSIONS

The main goal of this project was to design a pedagogical intervention based on the transformative role of podcasts, collaborative learning strategies and the motivational aspects of ICT in language teaching. The creation of a tangible product in the form of a podcast is likely to serve as a significant motivator for students. This final output offers a concrete goal that has the potential to engage and inspire students to actively participate in the learning process. Additionally, the collaborative format of the project fosters dynamic and motivating interactions among students. Also, given the attractiveness of technology, especially for young students, its inclusion in the project acts as an inherent motivator.

The project is in line with the current theoretical foundations of ICT in language learning, emphasising its motivational role and transformative potential. The integration of podcasts as dynamic tools for language acquisition is consistent with previous research, highlighting their effectiveness in providing authentic materials and enhancing oral proficiency. Despite its theoretical validity, the limitations of the project stem from its unapplied status. Practical implementation is necessary to test the direct impact on students and the actualization of stated objectives. Anticipated challenges, such as potential resistance to technology and variations in student digital literacy, require validation through practical application.

To enhance the value of future research, it would be beneficial to explore the long-term effects of podcast creation on students' oral proficiency, motivation, and digital literacy. Additionally, examining barriers and facilitators to the implementation of this and similar projects could provide valuable insights. Furthermore, exploring variations in project design, such as different themes or formats for podcasts, could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the pedagogical possibilities of this approach.

In conclusion, the project's unapplied status highlights the need for empirical validation and practical refinement. The theoretical foundations, which reference ICT, podcasts, and collaborative learning, provide a promising framework for future research and practical implementation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Project timeline

Project Kick-off and Explanation	April 5	On this day, the project officially begins. The teacher will provide an overview of the project, form groups, and conduct a random selection of topics (unless groups mutually agree to avoid disputes over chosen themes). For the explanation and presentation of the project, we will use a Canva presentation .
Initial Ideas	April 12	Students will come together in groups for the first time to initiate the project. This serves as an initial brainstorming session where they will start documenting preliminary ideas. Utilizing a shared Google document ensures constant teacher access for supervision, guidance, and corrections.
Script Writing	April 23 and May 3.	On these days, students, having already generated a pool of ideas for their podcast and conducted research from textbooks and online sources, will begin crafting the script. On May the 3 rd students will send the script to the teacher and the following session they will refine the script with the feedback given.
Improvement of the script	May 10	Students will refine their scripts with the feedback received from the teacher.
Voice Recording	May 17	This day is dedicated to recording the podcasts. In case all students cannot complete their recordings or need more time, a few minutes from the arts and crafts session (which I, as the English teacher, also oversee) can be utilized.
Audio Editing	May 24 and 31	During these two days, students will edit and refine their audio using Audacity. This stage focuses on enhancing the overall quality and coherence of the recordings.
Logo Creation	June 7	Students will design the cover art that will be showcased prior to the playback of their podcasts. The creation will take place using Canva, a collaborative and intuitive platform. If additional time is needed, the arts and crafts session on Fridays can be used.
Presentation Day	June 14	Students will present their podcasts to the rest of the classmates. They will be encouraged to provide a brief overview of their topic and showcase the cover art they have created. We may extend an invitation to other classes, allowing younger students to enjoy the content crafted by the older students in the school.
Annotations	It is important to note that students will only communicate among them by using English so oral skills are practised throughout the project.	

Moreover, during the 26 April to 10 May sessions, students will work also on writing skills. These mandatory pre-tasks serve as support for the communication task and allow working on linguistic aspects, concepts, functions, and grammar. Furthermore, they will be useful for assessment purposes and to verify what has been learned.

