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Student-produced podcasts as an alternative to presentations

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Since their appearance, podcasts have become a popular source in language learning and teaching, and thus, an object of research interest related primarily to receptive skills. Studies researching student-produced podcasts have been published with a much lower frequency. This presentation aims to contribute to the latter research with describing the teaching context, the format and outputs, and the evaluation of a podcasting task which formed part of the final assessment of the course of Legal English. The observations and tips might be, however, applied to any ESP course.

The motivation to implement podcasts into the course arose from the need to substitute presentations delivered in class with an out-of-class alternative due to a significant increase in the number of students. The research question is, therefore, whether preparing and publishing a podcast for the fellow students to listen and provide feedback to has similar learning outcomes to preparing and delivering a presentation. The main method consisted of final questionnaires with closed as well as open-ended questions.

The results show that, apart from the obvious differences resulting from the face-to-face interaction compared to the asynchronous interaction within an online platform, preparing and publishing podcasts enhance students' skills in a similar way to presentations. Both presenting and podcasting are challenging, yet the podcasts seem to be more enjoyable. In conclusion, both contribute to developing not only academic skills, such as presentation and research skills, but also to English language skills, receptive as well as productive.

Biographical note(s) of the author(s)

Štěpánka Bilová is Assistant Professor at the Masaryk University Language Centre, Brno, Czech Republic. She has been involved in teaching English for Specific Purposes since 2002, she specializes in English for law and English for mathematicians. Her main research areas focus on using ICT in language learning and on student autonomy. She is keen on developing and supporting various learning strategies and interested in metacognition in language learning and teaching. She is also active in international cooperation, both within and outside projects.

Recommendation (for student section)

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