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# Digital Education:

# “A cup of tea with Alex”,

# a supplementary educational podcast

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## **Abstract**

Among several technologies that are being used in education and that are changing the way learning takes place, podcasting has been used by schools, universities and other institutions to improve the learning experience of their students. The aim of this research study is to get information, explore perceptions and collect opinions regarding the experience with podcasting of a group of adult learners enrolled in a language course. To do so, I have created “A cup of tea with Alex”, a ten-episode educational podcast series that served as supplementary material for the 20-hour-language course I organized. Every lesson of the language course was combined with a podcast created the day after class. The aim of each episode was to summarize the previous lecture with additional examples and explanations, provide the audio materials used in class, and give homework and/or extra information. Qualitative data about the participants’ experience were collected through two questionnaires. The analysis of the answers given by the respondents shed light on the features, advantages and disadvantages of podcasting. The findings highlighted that educational podcasting used as supplementary tool succeeded to enhance the overall learning experience, providing an additional source of content to learners and enabling them to be more in control of their learning.

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# **Introduction**

In the last two decades, the learning context has shift from conventional to digital. The emergence of new technologies, easy access to the internet and a substantial decrease in the cost of employing various technologies have led to a new era of learning and education (Burston, 2013). Nowadays learning does not take place just in the classroom, but it happens anywhere and at any time thanks to the integration of mobile technology such as smartphones, and other handheld devices. Among the technological tools that are changing the way learning is perceived, podcasting has gained mainstream acceptance and has enhanced the overall learning experience for teachers and learners.

# **Chapter 1 - Theoretical framework**

## **1.1 Digital technologies in education**

Digital technologies have had a profound impact on the management of learning. In the last two decades, schools and universities - aware that digital technologies are constantly changing and developing - have been investing in digital technologies to meet the technological demands of today's society (Alavi and Leidner, 2001), and improve their students' learning experience.

The use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in education can “render information more easily accessible, decentralized, free, boundless place and time” (Margaryan et al., 2008). Moreover, ICT tools are said to both enhance social collaboration and cooperation among students, and facilitate communication and feedback between teachers and learners. Digital technologies used in education can provide dynamic and interactive ways of presenting learning materials. Moreover, digital resources are easily accessible and engaging for learners.

Similarly, Web 2.0 technology has had a great impact in the digital evolution of education. Even though initially the application of web 2.0 technology was not designed for education, this tool has created new opportunities for learners all over the world. Web 2.0 can be defined as “an interactive web that allows multiple users to work together in a group, share and exchange information through text, audio or video conferencing” (Allison et al., 2012).

Web 2.0 applications are said to enable individuals “to create, share, communicate, and collaborate on the web, regardless of geographical, temporal or technological skill constraints” (O’Reilly, 2005). In other words, web 2.0 technology allows learners to interact among them even from different locations.

The most common web-based technologies that are being used in education are blogs, wikis, social networks, and podcasts (Liu et al., 2010).

Blogs are online journals that can be updated daily with thoughts, ideas, pictures and videos. Blogs are easy to create, manage and allow numerous uses. Pedagogically, they are said to “promote interaction and collaboration” thank to the possibility to give and receive comments. In addition, blogs can reach readers beyond classrooms or schools, they can reach readers all around the world. Moreover, blogs can be used as online personal journals and electronic portfolios. Furthermore, teachers can check how much their students have improved in terms of content and grammar, just by checking the posting on their personal blogs. Doing so, blogs can easily be used as assessment tools. Finally, the awareness that everyone can read a blog should make students more responsible about what they write, since the audience is real.

Wikis are “shared repository of knowledge over time” (Godwin-Jones, 2003). They are suitable to become great tools for collaboration or collaborative writing in foreign language classrooms (Kessler, 2009). Wikis used as a group work, allow a continuous exchange of thoughts and ideas among students and are said to enhance motivation and learners’ responsibility in their writing in terms of style and the quality

of content (Jee, 2011). In addition, equally to other web 2.0 tools, wikis do not require much technical knowledge and are easy to create and manage.

Social networks are free-to-access social networking websites such as *Facebook*, *Instagram* or *Twitter*, that can be used to informally interact with other users. Social networks are user-friendly and have a great potential when used in foreign language teaching. Social networks allow many different functions able to contribute to language learning. For example, social networks can be used to improve reading and writing skills; in fact, it is possible to send messages to individuals or to groups and write in chats with people from all over the world. Moreover, being social networks friendly and fun, they are said to reduce foreign language learner anxiety, especially in early stages of acquisition and among young learners (Jee, 2011). In conclusion, social networks both enable students to learn outside of the classroom and build communities.

All things considered, digital technology does play a great part in today's education and provide a wealth of advantages to both learners and teachers, however digital technology should not be regarded as "a magic bullet to solve educational problems, but rather as a powerful tool able to have both positive and negative impact, and that must be carefully exploited" (Warschauer, 2009).

## **1.2 M-learning and MALL**

Lately m-learning has been changing the way learning is conceived. M-learning is defined as "any service or facility that contributes to acquisition of knowledge

regardless of time and location” (Lehner and Nosekabel, 2002), and that make use of handheld wireless technologies. In language learning, when referring to m-learning we talk about MALL, Mobile Assisted Language Learning, which is a language-applied variety of m-learning. Nowadays the concept of CALL, Computer-Assisted Language Learning, “whose purpose is to investigate the impact of the use of computers in the teaching and learning of both maternal and foreign languages” (Bamanger and Alhassan, 2015) has been outdone by MALL. MALL can be defined as “any type of language learning that takes place anywhere and anytime, supported by mobile devices” (Moura and Carvalho, 2012). Usually when talking about m-learning and MALL we refer to learning that takes place through devices such as: smartphones, MP3/MP4 players, PDAs<sup>1</sup>, palmtop computers and tablets. Currently when referring to m-learning and MALL, we do not refer just to the mobility of the device itself, but instead both the mobility of the learner (Sharple, 2006) and the mobility of learning (El-Hussein and Cronje, 2010) are taken into consideration.

According to Ozdamlia and Cavusb (2011) the main characteristics of mobile learning are:

- a) ubiquity;
- b) portable size of mobile tools;
- c) blended learning;

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<sup>1</sup> Personal digital assistants

- d) private learning;
- e) interactive learning;
- f) collaborative learning;
- g) instant information.

M-learning allows to learn everywhere through handheld devices, which are small and portable (Quinn, 2000; Ahonen et al., 2004; Cavus and Ibrahim, 2009). Teachers can provide blended learning, which “combines classroom instruction with m-learning” and “maximizes benefits of both face-to-face and online methods (Bonk and Graham, 2006; Ocak, 2010). Moreover, m-learning can both be private and interactive, since every student (each using its own tool) can get involved and engaged in the learning process. In addition, m-learning provides “quick answers to specific questions” (Cohen, 2010), and offers both individual and collaborative learning activities to use during the learning experience in order to provide the best results.

There are several approaches related to m-learning: a one-way teacher-to-learner communication, mainly focused on providing content (Thornton and Houser, 2005), and a learner- learner approach, where peers interact among each other. In addition, give its multimedia approach, m-learning is said to provide a complete learning experience. In other words, m-learning can be text-based but also involve the use of cameras, voice recording etc. (JISC, 2005). Presenting the learning material through text, sound, pictures, animation etc. allows learners to process information through different sensory channels. Moreover, receiving information through different media,

is said to improve recall and comprehension since information and data are encoded in various forms in learners' memory (Mayer and Moreno, 2000). Similarly, the cognitive multimedia learning theory suggests that: "the sensorial characteristics of multimedia tools facilitate its acceptance and use by learners which, in turn, may lead to a better assimilation of information" (Castillo, Fernández and Carrillo, 2017). Moreover, presenting learning materials through multimedia tools, respect learners' different learning styles and physiological characteristics.

In addition, MALL has been defined as a "powerful tool for initiating and directing learners' autonomy" (Benson, 2004; Lee, 2005; Murphy, 2006) aimed at improving "learners' learning capacity in and out of the language classrooms" (Rosell-Aguilar, 2013). In fact, learner's autonomy is said to be enhanced, since learners have greater control over their overall learning experience and are able to learn through their devices anytime and anywhere. In addition, Hulme and Shield (2008) claimed that these new ways of learning should: "emphasise continuity and spontaneity of access and interaction across different contexts of use."

In this paper we will focus on podcasting, a m-learning tool which has raised a lot of attention in the last decade, especially in education; and has led numerous researchers to investigate over podcasts' value and role in education.

### **1.3 The podcast**

Podcasting emerged in the early 2000s and it “promised to open traditional audio production and distribution, and empower listeners and producers” (Crofts, Dilley, Fox, Restsema, and Williams, 2005; Hammersley, 2004). In 2005, the editors of the *New Oxford American Dictionary* announced that the word of the year would be podcasting, a new technological tool (Skira, 2006). In 2006, *The Economist* referred to podcasting as “something genuinely new”, but just few years later, in 2008 web and tech industry commentators were already proclaiming the death of podcasting (e.g., Freedman, 2005; Iskold, 2007; Wolfe, 2008). However, podcasting did not disappear, on the contrary, it continued to grow steadily since 2014, when several articles proclaimed “a new golden age” for podcasting (Blattberg, 2014; Roose, 2014; Sillens 2014). While it is still considered niche, podcasting has become “a mundane format embraced by producers and users” (Morris and Patterson, 2015). Indeed, since 2005, podcasting has slowly spread worldwide, with increasing ease of use. It has been adopted for multiple aims by “individuals, businesses, the arts, the media and, of course, education” (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

According to Chan, Lee and McLoughlin (2007), the term podcast was first created blending the words Pod (i.e., from the Apple iPod) and broadcast. However, the word ‘pod’ may be considered misleading, since podcasts are usually in MP3 format and therefore they can be played by several electronic devices such as laptops, smartphones, stereo systems etc., not just by the iPod. Even though the word derives from iPod, the term podcast is the most common term to refer to all kind of audio and/or video which are on the internet in this manner (Mcgarr, 2009). Further confusion comes

from the fact that the term podcast “can refer both to the program (or series) as well as the individual unit (or episode)” (Bottomley, 2105). Currently podcast is defined as: “a recorded program of talk, music, etc. made available over the Internet as a file able to be downloaded to a computer or portable device” (*Collins dictionary*, 2018).

Podcasts are uploaded online on media hosts which provide Rapid Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds. The RSS feeds “allow listeners to be updated on the new episodes uploaded on media hosts or directories such as *iTunes* and *Spotify*.” The RSS feed is what differentiates podcasting from streaming audio and an abundance of other downloadable audio media files online (Bottomley, 2015). In sum, Podcatching software allows users to get into a database of popular podcasts, and thanks to the RSS feeds generated, users can easily download, manage, organize, share, and listen to podcast episodes on their devices.

According to an article from *The Guardian*, podcasting is now considered mainstream; no longer an unknown or obscure concept. Audiences for podcasts are huge and are growing rapidly. In fact, just in the US “67 million people above the age of 12 listen to podcasts at least monthly” and in the UK “24% of people aged 15 and over have listened to a podcast at least once” (The Guardian, 2017). Moreover, the variety of podcast available is incredibly vast, ranging from entertainment and music to history and the sciences (Savel et al. 2007; Jham et al. 2008).

