

Podcast

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Podcast

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Introduction

The fast development of technology brings us to the virtual era of technology in which information is possible to be available and accessible everywhere. Resources of information not only come in 'hardware' such as books, but the internet is also available as the 'software' from which the incredible amount of information can be retrieved. Internet, known since the mid 1990s (Decoo: 2002, cited in Cahyono and Widiati, 2007: 187), is an advantageous resource of information. One of the benefits of the internet is that it can help people deliver and exchange ideas in very rapidly regardless of their boundaries of place. Through internet, one can get ideas from or exchange ideas with other people throughout of the world. The fact that it brings many advantages leads the use of the internet in education.

Teachers, notably English teachers, should be aware that they can use the internet as a resource of ideas of such as teaching approaches, teaching aids, teaching strategy, in order to help students learning better. In addition, Harmer (2001: 149, as cited in Cahyono and Widiati, 2007: 190), mentioned that access to 'authentic' English is provided by the internet, both for the teachers and the students. According to Kilickaya, (2004) authentic materials, such as Internet-based materials, enable students to interact with the real language as well as the content. Internet, indeed, allows the exposure of authentic environment through which communicating with native speaker and other language learners all over the worlds is accessible. Internet is like a 24-hour mobile library, thus the exposure of the target language can authentically be accessed anytime and anywhere (Cahyono and Widiati, 2007:190). Considering such students' needs, it is good for the teachers to integrate the internet within their teaching learning process. Inserting the internet in the teaching learning process means developing a clear, systematic, and accessible teaching strategy. Instead of merely telling the benefits of the internet to the students, teachers should guide them, that is by developing Internet- based teaching strategy. In fact, Internet-based

teaching positively affects the students' analytical and synthesis ability (Whattananarong: 2004). Before developing such strategy teachers should get acquaintance with several facilities served by the internet.

As time changes, the internet develops. Compared to the 1990s internet, today internet provides more facilities for English teachers. *Podcasts* are one of many new facilities provided by the internet that can be used by the teachers. The term "Podcast" appeared in the late of 2004. A podcast is a series of digital media files (either audio or video) that are released episodically and downloaded through web syndication (Wikipedia, 2009). Podcasts can be audio or video; the chapter focuses on Audio Podcasts, which are shortly stated as Podcasts. Video Podcasts are called Videocasts which are not the focus of this chapter.

Podcasts which are mostly in MP3 format is an interesting source of material. Through Podcast teachers can help students improving their listening with authentic environment of English. Podcasts enable the students to practice the target language more conveniently. This is because podcasts are easily downloaded and kept in a portable media player such as *iPod*. Thus, students can practice when they are walking to school or sitting in a bus. This chapter discusses the nature of podcast, the benefits of podcasts as a source of material, and the procedures in using podcast for the teaching of English.

Theoretical Basis

The term "Podcast", was initially mentioned by Ben Hammersley in *The Guardian* newspaper in a February article. It was derived from the words "*iPod*" and "*broadcast*". The word "Pod" borrowed the word "*iPod*" which was taken from a brand, the *Apple iPod*, of an initial portable media player, allowing podcasts to be transferred from a personal computer to a mobile device after downloaded (Wikipedia, 2009). The idea of cast is similar to the term of "broadcast", referring either to an ongoing series or episodes of a particular program. A podcast is different from other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added. The easiest way to understand a podcast is to think of a radio show that you often like to listen. Instead of having to tune in at specific time, you are able to download it to your iPod and listen at your convenience, sometimes by subscribing or for free. Researchers at the Center for Journalism and Mass Communication Research at the University of Texas at Austin, as cited in (Wikipedia, 2009), stated that there are

three main characteristics of Podcast, they are; episodic, downloadable, and a program-driven mainly with a host and/or theme.

Podcast in education is popular of recording of lectures allowing students to easily access the recording as a revision aid, to catch up on missed lectures. The teachers can also ask the students to record their own Podcast on, for example, on project reports. However, it is advised that to gain experiences of Podcast initially as a recipient (An Introduction to Podcasting, 2005). In line with this, this article highlights Podcast as a source of teaching material, English, not podcasting the teaching material. It is due to the fact that the use of Podcast in this project is particularly to give more exposures of authentic English and chances of practice listening. Beare (2009) mentioned that Podcasting is interesting for English learners as it provides a means for students to get access to "authentic" listening sources about almost any subject they may be interested in. Teachers can take advantage of podcasts as a source for listening comprehension exercises, as a means of generating conversation based on students' reaction to Podcasts, and as a way of providing students with diverse listening materials. Students will obviously find the ability to listen to these podcasts useful especially due to its portability.