Appendix B. Project overview and implementation details

THE PROJECT: <i>Small Speakers, Grand Insights</i> Podcast	
Student Profile	6th grade of Primary Education, 20 students, English level A2.
General Objective	To collaboratively create a series of 5 podcasts, aligning with topics covered in the book to review previously learned content, for students. The aim is to work on oral skills, overcome the fear of speaking in front of peers, and reinforce understanding.
Specific Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance oral expression and pronunciation through the recording and presentation of podcasts. • Foster collaboration by assigning specific roles and tasks to strengthen teamwork. • Reinforce digital competence using technological tools for podcast editing and presentation. • Promote research and acquisition of specific vocabulary by exploring assigned topics for each episode. • Develop creative writing skills and narrative structure through the composition of scripts.
Duration	One 45-minute session per week for 10 weeks, from April 5 to June 14.
Methodology	Project-based learning with a collaborative approach.
Digital Tools and Devices	Canva, Google Docs, Audacity, Voice Recorders, Chromebook computers. For the presentation day: digital whiteboard for projection and classroom speakers.
Key Competences (LOMLOE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication in Linguistic Competence (CCL) • Plurilingual Competence (CP) • Digital Competence (CD) • Personal, Social, and Learning to Learn Competence (CPSAA) • Citizenship Competence (CC) • Awareness and Expression of Cultural Competence (CCEC)
Specific Competences (English Area Decree 106/2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multilingualism and Interculturality • Oral Expression • Written Expression • Oral and Written Mediation

Appendix C. Assessment rubric and checklist

Item		Achieved 1	In progress 0'5	Not achieved 0
Podcast Content	15%	Content fully adheres to the assigned topic, demonstrating deep understanding and meaningful connections. Clear evidence of research is presented, supporting the content with accurate and well-supported information.	Content is relevant to the assigned topic, competently addressing key issues. Some evidence of research is incorporated, supporting the content with adequate information.	Content is limited, unclear or deviates significantly from the assigned topic. Research evidence is insufficient or non-existent, affecting the depth of the content.
Inclusion of Vocabulary and Grammatical Structures	25%	Extraordinary content in terms of classwork vocabulary, as well as appropriate and varied grammatical structures.	Competent content vocabulary is included, with some areas for improvement in the variety of grammatical structures.	Inadequate or inappropriate inclusion of vocabulary and grammatical structures, affecting comprehension.
Pronunciation and speaking	25%	Pronunciation and speaking are excellent, demonstrating fluency and clarity.	Pronunciation and speaking are competent, with some areas for improvement.	Pronunciation and speaking are difficult to understand and affect comprehension.
Collaboration and Teamwork	15%	Teamwork is excellent, with equal distribution of tasks and effective collaboration between group members.	Teamwork is good, with effective collaboration and distribution of responsibilities among the group members.	Collaboration and teamwork are insufficient, negatively affecting the project.
Creativity and Originality	10%	The podcast demonstrates exceptional creativity and originality in the presentation of the content.	The podcast is creative and shows originality in the presentation of the content.	Lack of creativity and originality negatively affects the presentation of the content.
Use of Technology and Technology Skills	10%	Use of technology tools, such as Google Docs, Audacity, and Canva, is excellent, showing advanced technology skills and significantly improving the quality of the podcast.	Use of technology tools is effective, contributing positively to the quality of the podcast. Adequate technological proficiency is demonstrated.	Use of technological tools is insufficient or basic, negatively affecting the quality of the podcast. Technology skills are limited.

Checklist: evaluation of our peers' podcasts



NUMBER OF
THE
EVALUATING
GROUP:

NUMBER OF
THE EVALUATED
GROUP:

SPEAKING AND
PRONUNCIATION:

- They spoke clearly and understandably.
- They expressed themselves without slurring or speaking too fast.

PODCAST CONTENT:

- They talked about the topic in an interesting way.
- The information was clear and easy to understand.

ENTHUSIASM AND ATTITUDE:


- They were enthusiastic when presenting.
- They conveyed good energy and participation.

PRESENTATION TIME

- It was not too long and not too short.
- Everyone spoke for about the same amount of time.

Our podcast project

Appendix D. Daily log that students need to complete every day



Podcast Creation Project Daily Record Form

Date: _____

Activity of the Day: (Specify the main activity planned for the day)

Task Organisation:
(Record how the tasks were assigned and organised among the group members)

1. Assigned task: _____
All participated: Yes / No

2. Assigned task: _____
All participated: Yes / No

3. Assigned task: _____
All participated: Yes / No

4. Assigned task: _____
All participated: Yes / No

Additional Comments: (Space for comments on group dynamics, difficulties encountered, difficulties encountered, etc.)

Planning for the Next Session:(Specify the tasks to be carried out in the next session.)

Participants' signatures: (Each group member signs as confirmation)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