In the past, *Apple* with *iTunes* represented the main and one of the only providers of podcasts. In June 2015, *Apple* upgraded *iTunes* to *iTunes 4.9* “the first version of the software to provide fully integrated podcast support”. This upgrade represented a

huge change for podcast users since it simplified the overall process of searching for and subscribing to podcasts (Friess, 2015). However, iTunes is not the only virtual place where to find podcasts. Nowadays there are several great podcast providers, such as *Spotify* or *Audible*, to name a few.

Podcasting does not just represent a form of entertainment; on the contrary, it is becoming a bearer of education. In fact, in the last decade increasing numbers of universities, high schools and other institutions have started to introduce podcasting as learning tool. According to McGarr (2009): “Podcasting has seen significant growth in education in recent years driven by claims of its value in supporting mobile learning and enhancing the student’s experience”. Since podcasting started to become popular, several researchers became interested in how it can be utilized for educational purposes, later claiming that it is a “convenient and easy to use format”, “attractive and motivating” for students, and most of all: “a tool that allow a great portability” (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). In fact, its capability to transfer digital material to other portable devices provides an 'anytime, anywhere' media experience (Harris and Park, 2008).

Duke University was one of the first universities to introduce podcasts as an educational tool, providing its students with free iPods to ensure that everyone could have access to the podcast. After Duke University, many other institutions started to offer podcasts to their students: Stanford, MIT, Yale, and UC Berkeley are just some of them. The popularity of podcasting in education was accompanied by positive results provided by different studies. Just to provide some examples, Kurtz, Fenwick, and Ellsworth (2007) used podcasts with their students and observed how this resulted

in higher scores in their final projects, and Lazzari (2009) found out that full-time students involved in the creation of podcast lessons felt a great improvement in their overall learning experience.

### **1.3.1 Types and usages of podcasting**

There are several types of podcasts according to different authors. A first classification is the one suggested by Fernandez, Sallan and Simo (2015), who divide podcasts in three main categories based on their form:

- a) traditional podcast;
- b) enhanced podcast;
- c) video podcast (or vodcasting).

The traditional podcast is the most common, and it includes only audio material. Likewise, the enhanced podcast contains audio material, but it may also include pictures, slides, short videos or chapters related to the topic of the podcast. The third and less common type of podcast is vodcasting. In vodcasting, audio is substituted for video. Given its features, this kind of podcast is usually played in bigger screen devices such as laptops or PDA (Fernandez, Sallan and Simo, 2015).

A second classification, suggested by Voegele and Card (2006), identify three types of podcasting based on their function:

- d) administrative podcasts;

- e) special events' podcasts;
- f) class podcasts.

According to the authors, the administrative podcast is used to provide “information, rules and guidelines.” Instead, special events' podcasts are used to “broadcast lessons of guest lecturers, conferences, awards, and honours”. Finally, class podcasts, are podcasts which are somehow involved “in the learning process within a course”. McGarr (2009) further subdivides this last type of podcast (f) in three more categories:

- g) substitution podcasts;
- h) supplementary podcasts;
- i) creative podcasts.

The substitutional use consists of providing students with a complete recording of the lesson as a substitute of the traditional lecture. Podcasting can also have a supplementary use, that is, when students are provided with additional material to support their learning. According to the author, podcast as a supplementary material can have two forms. The first and most common form is to summarize concepts of the lecture and providing syntheses of the core readings, while the second and less common form is to provide additional material either to deepen and broaden the understanding of the lecture, or to boost the curiosity of students about that topic. Whereas in the first two uses (g, h), students are merely receiving content, the creative use instead allows students to become more engaged in the learning experience by constructing a podcast using what they have learned. This third use is less common than the previous two, yet

it is equally efficient. In fact, the creative use is said to challenge students to be more involved in the learning process and cooperate in the creation of learning material. Thus, to create a successful podcast, students have to critically examine the material they have been exposed to previously and use their ICT skills in the process of recording and editing the podcast. This third use can also boost students' social skills when provided as a group task. Students are encouraged to collaborate with their peers and participate in the process of creation. "The true potential of podcasting technology lies in its knowledge creation value, and its use as a vehicle for disseminating learner generated content" (Lee, Mcloughlin and Chan, 2008). The creative use may change the way students perceive the podcast, becoming knowledge creators rather than just knowledge receivers. Moreover, publishing a podcast, especially when the audience is real, is said to motivate learners. In the creative use of podcasting communication shifts, in fact it is not just teacher- learner, but also learner-teacher and learner- learner, and eventually learner to an unknown audience (Stanley, 2006). In brief, depending on its use, "podcasting can range along a spectrum, from being used as a substitute or a support to the traditional lecture, to being used as a tool to enable student generated content" (Mcgarr, 2009).

Rosell-Aguilar (2007) who categorizes the podcast resources made available for language learning into two main groups:

- j) Authentic material;
- k) Language courses of teaching content.

The first group is aimed at native speakers of that language (or advanced learners) to provide them with authentic material, and it is not intended to teach language, instead containing subjects such as news, football, or radio programming. On the contrary, the second group includes language courses or teaching content and it is hence designed for language learning. The author further subdivides the second group into two subgroups:

- l) materials designed for a known audience;
- m) supporting materials.

The first subgroup contains materials provided by educators, institutions or students themselves aimed at in-class learning (for example audio recordings of texts, oral quizzes, oral feedback, and vocabulary items). The second subgroup is designed for independent learners, that is people who are not enrolled in a course.

To conclude Carvalho et al. (2008) propose a more in-depth classification of podcasts. The authors classify podcasts based on:

- a) type;
- b) media;
- c) length;
- d) author;
- e) style;
- f) purpose.

In terms of the type, podcasts can be informative, include feedbacks or comments about assignments, group works etc., and be used to deliver guidelines, that is to give recommendations, or can contain authentic materials (interviews, radio programming, etc.). Podcasts can then contain audio or video and hence be podcasts or vodcasts. The lengths can be short (1-5 min), medium (6-15 min), or long (>15 min). Podcast creators can either be lecturers, students or third parties (experts). The style is related to the degree of formality adopted, and hence it can be formal or informal. Finally, the purpose of a podcast can vary: for example, a podcast can inform, analyse, develop or motivate.

### **1.3.2 Advantages of podcasting**

In the next paragraphs, when referring to podcast and podcasting, we will imply podcast in its traditional form, excluding enhanced podcasts and vodcasting.

It is first essential to remember that it is not possible to talk about podcasting without talking about the sense of hearing. Hearing is in fact a very powerful sensory channel. “Humans are able to understand real speech at 10 to 15 phonemes per second for normal speech, and up to 40 to 50 phonemes per second for artificially speeded up speech” (Clark and Walsh, 2004). Moreover, the ‘cocktail party effect’ allows us to “ignore the background noises and focus on a specific sound”. The brain works as an “acoustic analyser”, and it is able to “distinguish, select and interpret” a wide range of sounds. In addition, listening is instinctual while reading and writing are not. In fact,

experts have found out that the listening skill is hard-wired; conversely, writing and reading are to be learnt.

Audio is usually said to have educational advantages over printed media, in fact according to Durbridge (1984): “as compared with a written text, the spoken word can influence both cognition (adding clarity and meaning) and motivation (by conveying directly a sense of the person creating those words).” Power (1990) adds that: “spoken words through heightened intonations or subtle nuances can communicate...emotions and create a sense of intimacy at the same time”; by contrast, “print does not allow a learner to identify or interpret audible nuances that personalise content because print cannot stimulate the auditory senses.” The educational power of audio is probably the reason why, starting with radio programs, audio has been used as a primary educational channel. Initially, radio was used to teach a wide range of subjects at various level; later audiocassette tapes appeared, and afterwards CDs replaced audiocassettes, offering a more personal and efficient way for teachers all over the world to educate their students, especially when teaching a foreign language. Nowadays, digital audio has almost replaced CDs, and it is appreciated in several educational fields. The main reason is to be found in its features, which are especially appreciated in the education, where economical resources are usually scarce, and time is limited.

Digital audio is cheap, easy to produce and manipulate (Chan and Lee, 2005). Educators can easily meet their students’ needs, since there is a lot of material available, and when it is not available, teachers can produce their own digital audio material. Portability is another precious feature of digital audio. In fact, podcasts can

be played by several handheld devices and also by computers, stereos etc. All these devices are easily encountered both by teachers and by students. In addition, listening to an audio file does not involve the use of hands and neither of eyes. That is why listening to audio material allows to perform a variety of manual tasks simultaneously. Listening to audio is said to be an “unobtrusive activity” that is able to integrate with other activities in our daily lives (Clark and Walsh, 2004). Multitasking is one of the main advantages related to audio material and podcasting, since listeners can do other tasks (cooking, taking notes, driving) while listening to their podcast.

According to several researchers<sup>2</sup>, podcasting provides further advantages to its users, especially in education, in fact it is said to:

- a) increase accessibility;
- b) guarantee flexibility, portability and affordability;
- c) allow self-paced learning;
- d) encourage communication and interaction;
- e) include tailor-made material;
- f) aid revision and comprehension;
- g) contribute to reduce pre-class preconceptions and anxiety;
- h) boost motivation and drive creativity;
- i) encourage independent learning;

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<sup>2</sup> Evans, 2008; Mcgarr, 2009; Kukulska-Hulme, 2006; Sloan, 2005; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005; Chan and Lee, 2005; Williams and Fardon, 2007; Brittain et al., 2006; Lee and Chan, 2007; Fernandez et al., 2009; Lazzari, 2009; Kemp et al., 2010; Istanto and Indrianti, 2011; Stanley, 2006; Chan et al., 2011.

- j) allow distance education;
- k) aid students with learning disabilities;
- l) be beneficial to language learning.

According to Evans (2008) podcasts increase accessibility. In fact, students are often “forced to study when the opportunity arises”, for example when they are commuting, on the train, bus, metro, at evening, weekends or during lunch breaks. Seizing every moment of the day to access to their learning materials is thus essential for students, who are able to do that by accessing the learning content through handheld devices such as smartphones, or laptops, whenever and wherever they need to. Podcasting allows students to learn when it might not normally be possible (Evans, 2008). Both McGarr (2009) and Kukulska-Hulme (2006) claim that podcasting facilitates mobile learning since it enables learners to access course material on portable devices in any location.

According to Harris and Park (2008), features such as flexibility and affordability allow podcasting to meet students’ diverse needs and let students dedicate their spare time to learning. In addition, podcasting enables repeated learning giving students the opportunity to learn according to their necessities and diverse styles. In this sense, Sloan (2005) and Kaplan-Leiserson (2005) explain how podcasting can facilitate self-paced learning allowing learners to pause, fast-forward, rewind or skip accordingly to their needs.

In addition, podcasting is said to overcome the temporal and spatial limitations of the conventional in-class lecture, enables direct communication and interaction

between teachers and students. Podcasting gives teachers the chance to put emphasis on complex information when explaining a topic, and consequently students' comprehension is facilitated, and educational materials become student-friendly (Harris and Park, 2008). Not only does podcasting support communication between teachers and students, but also provides universities and institutions with the possibility to communicate with their students and reach out to a wider community. In addition, podcasting is said to provide "a lifelong extended education to alumni" and "create a culture of knowledge sharing and interdisciplinary collaboration" (Harris and Park, 2008).

Podcasting allows educators to provide students with tailor-made materials to suit their needs. Instead of distributing material that is re-used from semester to semester, as it is in the case of CDs or MP3 tracks contained in textbooks, teachers can create content to meet their student's necessities (Chan and Lee, 2005). Student's themselves can create podcasts for their peers or for other recipients.