Sample Material

A Podcast is used as source of teaching material due to several reasons. It provides easy access to linguistic features, and it is fun and cheap. Due to its friendly access, we can easily listen to the podcast through any computer devices equipped with audio; it can be through a personal computer, an MP3 Player, iPod or a Hand Phone. The second reason is that it brings linguistics features authentically. Thus, studying linguistic features is not always done in conventional way only, in the classroom by the teacher. It can be done anywhere and it is the native speakers that produce the linguistic features. The last reason is that Podcasts are fun and cheap. It is fun to practice listening from the native speaker at any place students prefer. Students do not have to be in the language laboratory which sometimes brings boredom. It is also cheap. Instead of buying a CD of listening practice consisting limited number of tracks, we can download podcast for free.

In line with the reasons mentioned, Audio podcast is presented in this article. The Audio Podcast, *Happy Birthday!* (2009), is used as the source material. This episode provides information about how American usually celebrates his/her birthday. This episode covers

linguistic features which are accordance with the syllabus of Junior High (Depdiknas: 2004). Besides, by listening to this episode students will get a different cultural point of view of celebrating one's birthday. This source of material is accompanied by worksheets for students (see Appendix 1) and transcript for the teacher (see the Appendix 2). Below is the example of the page that students should open in order to be able to listen to the recommended podcast.

Listen to English and learn English with podcastsinenglish.com



▶ [Listen to all podcasts](#)

Level 1

Listen (left click) or download (right click) the individual podcasts below. NB Please ensure your 'pop-up blocker' is turned 'off'.

There are more vocabulary activities related to these podcasts on the ['extras'](#) page.

55 **The blue house.** Join Richard as he walks around 'casa azul' (22 Oct 09)

- ▶ [Listen](#) or [download](#) (1.8MB, 3min 50sec)
- ▶ [Transcript](#) (pdf 44KB)
- ▶ [Worksheet & Answers](#) (pdf 68KB)
- ▶ [Vocabulary tasks](#) (pdf 72KB)

This podcast goes with this video:

54 **The perfect day** [How](#) would Jackie and Richard choose to spend their perfect days? (24 Sep 09)

- ▶ [Listen](#) or [download](#) (3.9MB, 4min 07sec)
- ▶ [Transcript](#) (pdf 57KB)
- ▶ [Worksheet & Answers](#) (pdf 78KB)
- ▶ [Vocabulary tasks](#) (pdf 74KB)

53 **Happy birthday!** The pie team talk about birthdays to celebrate three years of podcasting (27 Aug 09)

- ▶ [Listen](#) or [download](#) (1.73MB, 3min 47sec)
- ▶ [Transcript](#) (pdf 52KB)
- ▶ [Worksheet & Answers](#) (pdf 75KB)
- ▶ [Vocabulary tasks](#) (pdf 61KB)

Bonus for members! Which birthday is more important - 18th or 21st?

- ▶ [Listen](#) or [download](#) (1min 11sec)
- ▶ [Transcript](#) (pdf 85KB)

UTF-8	UTF-8	Search for podcasts with 
<input type="text"/>		

Happy Birthday!

This month podcastinenglish.com is three years old. So for these weeks podcastinenglish.com were talking about birthdays.

Richard: So Jackie, Do you like celebrating your birthday?

Jackie: Umm, as an adult umm.... It's not such a special thing for me so not really, I don't really celebrate my birthday now.

Richard: But you used to as a child?

Jackie: Yes, I think as a child Umm.... That was always a very-very special day

Richard: So what is your best birthday memory?

Jackie: O... I don't have one special memory. But when I was aged maybe between ...umm...six or nine something like that, my parents always umm...gave me very-very special birthdays. My mom made me cakes, of course but not just normal birthday cakes, really special one like in shape of ...I think one year she made me a cake in shape of a bear for example. Umm....They're always very colorful with little sweets on. So I remember receiving those cakes and that was very exciting.

Richard: and of, and of course when, when you're child ...and... you always have a birthday party

Jackie: Yes, Yes.

Richard: Can you tell us about any birthday parties you have?

Jackie: I can't remember. One in particular but certainly I said between...between the age of six and nine. Friends would come around, umm lots of presents of course, lots of games....Umm... yeah.... I've just always... I've just always very excited about them, and just... just the colors I think, I remember the colors of the balloons and of course, lots of decorations around the house, umm... the cake as I say was always very colorful.

Richard: and then and what other... What special things did you use to eat at the birthday treats?

Jackie: Well, I only remember the cake and I only remember the ice cream and jelly.

Richard: Yes!

Jackie: I don't know why it's just only ice cream and jelly, different colors jellies.

Richard: Fantastic! And... and..., of course on the birthday cake what was always on top the birthday cake?

Jackie: Well, always candles of course and we wish have one candle for every year of our lives. I don't know if...if other countries do that.

Richard: I don't and I don't know when it stops. When... when the cake becomes too small with so many candles I don't know.