According to Williamson and Fardon (2007), the use of podcast to replay and review past lectures aids revision and comprehension. Similarly, podcasting is claimed to be the best revision tool according to research by Evans (2008) and Brittain et al. (2006), who found out that students perceive podcast to be the best tool for revision, in comparison with other more traditional materials such as textbooks or their own notes.

Podcasting seems to provide some sort of social benefits to its users, since according to Lee and Chan (2007), podcasting increases the sense of belonging to a group or community of students, reducing feelings of loneliness when studying.

Similarly, Fernandez et al. (2009) claims that using podcasts help to create a link between teachers and students, increasing a sense of proximity between them. This social enrichment is also said to increase student's motivation (Fernandez, 2009). Additionally, the creation of podcasts as a class group work can promote collaboration and develop a social network within a course (Lazzari, 2009). Lee and Chan found out that providing students with short pre-class listening clips, delivered through podcasting, were more effective than (web or print-based) pre-class reading in addressing students' preconceptions and anxiety. In fact, students seem to be more willing to use their spare time to listen to a short audio clip than to read something online or on paper, which would consume a greater deal of their time. Providing small audio clips seems to be a convenient way for teachers to make sure that students get to class prepared, and at the same time help them to reduce their preconceptions and anxiety about the class they are going to attend (Chan and Lee, 2005). In addition, Kemp et al. (2010) observed that podcasting used as a revision tool helps to decrease student's anxiety before an examination.

Podcasting can benefit from being considered "socially acceptable", since listening to smartphones or other handheld devices while walking or sitting on a bench is very common. This may constitute an advantage, especially with younger students who may be less attracted from traditional forms of teaching and learning.

The University of Winchester used podcasting to help dyslexic students as a part of a dyslexia support scheme. Podcasting has been used as a "sensory aid support mechanism", providing ways to help students who suffer from dyslexia (Harris and

Park, 2008). Similarly, podcasting can be used to help students with reading and/or other learning disabilities (Sloan, 2005).

In addition, podcasting is suitable also to assist non-native speakers, who benefit from multiple exposure to language inputs. Moreover, podcasting can be used to offer extra content and thus motivate more advanced learners. Furthermore, podcasting is beneficial to students who cannot attend on-campus sessions or who cannot attend regularly, since they can obtain the same materials that their peers has been exposed to in class.

Language learning is indeed one of the disciplines able to benefit from the introduction of podcasting and its further development (Kukulska-Hulme, 2006). Using podcasting can improve the overall language learning experience, providing additional language exposure and enhancing learners' language skills (Istanto and Indrianti, 2011). As suggested by Stanley (2006), podcasts can be an alternative support to textbook materials, provide authentic listening materials, and show "specific aspects of the language such as idiomatic expression or grammatical construction". In addition, Chan et al. (2011) claimed that a "podcast can support students' learning not just in listening but in other language skills and areas as well such as grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking and learning strategies" (p. 34).

A small parenthesis on the benefits of podcasting for note taking is also worth discussion. Note taking while listening to a lecture is fundamental, and it usually results in getting a better score in a test rather than just listening to the lecture (Kiewra, 1985; Titsworth and Kiewra, 2004). However, in-class note taking may be difficult and

sometimes even challenging. Podcasting can support students who struggle with note-taking, since it allows them to listen to the lecture as many times as they need. Moreover, students can pause whenever they feel they need a break, or simply when they need more time to sum up the main concepts. A study made by Evans in 2008 examined student's attitude about revising notes from a previous lecture using podcasts. In the study, students gave a positive response to podcasting since it helped them to revise the notes they had previously taken in class more effectively than the textbook (Evans, 2008). In a study conducted in the same year by Mckinney, Dyck and Luber (2008), some university psychology students were divided in two groups. The first group listened to a 25-minute lecture given in person by their professor, while the second group received a podcast with a recording of the same lesson. Some days later, the two groups made a test about the lecture to verify their comprehension. The students in the second group (the group who used the podcast), obtained better results than their peers. This study, even though small, suggested that educational podcasting can have positive effects on students, and that it can help them by providing a more-flexible content, which is also closer to their needs.

### **1.3.3 Disadvantages of podcasting**

Although most studies are in favour of podcasting, and do not show direct evidence against it, the literature about podcasting presents some disadvantages related to this

tool. Some researchers were indeed sceptical about the utility of podcasts based on their results. The main topics which were discussed were:

- a) the influence of podcasting on in-class attendance;
- b) podcast's features: mobility and multitasking;
- c) podcast's efficacy and utility;
- d) further podcast's drawbacks.

Some studies (Campbell, 2005; Fernandez, 2007) criticized podcasting since it may cause a decline in student's attendance. Students are aware that podcasts will provide all the information they need about the lessons and consequently they may not feel the need to attend classes. Similarly, Traphagan et al. (2010) claimed that podcasts may affect student's attention in class since they do not feel the need to be extremely attentive due to podcasts' benefits. However, other studies (Larkin, 2010; Bongey et al., 2006) claimed that the use of podcasting does not result in a significant decrease in class attendance.

Podcasting is claimed to aid multitasking, however some studies (Lee and Chan 2007; Evans 2008) suggest that students tend to treat podcasting as a learning activity, and consequently they do not undertake other activities while listening to it. Moreover, students seem to prefer listening to podcasts within a designated study location instead of "everywhere". Indeed, some researches claimed that the so called "mobility", which is said to be one of the main features of podcasts, is not real. In fact, some studies (Brown and Green, 2007; Lee, Miller, and Newnham, 2009) reported that most students

tend to listen to podcasts using their computers or laptops, rather than music players or other handheld devices. The reason for that may be due to the fact that some students do not perceive educational podcasts in the same way as music or audio, and therefore they approach podcasts as they would approach other school materials.

The efficacy of podcast is also called into question. Specifically, a study by Deal (2007) found out that podcasts do not have a significant utility for students. Similarly, Lazzari (2007) claimed that podcast is a “pedagogical neutral tool.” Other authors (Read, 2005; Brittain et al. 2006) suggested that podcasts are useful but only to review materials; in fact, they are not suited for first-time study. In that case, textbooks are said to represent a better option. Further research (Mckinney et al. 2009) found out that podcasting does provide benefits, but only when students take notes and listen to podcasts multiple times. Other authors suggest that podcasting is useful only when students are involved in its creation (smith et al., 2005; Abt and Barry, 2007).

According to the Scottish Council for Educational Technology (1994): “Audio is an extremely powerful medium for conveying feelings, attitudes and atmosphere”, however “it is less good at conveying detail and facts.” Audio materials, and likewise podcasts, seem to be more suitable to give opinions and arguments but they result less efficient to provide data, since understanding may be difficult and tiring for listeners.

Another argument against podcasting is that it may be hard for students to understand complex topics or follow articulate arguments just by listening to a podcast. To improve comprehension some students may need to benefit also from written or video materials. Every student is different and hence podcasting may not be suitable

for everyone. According to Conner et al. (1996) there are four types of students: visual learners, auditory learners, kinaesthetic learners, and tactile learners. Visual (as opposed to auditory) learners may not find audio materials suitable for them or they may not be able to engage with those materials.

Another drawback of podcasting in education is that students may have difficulties when looking for a specific part of the podcast, for example a comment or a quote that they may need to review for an exam (Fernandez et al., 2011). Moreover, podcasts do not allow students to do a quick read of content as they would do with a book. Menzies (2005) also underlined that podcasting may create a barrier to those teachers and students who are technically challenged, in addition creating a podcast may require a good amount of time, and hence it may cause an increase in teachers' workload.

It can be concluded that this overview of the literature reveals both benefits and doubts about podcasting. Moreover, as podcasting is a tool-related technology, it is constantly changing and evolving at a rapid pace, and consequently should be studied further to understand its true value. Above all, the use of podcasting in education has raised much interest and curiosity among researchers. In the next chapter, we will discuss how to create a podcast, with a focus on my experience in creating an educational podcast series for a group of adults learning English as a foreign language.

## Chapter 2 - Creating a podcast

In this chapter we will focus on my experience with the creation of the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”, but first it is essential to explain how podcasts are usually created. According to Borja (2005), there are seven steps to create a podcast:

- a) first, sound is to be recorded using a digital audio recorder or an MP3/smartphone with a recording function. Another option is to record sound using microphones embedded in computers (in this case, step b is not needed);
- b) next, the recording should be transferred from the chosen recording device to a compatible computer for editing;
- c) subsequently, the sound is to be edited using production software such as *GarageBand* or *Audacity*. In this phase of editing, additional music, voice-overs, and other audio elements can be added;
- d) the finished audio is usually converted into MP3 format, since it is easily read by any device and media host;
- e) the final product is to be uploaded on a web server;
- f) finally, a Really Simple Syndication, or RSS, feed of the audio file is to be created so that listeners can subscribe to the podcast.

Podcasts rely on audio clarity when providing content to audiences, this making sound quality a top priority when creating a podcast. As a result, the microphones used to

record sounds are significant in the creation of podcasts, since it may affect the final quality of the product. Podcasts can be played by multiple devices and thus, their quality must be high. In fact, podcast users should be able to appreciate podcasts regardless of the device they are using to listen to that podcast.

Nowadays there is an abundance of programs to edit audio files. Editing is a crucial part in creating podcasts since it allows podcast creators to improve their work and get rid of imperfections such as long pauses, background noises and misspoken words etc. Editing and recording usually require a great deal of time and ICT skills. Recording and editing using a variety of programs require practice and expertise. Similarly, Flannigan and Calandra (2005) claimed that the use of podcasting “implies the need for technology for its creation, storage (server), download (bandwidth), syndication, and maintenance.” Moreover, a certain level of training is said to be necessary both for podcast creators and users.

The web provides several pages where content creators can convert the format of their audio easily, usually for free and in a short amount of time. Some examples are: *123apps*<sup>3</sup>, *online-converter.com*<sup>4</sup>, *Aconvert.com*<sup>5</sup>

The use of webservers and RSS feeds mentioned in Borja’s seven steps (points “e” and “f”) can be summed up in one single action, since today media hosts allow to

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3 <https://online-audio-converter.com/it/>

4 <https://audio.online-convert.com/convert-to-mp3>

5 <https://www.aconvert.com/audio/>

upload podcasts and at the same time provide RSS feeds for them. In addition, podcasts' listeners can easily subscribe to their favourite podcasts just by clicking to the subscribe button, and consequently remain updated on new episodes.

According to Fernandez et al. (2015) when designing podcasts, creators must take into consideration the following features:

- g) style;
- h) length;
- i) media and technology;
- j) materials.

The first thing to decide when planning a podcast is the degree of formality to use. According to Edirisingha et al. (2007), podcasting is more interesting when it includes informal learning. A friendly tone is said to “invite students to learn and helps to build intimacy with the speaker” (p. 165).

According to Carvalho et al. (2008), podcasts should not be longer than 30 minutes if conveying details and facts, otherwise their length may affect their popularity among listeners. Listeners may not be able to follow, and this may lead to “a loss of attention and subsequent decrease in comprehension”.

When designing podcasts: the technological knowledge, materials, and time required for their production must be taken into consideration. Podcasting requires specific technical skills and editing expertise. Both teachers and students may require

either the assistance of an experienced podcast creator, or the viewing of online tutorials on how to record audio, use editing software, and distribute content online.

Fernandez et al. (2015) underlined the importance of being aware of the materials used in podcasting; since it may be necessary to ask for permission and therefore respect copyright before using certain materials such as music or images. The authors suggest that references to the materials used (books, articles, web pages etc.) should always be provided.

## **2.1 Technical Aspects: recording, editing and distributing podcasts**

Arguably the most important part when creating a podcast is the environment chosen to record in. The environment can dictate the quality and sophistication of one's podcast and can influence the interest of potential listeners.

The recording of a podcast requires a quiet environment, possibly a small space with soundproof walls. External noises may compromise the quality of the podcast and result in loss of attention from listeners. Any type of microphone is suitable for recording a podcast, although a professional microphone provides a better outcome in terms of sound-quality.

One's own voice is the main instrument of podcasting, and thus there are many elements to consider when using it. Lampton (2011) suggests that reading a script should be avoided, instead natural voice/tone should be preferred. In addition, Lampton claims that a speaker should show vigour, enthusiasm, and engagement for the topic of

the podcast. He argues that concepts and ideas should be explained through phrases instead of long paragraphs to facilitate listener's comprehension. O'Kelly (2011) stresses the importance of the speed in which the podcaster speaks. The podcaster should try to speak at a pace that listeners can understand. Especially when the topic being discussed is complex, the listener should have the time to process the information being communicated, and alternatively offer some examples to aid comprehension. Similarly, the author suggests exaggerating movements of the mouth and lips to provide clear articulation of points.

Together with voice, sound effects play an important role in podcasting. If used correctly, sound effects and music can in fact enhance the podcasting experience. However, podcast creators should choose carefully whether to include sound effects and music or not. Reasons for including them should be clear and lead to an improvement of the podcast. An excessive use of music or sound effects could make the podcast less clear and confuse listeners (Fernandez et al. 2009).

Given the technological advances that have undergone in recent years most people have the tools needed to create their own podcast series. In fact, owning a smartphone and a computer with connection to the internet is the basic element to start podcasting. In addition, the abundance of resources available online for editing and distributing podcasts will make it easy and conveniently cheap or even free to produce podcasts.

The last step in the creation of a podcast is distribution. Podcasts can either be uploaded to the course intranet if the podcast is aimed at the students of a certain course,

or it can be uploaded to an external server if the podcast is aimed at a larger public audience. Most podcast creators want to cater to a larger external server, in that case the first step is to create an account with a media host. A media host is a website designed to host media files. Nowadays there is an abundance of media hosts, for example: *buzzsprout*<sup>6</sup>, *podbean*<sup>7</sup>, *soundcloud*<sup>8</sup>, *spreaker*<sup>9</sup>. After creating an account with a media host, details about the podcast series such as the name, the description of the podcast, the category that best suits it and other information must be filled in. Usually a podcast requires the creation of cover art or a logo. Publishing episodes is a simple process since it just requires uploading the episode within the media host platform and providing all the detailed information related to the episode. This includes but is not limited to the: episode title, description, useful links etc. After signing up to a media host and creating a profile, the media host will provide a unique web address called RSS feed. The RSS feed allows podcast creator to publish their podcast series on major directories such as *iTunes* and *Spotify*. Every time the content creator publishes a new episode on its media host page, a HTML code will be provided by the media host to allow the content creator to share the new episode on blogs, social media etc. (Mclean, 2018).

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6 <https://www.buzzsprout.com/>

7 <https://www.podbean.com/>

8 <https://soundcloud.com/stream>

9 <https://www.spreaker.com/>

## **2.2 My experience with “A cup of tea with Alex” podcast series**

“A cup of tea with Alex” is a ten-episode educational podcast series that was created as supplementary material for an upper-intermediate English course for adults. The course lasted twenty hours, two hours per week and was held in Legnaro (Padova).

Every lesson was combined with a podcast created the day after class. The aim of each episode was to summarize the previous lecture with additional examples and explanations, to provide the audio materials used in class, and to give homework and/or extra information in order to save in-class time to do more educational activities and games.

The podcast series is 140 minutes long in total, with an average of 14 minutes per episode. Each episode has a similar structure: jingle, grammar explanation, vocabulary recap, audio materials, jingle. Episodes 0,1,2,3,4 and 8 are in Italian, while episodes 5,6, 7 and 9 are in English.

The following table (table n. 1) summarizes the content of each episode diving it into three main categories:

- a) grammar points;
- b) vocabulary;
- c) extra content.

<b>Episode</b>	<b>Grammar points</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Extra content</b>
Episode 0	/	/	Explanation about the podcast series and how to listen or download episodes
Episode 1	Present perfect simple	Extract from the article “Finns are happy because every citizen is equal” by the newspaper “The Guardian”	Audio file of the article read by a Canadian speaker + Homework
Episode 2	Countable and uncountable nouns	Extract from the article: “Scientists accidentally create mutant enzymes that eat plastic bottles” by the newspaper “The Guardian”	Audio file of the article read by a Canadian speaker + Homework
Episode 3	Conditional sentences	Extract from the article: “Rana Plaza, five years on” by the newspaper “The Guardian”	Correction of the in-class activity “record a WhatsApp audio message in English” + Audio file of the article read by a Canadian speaker + Homework
Episode 4	Past perfect simple	Business English pt. 1	Homework
Episode 5	Present perfect continuous	Business English pt. 2 + 20 common mistakes Italian make when speaking English	Homework
Episode 6	/	Translation activity	Tips to sound like a native speaker + Homework

Episode 7	/	Job interview	Homework + Job interview audios
Episode 8	Passive	Accidents and emergencies	Homework
Episode 9	B1 English test	Life experiences	Audio files about different experiences abroad + Homework

(Table n. 1)

Each episode of the podcast was recorded using a professional microphone connect to a portable computer. A free-software called *audacity* was used to record and edit. Before uploading a new episode on the selected media host, the audio file was converted into MP3 format. Initially, “A cup of tea with Alex” was uploaded on the media host “*Podbean*”, however due to technical issues, the podcast was further moved to *SoundCloud*.

Before starting the course, the title, logo art and music for this educational podcast were chosen:

- a) the title chosen for the podcasts series was “A cup of tea with Alex”. “A cup of tea” is related to the English language, especially to the British culture and its tradition of tea time. While “with Alex” was added to give an idea of informality and to create a feeling of proximity to the teacher;

b) the second step was creating a logo art for the podcast series. The online software “*free logo design*<sup>10</sup>”(image n. 1) was used to create the final logo, which is minimalistic, original and it includes the title of the podcast;



<sup>11</sup> (Image n.1)

c) the third step was to find a jingle to insert at the beginning and at the end of each episode. Music and sounds used in podcasts must be royalty free to avoid copyright issues. The song “sunny” was chosen from the music provider “*Bensound*<sup>12</sup>”. *Bensound* allows content creators to use its music for free, however credit to “*Bensound.com*” is to be made, and creative commons license attribution of the selected song must be respected.

A WhatsApp group was created before the beginning of the English course in order to provide additional information, useful links, multimedia materials and an additional place to use English outside of the classroom. In addition, the WhatsApp group was used to provide students with HTML codes of podcast episodes. As a result, students

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.freelogodesign.org/>

<sup>11</sup> Image 1 – podcast logo

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.bensound.com/>

could either choose to subscribe to the page “A cup of tea with Alex” or just access each new episode through the HTML link provided by the teacher in the WhatsApp group. Finally, the WhatsApp group was used to communicate potential technical problems related to the podcast.

The participants to the English course could decide whether to use the podcast or not. They could either decide to listen to the podcast episodes online, or download the episodes on their devices (smartphone, pc etc.). As mentioned before, the participants had two ways of accessing the podcast:

- a) subscribe to the page “A cup of tea with Alex” hosted on *Podbean*, and consequently receive a notification every time a new podcast episode was available;
- b) click on the link posted on the course WhatsApp group by the teacher every time a new episode was available.

The decision to create a podcast as supplementary resource for an English course came from the knowledge that this type of podcast had been used extensively in education (Bongey, Cizadlo and Kalnbach, 2006; Huntsberger and Stavitsky, 2007) both to support textbooks materials, and to engage students (Edirisingha and Salmon, 2007). The previous literature about this topic shows that educational podcasting has been used to increase students’ preparation and knowledge retention for exams and to complete assignments (Copley, 2007; Evans, 2008). Moreover, in a study conducted in 2007, Kurtz, Fenwick and Ellsworth found that students who benefited from

podcasts of classroom lectures to review, have obtained higher grades, compared with their peers who only took part in in-class lectures. It was claimed that an innovative use of podcast technology in education can motivate students and, when technology is “thoughtfully integrated into course curricula, with a clear purpose and rationale for its instructional” it can be highly effective (Copley, 2007; Herrington and Kervin, 2007).

Moreover, this podcast series was aimed at a group of adult learners. Most adult learners tend to be working people with a career and consequently they are usually very busy and need to balance their studies with their work and career (Bates, 2014). Podcasting is a digital media that can be used to support adult learning (Lee, McLoughlin, and Chan, 2008; Maikat, Martinez, and Jorstad, 2007), since it allows them to study conveniently in their free time.

As can be seen, several inquiries have already been done on this topic, however very little research was made in Italy, especially with adults. For this reason, this investigation aims at further exploring educational podcasting and understanding the perceptions of a group of adults using podcasts as a supplementary aid to learn English as a foreign language.

## **Chapter 3 - Data collection and methodology**

After having read and analysed academic materials related to the topic of this thesis, two questionnaires were created. The aim of these questionnaires was to get information, explore perceptions and collect opinions about the experience with podcasts of the group of adult learners enrolled in the 20-hour-English course I organised. The learners had the opportunity to use the podcast series “A cup of tea with Alex” as supplementary material during the course. However, before describing how data were collected, it is necessary to open a parenthesis on the type of research conducted in this thesis: the section that follows, therefore will describe what is meant by qualitative analysis.

### **3.1 Qualitative analysis**

“The key to understand a qualitative analysis research lies in the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their word [...] In our world there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time.” (Merriam, 2002)

The aim of qualitative research is to understand interpretations of reality in a certain time and context. According to Merriam, this type of research has some specific

characteristics. The first is that the researcher strive to understand how people perceive their experiences and the world around them. As Patton (1985) explains:

“Qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end to itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting.”

A further important feature of this type of research approach is that the primary instrument for data collection and analysis is the researcher itself, being ‘understanding’ the aim of this research. The task of the researcher is to gather data to build concepts, theories and hypotheses and therefore this process is called inductive.

Merriam explains that it is not necessary to eliminate the subjectivities or biases that the researcher may have. Instead, she underlines the importance of identifying and monitoring them, and with the awareness that “they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data.”

The last characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher uses words and pictures to convey what they have learnt about the topic, and therefore Merriam points out that the product of a qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive. Furthermore, “quotes and excerpts are used to contribute to the descriptive nature of qualitative research.” Merriam distinguishes among eight types of qualitative analysis: basic interpretive, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, ethnography, narrative

analysis, critical and postmodern-post cultural. For the purposes of this research, I conducted a basic interpretive qualitative study; since I was interested in understanding the perceptions of the participants involved in the surveys I created. To do so, I adopted an inductive approach to analyse the responses given by the participants to the questionnaires. In my investigation I tried to identify the recurring patterns and common themes as they emerged from the data.