Jackie: I think I do remember having ten candles when I was ten. But then, in fact, I think not long after that I didn't have those special cakes.

Richard: Yes, maybe when you're teenage about I don't know 15, 16, [17](#)?

Jackie: I think when you're 15 or 16 you don't..., I don't know, I wasn't that interested in having a cake with the candles, that was not, that was not so important. So Richard, [podcastsinenglish](#) is three years old, so, maybe, we should make a cake and put three candles on it.

Richard: Definitely! And also tradition for birthdays you have to blow the candles out and make a wish but you're not always allowed to tell anybody what your wish is. So we'll keep that a secret until our fourth birthday.

Jackie: OK.

The Teaching Procedures

There are several steps in using podcast as a source material for teaching English. They are pre-teaching, whilst-teaching, and post teaching.

- Pre-Teaching Activities
 1. Prepare the worksheets of Podcast for the students.
 2. Inform the students about steps on how to visit [podcastinenglish.com](#) by using the power point presentation.
- Whilst-Teaching Activities
 3. Ask the students to read the Introduction of the worksheet
 4. Divide the students into groups, each consisting of 4 or 5 students

5. Ask the students to do the exercises in Podcast Activity Report by following the learning process.
 6. Based on the interview between Richard and Jackie, in groups, ask the students to write a recount text of Jackie's birthday when she was a child.
- Post-Teaching Activities
 7. Ask the students to submit their work with the answered exercise and a recount text, done in groups.

Reflection

Although I used this audio software as a source of listening practice and comprehension, practicing other skills through podcast is also possible. Thus, teaching the four skills integratedly through podcast is advisable. This facilities offered by the internet is so rich that it can be easily suited with the students' need, students' background knowledge as well as national education curriculum. *Podcastsinenglish.com*, in particular, comes with levels which enable the teachers to choose the right level considering the students' proficiency level. Other beneficial things which make podcast different from other audio software are its portability and simplicity of downloading. However, teachers still hold an important role in the use of Podcast to facilitate their teaching. It is the teacher that chooses the right episode, level, and podcast address. The teacher has to be sensitive to the students' need as well as students' proficiency. The teacher should also be clear and systematic in designing the worksheet in term of that the activities are truly done online and help students learning better. Thus, Podcast can still be a favorite source of material.

Conclusion

It is the fact that applying Internet-based teaching is useful, and this article informs what a podcast is. By the guidance of the teacher, students can experience learning authentically through Podcasts. The strategy described here is how to use Audio Podcast as a source of material. Having listened to podcast, students are assigned to do several tasks in the worksheet. Then, they can finish their final project by submitting the worksheet and a written recount text. The use of Audio Podcast as a source of material, hopefully, can make the students be more

familiar with Podcasts. Then, it will be easier for the teachers to introduce how to go podcasting, a more sophisticate way of using podcast. Yet, the success of such activities depends much on the role of the teacher.

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APPENDIX 1: WORKSHEET ON PODCASTS

Introduction

Do you celebrate your birthday? How do you celebrate your birthday?

Podcastsinenglish.com, especially this episode, *Happy Birthday!*, provides information on how one celebrates his/her birthday.

Task

The task assigned you to listen to *Happy Birthday!* [an](#) Audio Podcast accessed from internet with the link mentioned. Thus, you can get some information about Jackie's birthdays. You should listen to this podcast very carefully in order to be able to answer the questions and complete the table in the learning process section.

Process

- Through search engine you can visit podcastsinenglish.com.
- As you come to podcastsinenglish.com page you can click 'level 1' then find the episode 53, *Happy Birthday!*.
- Listen to *Happy Birthday!* [very](#) carefully, you may listen to it as many time as you like.

Conclusion

By now you have practiced your listening comprehension as well as understanding other culture in terms of celebrating birthdays. Hopefully, you can broaden your knowledge and improve your language skill.

WORKSHEET ON PODCASTS


Group: _____ **Date:** _____

Name(s): _____

Task 1: Listen for detail: Tick (✓) on T if the statement is correct and tick (✓) on F if the statement is wrong.

Statement	T	F
Jackie is now celebrating her birthday.		
When Jackie was a little, she loved celebrating her birthday.		
Jackie's parents made special birthday cakes for her.		
The cake was in the shape of a bird.		
The cake was very colorful.		
Jackie did not have any birthday party.		
There were colorful jellies at birthday treats.		
Children are always very excited about their birthday.		
When teenage, Jackie still had special birthday cakes.		
Birthday wish is a secret.		

Task 2: After Listening: Complete the following sentences with your view of celebrating one's birthday.



I celebrate/don't celebrate*) my birthday because

*) cross if necessary

Podcast

ORIGINALITY REPORT

20%

SIMILARITY INDEX

18%

INTERNET SOURCES

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PUBLICATIONS

11%

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