### **3.2 Data collection**

A first questionnaire was handed out to the 24 students at the beginning of the first lesson of the English course. The questionnaire was written in Italian to allow them to fully comprehend and answer extensively to the questions (a copy of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix 1). This first 4-item questionnaire was aimed at comprehending the previous knowledge and experience of the 24 students about podcasting. From this point forward, we will refer to this questionnaire as “questionnaire A”.

A second questionnaire created with Google Forms was sent via e-mail to the 24 students at the end of the English course. The aim of this 19-item questionnaire was to get information, perceptions and opinions about the student’s experience with the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”. This second questionnaire was titled “*Percezioni riguardanti il podcast educativo: A cup of tea with Alex*” and can be found in the Appendix (2). The questionnaire was written in Italian to allow students to fully

comprehend and answer extensively to the questions. The questionnaire included three questions to collect information regarding the biodata of the respondents (sex, age, occupation), while the remaining sixteen questions were aimed at collecting the respondents' opinions and perceptions about this educational podcast. From this point forward, we will refer to this questionnaire as "questionnaire B".

In the following chapter I will present the findings and discuss them on the basis of the theory and literature related to this topic.

# Chapter 4 – Findings

## 4.1 Questionnaire A

This first questionnaire was composed of four questions about participants' previous experience with podcasting. The third question (c), was related to the second question (b), in the sense that the respondents had to answer to 'c' only if their answer to question 'b' was positive.

The questions were:

- a) *“Sai cos'è un podcast?”*;
- b) *“Hai mai ascoltato un podcast?”*;
- c) *“Se hai risposto sì, qual è l'ultimo podcast che hai ascoltato? Dove lo hai ascoltato e attraverso quale dispositivo (telefono, mp3, computer portatile ecc.)?”*;
- d) *“Hai mai sentito parlare di podcast educativo?”*.

The answers to the first question (a) showed that many of the respondents (11) claimed that they knew what a podcast was, while 11 of them were not sure about it. The rest of the respondents (2) affirmed that they did not know what a podcast was.

In the second question (b), most of the respondents (13) claimed that they had listened to podcasts before, while the rest (11) stated that they had never listened to any podcast.

The third question (c) was related to the second one, and it was answered only by the respondents whose previous answer was positive. The third question was further divided into two queries. Most respondents (7) answered the first query saying that the last podcast they had listened to was a radio podcast. Two of the respondents answered that the last podcast they had listened to was an educational podcast to learn English. One respondent said that they had listened to an educational podcast about communication, while another respondent said that the last podcast that they had listened to was about eating habits. One respondent answered that the last podcast they had listened to was an educational podcast provided by their university, and another respondent did not remember. The second query showed that most respondents (7) had listened to their last podcast using their computers, five of them using their smartphones and one of them using their MP3.

The fourth question (d) revealed that the majority of the respondents (10) had never heard about educational podcasting, while eight of them had. Two respondents were not sure whether they had heard about educational podcasting or not.

The aim of this first questionnaire was to get a general idea about the learner's previous knowledge and use of podcasting. From the data collected, it is possible to affirm that most respondents had listened to podcasts before, usually from computers or smartphones, however most of them had never listened to educational podcasts. Therefore "A cup of tea with Alex" has been the first encounter with podcasting and educational podcasting for many of the learners who attended the English course.

## 4.2 Questionare B “*Percezioni riguardanti il podcast educativo: A cup of tea with Alex*”

The data collected through this questionnaire represent the focus of this thesis, since these data symbolize the experience, opinions and perceptions of a group of adult learners about educational podcasting used as a supplementary tool. This questionnaire (B) is composed of 19 questions: the first three questions are aimed at collecting information regarding the biodata of the respondents (sex, age, occupation), while the remaining 16 questions are aimed at collecting their thoughts and experience about the podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”. Most questions (1,2,3, 7,9,10,11,12,13,15,16, 17) were multiple choice questions, five of them (5, 6,8,14,19) were open- ended questions, and one (4) question was a dichotomous question.

The questionnaire was created with goggle forms and sent to the learners via e-mail at the end of the English course.

The 19 questions were:

- 1) “*Indica il tuo genere*”;
- 2) “*Indica la tua età*”;
- 3) “*Indica la tua occupazione*”;
- 4) “*Hai usufruito del podcast educativo “A cup of tea with Alex”?*”;

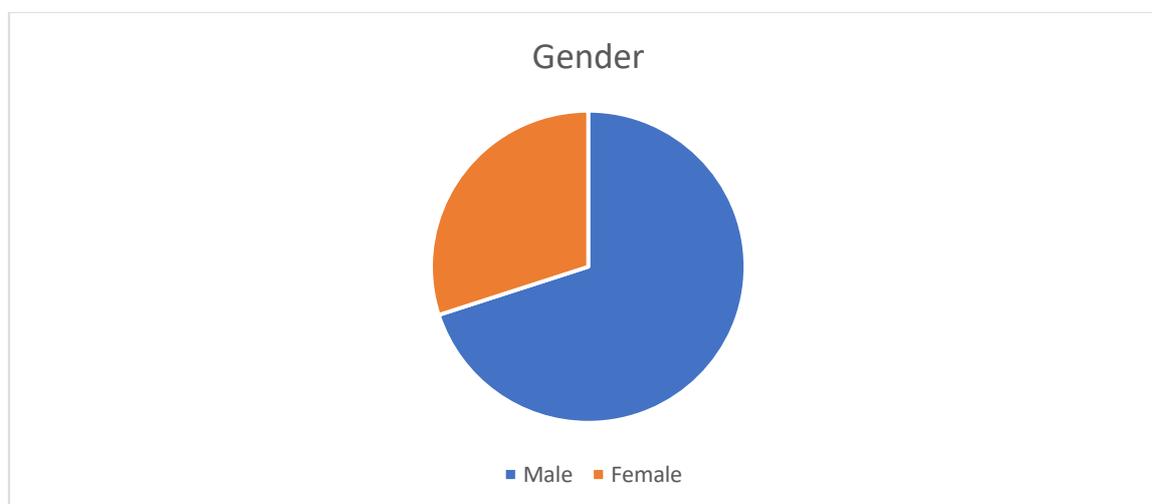
- 5) *“Se nella precedente domanda hai risposto no, non sarà necessario rispondere alle successive domande. Prima di concludere ti chiedo solo di motivare la tua risposta. Scrivi perchè non hai usufruito del podcast”*;
- 6) *“Dove hai ascoltato maggiormente il podcast (a casa, in ufficio, nei mezzi pubblici ecc.)?”*;
- 7) *“Attraverso quale dispositivo hai ascoltato il podcast?”*;
- 8) *“Mentre ascoltavi il podcast facevi altro (multitasking)? Se sì, cosa?”*;
- 9) *“Quanti episodi del podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” hai ascoltato?”*;
- 10) *“Nel caso avessi saltato qualche episodio del podcast, qual è stata la ragione? Indica il motivo per cui non hai usufruito di uno o più episodi”*;
- 11) *“Quanti minuti del podcast ascoltavi in media?”*;
- 12) *“Quante volte hai ascoltato in media ogni episodio?”*;
- 13) *“La maggior parte delle volte”*;
- 14) *“Hai trovato difficoltà nell’utilizzare il podcast? Se sì, quali?”*;
- 15) *“Eri motivato/a a utilizzare il podcast? Esprimi il tuo grado di motivazione da 1 a 5”*;
- 16) *“Ritieni che il podcast ti abbia aiutato ad apprendere meglio i contenuti del corso?”*;
- 17) *“Ti piacerebbe poter usufruire nuovamente di podcast educativi in futuro?”*;
- 18) *“Quali di queste affermazioni ritieni vera?”*;

19) *“Se vuoi hai la possibilità di aggiungere un commento relativo alla tua esperienza con il podcast educativo”.*

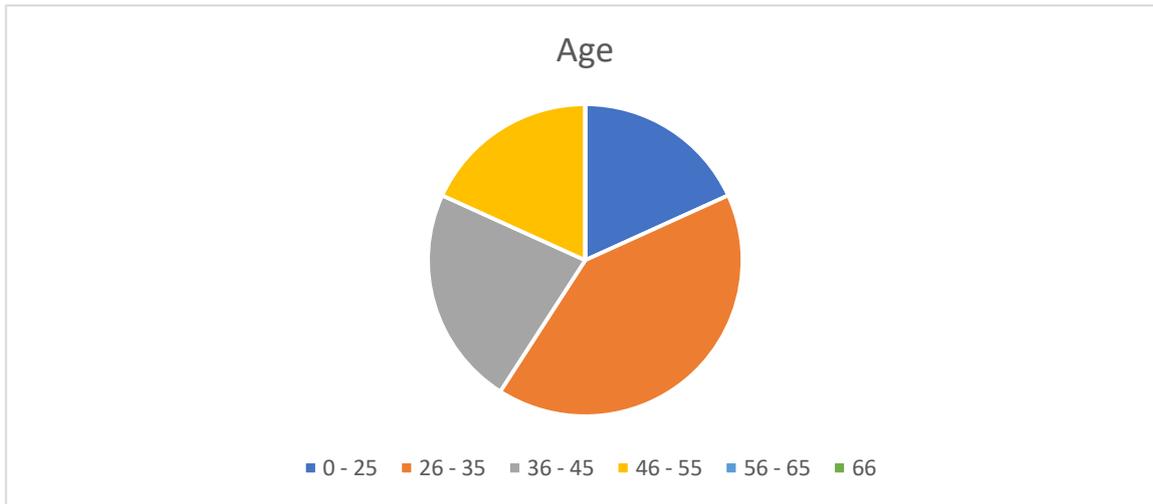
Out of the 24 people who enrolled in the English course, 22 of them answered the questionnaire. Two students did not take part in the research since they could not attend most of the lessons due to personal reasons.

#### **4.2.2 Respondents' biodata**

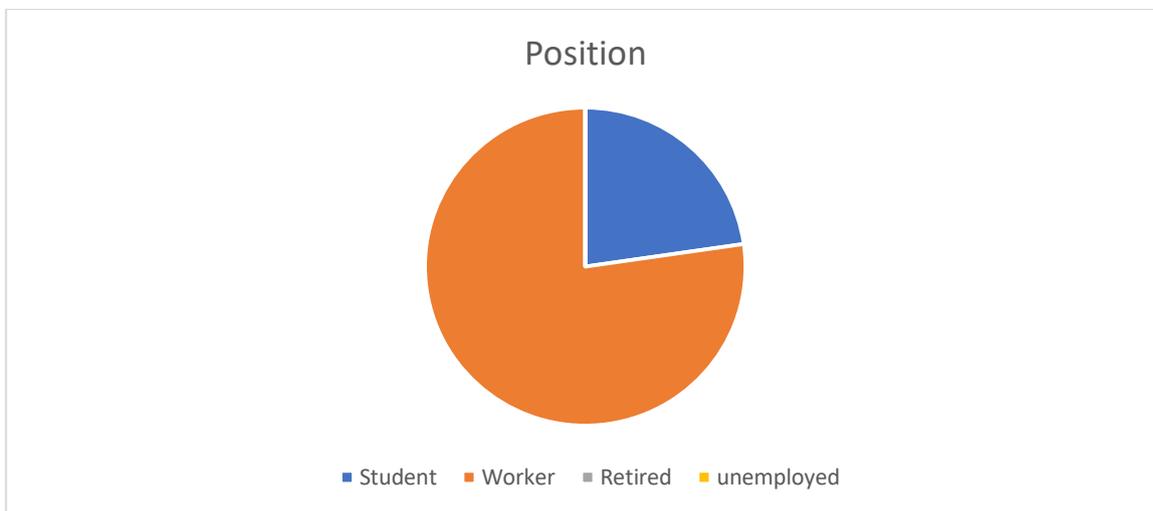
Of the 22 respondents, the woman-man ratio was fourteen (63,6 percent) to eight (36,4 percent), (Fig.1.). Nine respondents were aged 26-35, five respondents were aged 36-45, four respondents were aged 46-55 and the other four were aged 18-25. No respondents were older than 55 years of age (Fig.2.). Most of the respondents were workers (17), while five of them were students (Fig.3.).



(Fig.1.)



(Fig.2.)



(Fig.3.)

#### 4.2.3 Information, thoughts and experience about the podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”

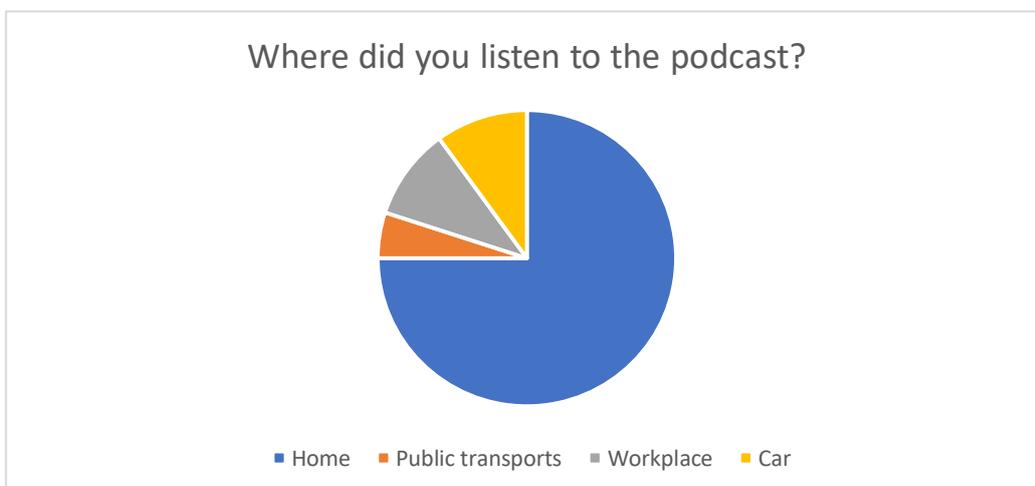
**Question 4:** *Hai usufruito del podcast educativo “A cup of tea with Alex”?*

The respondents were asked whether they used the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” or not. Twenty of them used the podcast, while two of them did not.

**Question 5:** *Se nella precedente domanda hai risposto no, non sarà necessario rispondere alle successive domande. Prima di concludere ti chiedo solo di motivare la tua risposta. Scrivi perchè non hai usufruito del podcast.*

Only the respondents who did not use the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” had to answer to this question and explain the reasons for that choice. One respondent could not use the podcast due to the lack of internet connection in their house, while the other respondent did not use the podcast because they did not have enough time. However, the second respondent added that they attended all the lessons in class and used their notes to review.

**Question 6:** *Dove hai ascoltato maggiormente il podcast (a casa, in ufficio, nei mezzi pubblici ecc.)?*

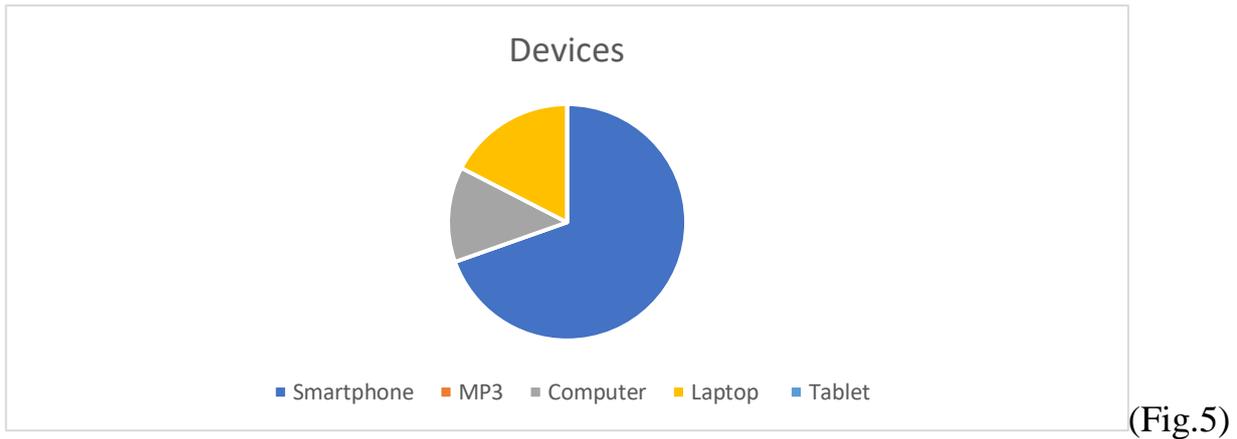


(Fig.4)

Most respondents listened to “A cup of tea with Alex” at home (15), while two of the respondents listened to the podcast in their workplace, and two others in their cars. Finally, only one respondent benefitted from the podcast while using public transports (Fig.4). These answers reflect the “anytime, anywhere” media experience (Harris and Park, 2008) that podcasting is supposed to provide. The respondents being either workers or students did not have much free time. Therefore, podcasting allowed them to benefit from it even when commuting or at their workplace. However, most respondents listened to the podcast at home, and consequently the mobility of podcasting could be questioned. As written in chapter 1.2.3, podcast users may prefer listening to podcasts within a designated study location, in this case their home, instead of everywhere.

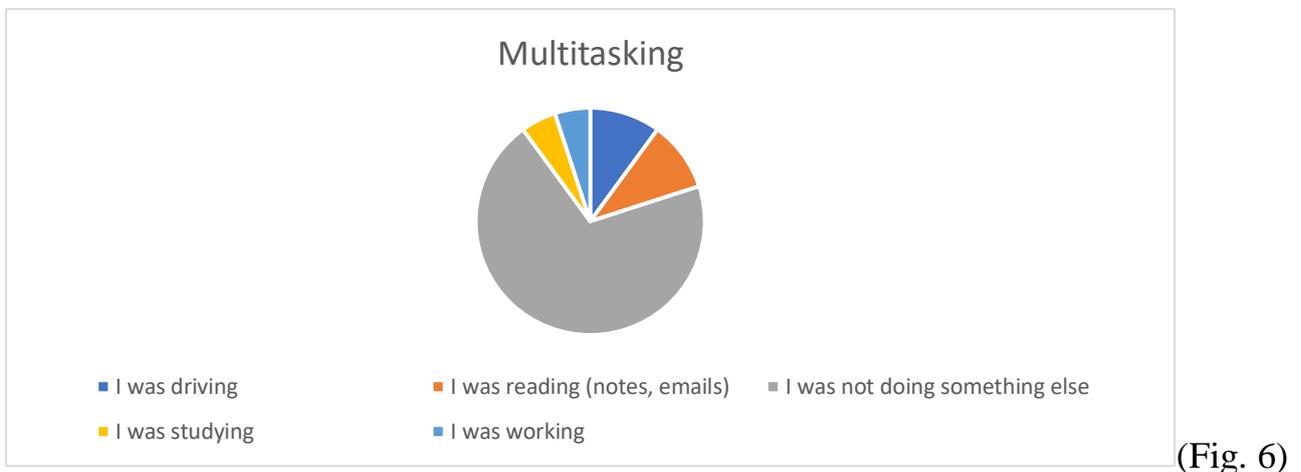
**Question 7:** *Attraverso quale dispositivo hai ascoltato il podcast?*

In this question, the respondents had to state which devices they used to listen to the podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” (the respondents could pick more than one device). The most used device was the smartphone (80%), followed by the laptop (20%) and last the computer (15%). No respondent listened to the podcast using an Mp3 or a tablet (Fig. 5).



**Question 8:** *Mentre ascoltavi il podcast facevi altro (multitasking)? Se sì, cosa?*

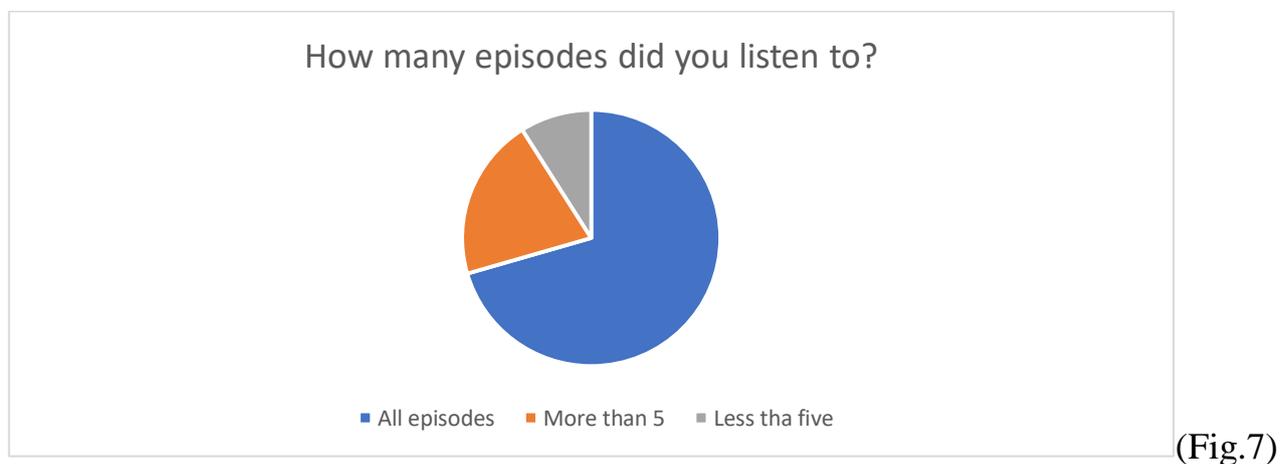
In this question, respondents had to say what they were doing while listening to “A cup of tea with Alex”. Most of them (70%) did not do other activities while listening to the podcast. Two respondents (10%) listened to the podcast while reading either their notes or their emails, and two other respondents (10%) listened to the podcast while driving their cars. One respondent said they were studying when listening to the podcast and one respondent listened to the podcast while working (Fig.6).



These answers are in line with Lee and Chan (2007), and Evans (2008) who claimed that learners treat podcasting as a learning activity, and consequently they do not undertake other activities while listening to it. In fact, in this study, just 6 out of 20 learners undertook another activity while listening to the podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”.

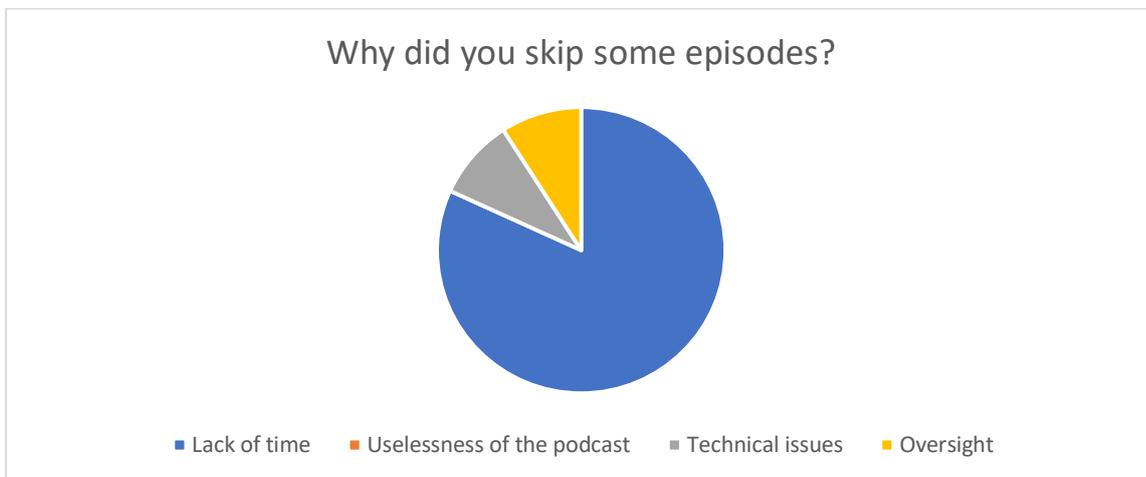
**Question 9:** *Quanti episodi del podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” hai ascoltato?*

Most respondents (55%) listened to all the episodes of the podcast: ten in total. 25 % of the respondents listened to more than five episodes, while 20 % of the respondents listened to less than five episodes (Fig.7).



**Question 10:** *Nel caso avessi saltato qualche episodio del podcast, qual è stata la ragione? Indica il motivo per cui non hai usufruito di uno o più episodi.*

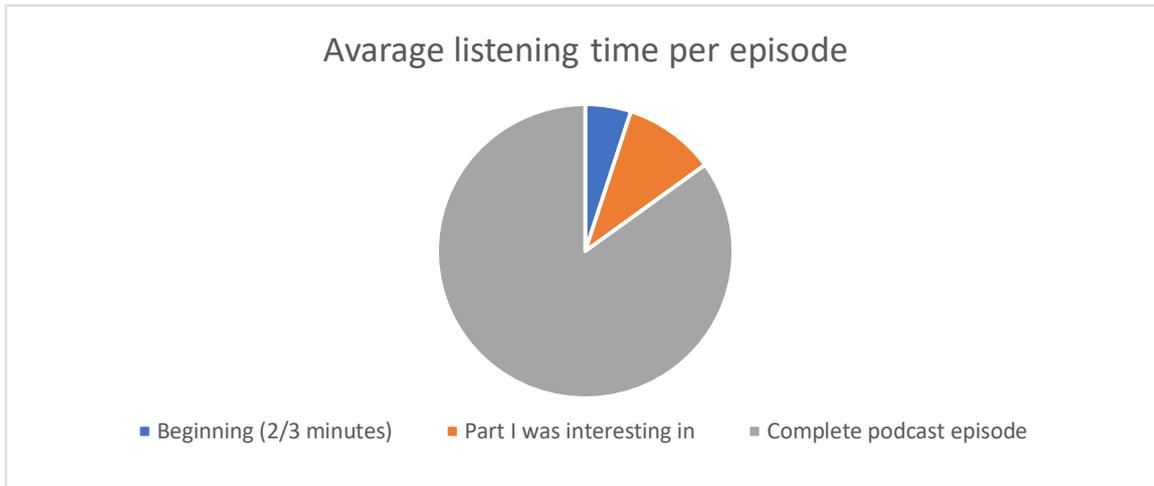
Respondents were asked to explain the reasons for skipping some episodes of the podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”. Most of them did not listen to all the episodes of the podcast due to lack of free time, while others due to technical issues or because they simply forgot. None of the respondents skipped some episodes because they thought the podcast was useless (Fig.8).



(Fig. 8)

**Question 11:** *Quanti minuti del podcast ascoltavi in media?*

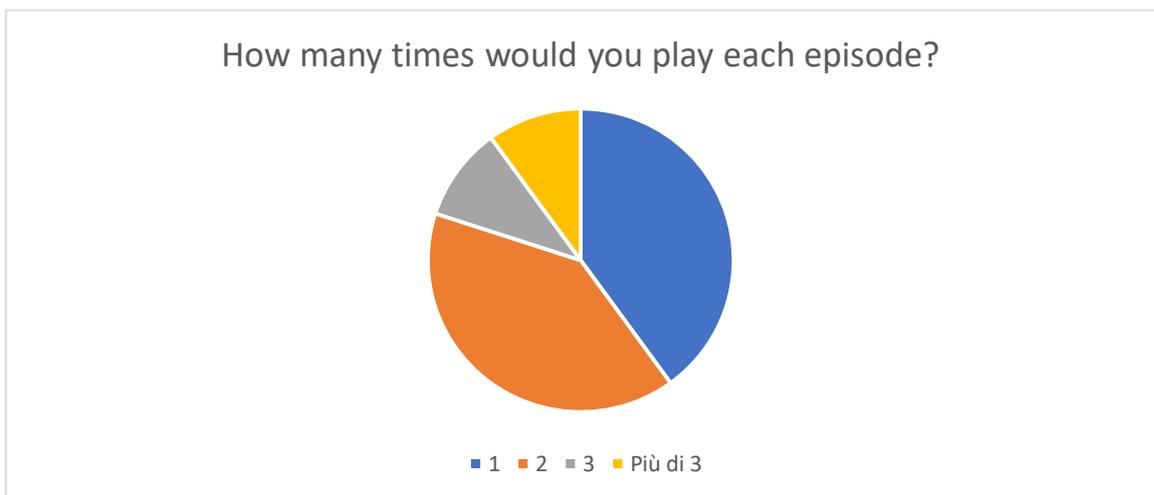
Most respondents (85%) listened to the episodes in their entirety, while few learners (10 %) only listened to the parts of the podcast’s episodes they were interested in. One respondent listened only to the beginning of each episode (Fig. 9).



(Fig.9)

**Question 12:** *Quante volte hai ascoltato in media ogni episodio?*

The majority of the respondents listened to each podcast once or twice (80%), while the other 20% of the respondents usually listened to each episode three times or more (Fig. 10).



(Fig. 10)

**Question 13:** *La maggior parte delle volte*

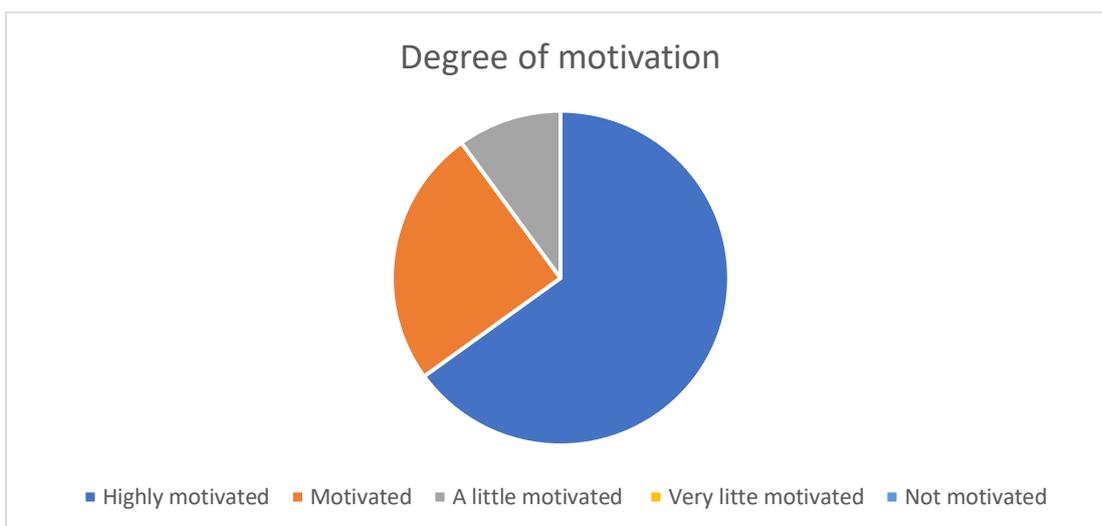
The podcast listeners could either stream podcasts' episodes online or download episodes on their selected device and later listen to the episodes. Alternatively, they could do both things: first stream episodes online and then download them on their devices. The listeners of "A cup of tea with Alex" usually listened to the podcast' episodes online (16), while few of them streamed and downloaded the episodes (3), and just one person downloaded the episodes and then listened to them on his/her device.

**Question 14:** *Hai trovato difficoltà nell'utilizzare il podcast? Se sì, quali?*

This question was inspired by the concept that podcasting may create a barrier to those students who are technically challenged (Menziez, 2005). However, the answers to this question are opposite to this idea. In fact, nineteen out of twenty respondents did not have any problem in using the podcast. Furthermore, this English course was held in a small rural town and was attended by young and older students who may not have been comfortable with using technologies. Additionally, almost half of the participants did not have any experience with podcasting and had never listened to a podcast before. The answers to this question show that podcasting may not be that difficult to use and consequently it is not likely to create a barrier for students. Finally, one respondent complained about the high-pace of the podcast. However, this complaint is not related to technology and therefore it is not appropriate.

**Question 15:** *Eri motivata/o a utilizzare il podcast? Esprimi il tuo grado di motivazione da 1 a 5*

Motivation is one of the most important psychological concepts in education (Rodgers and Withrow-Thorton, 2005; Vallerand et al., 1992) and it can entice students to learn as well as to complete learning activities (Green and Sulbaran, 2006). According to O-Bryan and Hegelheimer (2007), podcasting has the potential to create intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in students. Similarly, Rosell and Aguilar (2007) claimed that podcasting can be “attractive and motivating” for students. Podcasting motivated most of the participants, who in fact claimed to be highly motivated (65%) and motivated (25%) in the use of the podcast. Two participants felt a little motivated, however no one felt very little or no motivation.



(Fig. 11)

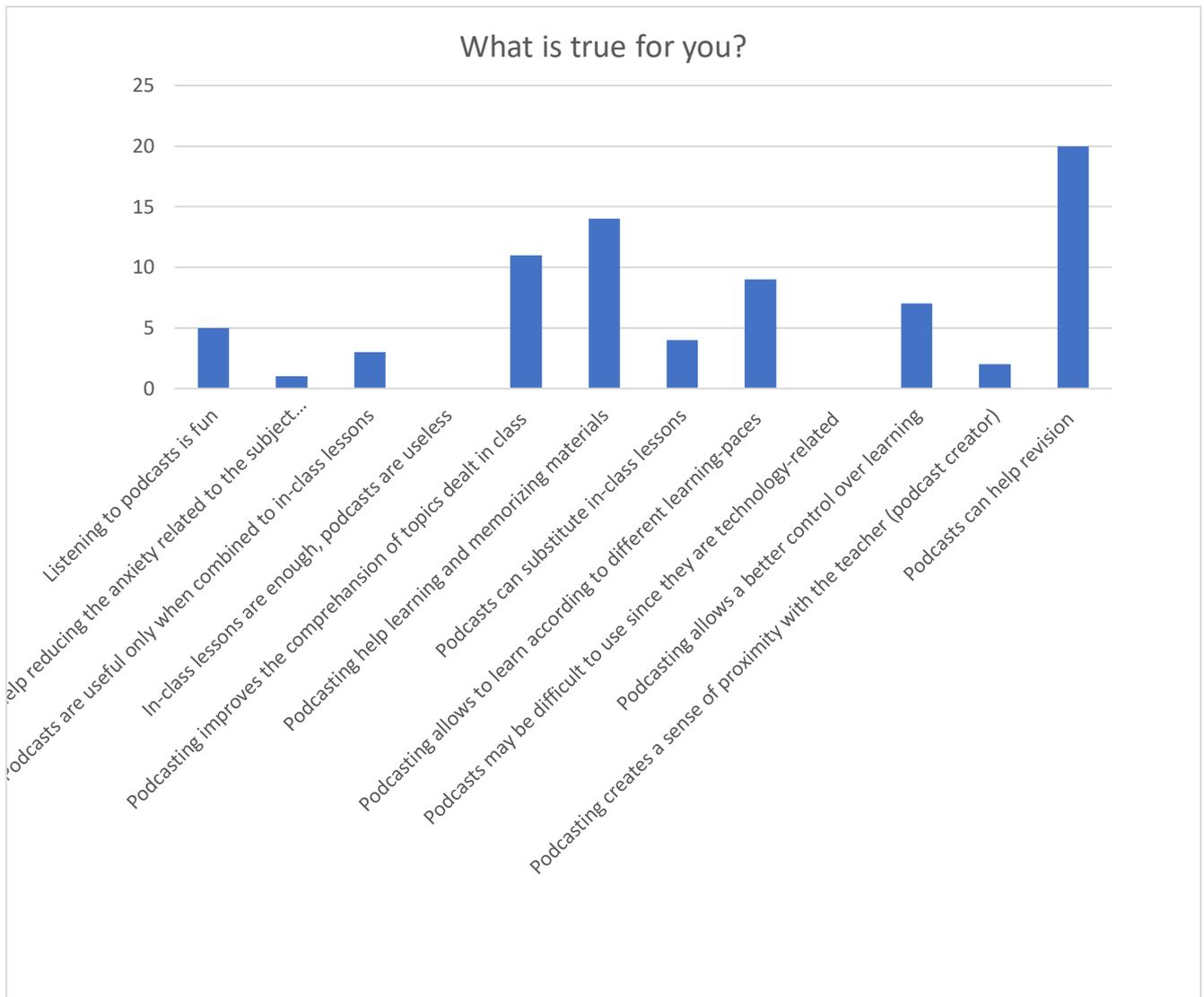
**Question 16:** *Ritieni che il podcast ti abbia aiutato ad apprendere meglio i contenuti del corso?*

95 % of the respondents claimed that the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” helped them get a better understanding of the course content. This datum is in line with McGarr (2009), who claimed that podcasting used as a supplementary material can “deepen and broaden the understanding of the lecture”. Only one person said that the podcast did not provide a better understanding of the contents of the English course.

**Question 17:** *Ti piacerebbe poter usufruire nuovamente di podcast educativi in futuro?*

One respondent claimed that they were not interested in using educational podcasts in the future, while the rest of the respondents (19) said that they would like to benefit from educational podcasting again. These answers show that educational podcasting has been highly appreciated by the learners since most of them would like to use educational podcasts in the future.

**Question 18:** *Quali di queste affermazioni ritieni vera?*



(Fig.12)

In question number 18, the participants had to say which statements were true according to them and their experience with podcasting. To analyse the data collected, the statements are going to be divided in three main categories:

## 1 Relation between podcasting and in-class lessons

1.1 Podcasts are useful only when combined to in-class lessons

1.2 In-class lessons are enough, podcasts are useless

1.3 Podcasts can substitute in-class lessons

## **2 Podcast's features**

2.1 Listening to podcasts is fun

2.2 Podcasts may be difficult to use since they are technology-related

## **3 Podcast's benefits**

3.1 Listening to podcasts helps reduce the anxiety related to the subject studied

3.2 Podcasting improves the comprehension of topics dealt in class

3.3 Podcasting helps learning and memorizing materials

3.4 Podcasting allows to learn according to different learning-paces

3.5 Podcasting allows a better control over learning

3.6 Podcasting creates a sense of proximity with the teacher (podcast creator)

3.7 Podcasts can help revision

In the first category (1), four of the respondents claimed that podcasts could substitute in-class lessons. Participants being mostly workers or students had to skip some in-class lessons because they were busy or tired after a long day spent at work or university. Podcasting allowed the learners to skip classes without stressing out about losing the content of the lesson or falling behind. "A cup of tea with Alex" allowed them to make up for lost lessons using some of their spare time (about 14 minutes) to listen to the podcast's episode they needed.

On the other hand, three of the participants claimed that podcasts were useful, but only when combined to in-class lessons. This statement is in line with the aim of

supplementary podcast (Mcgarr, 2009), which is to summarize concepts of the lecture and provide syntheses of the core readings and/or to provide additional material either to deepen and broaden the understanding of the lecture. “A cup of tea with Alex” provided both a summary of the main concepts of the previous lesson and additional materials. Either way, podcasting was related to in-class lessons. None of the participants claimed that podcasts were useless and in-class lessons were enough. This shows that participants appreciated the education podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”, and considered it an essential part of their learning experience and not just an additional component to the English course.

In the second category, two features of podcasting were taken into consideration: the enjoyability of podcasting, and its difficulty of use. Five respondents claimed that using podcasts was fun and none of them claimed that podcasting was difficult to use because of its relation to technology.

The third category focuses on the benefits provided by podcasting. All participants agreed that podcasting helps revision. This datum is in line with research by Williamson and Fardon (2007), who claimed that the use of podcasts to replay and review past lectures aids revision and comprehension. This result is also in accordance with Evans (2008) and Brittain et al. (2006), who found out that students perceived podcasts to be the best tool for revision, in comparison with other more traditional materials such as textbooks or their own notes.

Fourteen of the respondents agreed that podcasting helps learning and memorizing materials, and more than half of the participants (11) claimed that

podcasting improves the comprehension of topics dealt in class. Again, this is in keeping with research by Williamson and Fardon (2007), and by Harris and Park (2008), who claimed that podcasting facilitates students' comprehension, making educational materials student-friendly.

In line with Sloan (2005) and Kaplan-Leiserson (2005) who argued that podcasting facilitates self-paced learning allowing learners to pause, fast-forward, rewind or skip accordingly to their needs, nine of the participants said that podcasting allows learning according to different learning-paces.

Seven of the participants claimed that podcasting allows a better control over learning. In line with Chan and Lee research (2005), one respondent claimed that listening to podcasts helped reduce the anxiety related to the subject studied. Finally, two respondents believed that podcasting creates a sense of proximity with the teacher.

**Question 19:** *Se vuoi hai la possibilità di aggiungere un commento relativo alla tua esperienza con il podcast educativo*

In this last question, the respondents could write a comment related to their experience with the educational podcast. One respondent thought that the podcast was very useful especially when it was not possible to attend in-class lessons. Another respondent said that they had never tried podcasting before and that they believe it is very useful in language learning, and for other purposes. Finally, the last respondent to leave a

comment wrote that it was the first time that they experienced a combination of in-class lesson and educational podcast. They believed that this combination should further be used since in his/her opinion it aids learning.

## **Chapter 5 – Conclusions**

This thesis, titled “Digital Education: ‘A cup of tea with Alex’, a supplementary educational podcast”, explored the perceptions, ideas and experiences of a group of adult learners who benefitted from educational podcasting during a twenty-hour English course. This thesis was divided into five main chapters:

- 1) Theoretical framework;
- 2) Creating a podcast;
- 3) Data collection and methodology;
- 4) Findings;
- 5) Conclusions.

The first chapter outlined the theoretical framework that guided this research study. A general overview of the use of digital technologies and the spread of M-learning and MALL in education was first given. Then, the main topic of this thesis, podcasting, was explained, and its history and mode of operation were discussed. The types of podcasts and their multiple usages especially in education were later analysed. At the end of the chapter the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting were listed and discussed.

In the second chapter, the podcast-creation process was explained in detail and technical aspects of podcasting such as recording, editing and distributing were analysed. Then, my experience with creating the 10-episode podcast series “A cup of tea with Alex” was shared and discussed. This podcast series was created as supplementary material for an upper-intermediate English course for adults.

In the third chapter, the data collection process was explained and analysed. An inevitable parenthesis was also drawn on the type of research used for this research study: qualitative analysis. As fully explained in chapter three, the data for this study were collected through two surveys distributed to the 24 adults who took part in the English course I organized. The first 4-item questionnaire was handed out at the beginning of the course and was aimed at assessing the previous knowledge and experience of the 24 students regarding podcasting. The second 19-item questionnaire called “*Percezioni riguardanti il podcast educativo: A cup of tea with Alex*”, was created to gather information, perceptions and opinions about the students’ experience with the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”. This second questionnaire was sent via e-mail at the end of the English course.

In the fourth chapter, the findings of both surveys were shown and discussed in relation to the existing literature on podcasting.

From the results obtained from the first survey, it was possible to notice that: most respondents had listened to podcasts before, usually on computers or smartphones, however most of them had never listened to educational podcasts.

Therefore “A cup of tea with Alex” was the first encounter with podcasting and educational podcasting for many of the learners who attended the English course.

The second survey was completed by 22 participants, fourteen women and eight men. Their ages ranged from 18 to 55 years old and they were either workers or students. Out of the 22 participants, two of them did not use the educational podcast due to the lack of internet connection in their house and/or the lack of free time. Most of the respondents listened to the educational podcast series at home on their smartphones while they were not carrying out other activities such as: driving, reading, cooking etc. The results found in chapter 4 questioned the “anywhere and anytime” experience that podcasting should provide and its multitasking feature. Although listening to audio is said to be an unobtrusive activity that can be integrated into other activities in our daily lives (Clark and Walsh, 2004), the results of this research study showed that just six out of twenty learners undertook another activity while listening to the podcast “A cup of tea with Alex”. These results are in line with studies by Lee and Chan (2007) and Evans (2008), which suggested that students tend to treat podcasts as a learning activity, and consequently they do not undertake other activities while listening to them. Moreover, these results suggest that students prefer listening to podcasts within a designated study location, usually their house, instead of “everywhere”.

Most respondents listened to more than half of the podcast episodes and usually in their entirety. The majority of the respondents claimed that they listened to the

podcast' episodes online and that they played each episode once or twice. The main reason for learners to skip episodes seemed to be the lack of free time.

Overall the participants seemed to have enjoyed the educational podcast series, since most respondents claimed that they would like to benefit from educational podcasting in the future. This may be due to participants feeling motivated to use the podcast during the course, some of them having even described it as a “fun activity. Furthermore, almost all respondents enjoyed the podcast without experiencing technology-related problems and thus there were no technology-related barriers that prevented participants from enjoying the podcasting experience.

The data collected provide the opportunity to discuss the relation between podcasting and in-class lessons. According to the participants, educational podcasting could be an alternative to in-class lessons. Used in this way, podcasting can help learners to cope with the stress of losing lesson content or falling behind. Similarly, educational podcasting combined with in-class lessons was highly appreciated. The educational podcasts provided both a summary of the main concepts from the previous lesson and additional materials to the learners.

In view of the data collected, three main advantages related to podcasting came to light. First, all participants agreed that educational podcasting helped revision and that the educational podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” helped them get a better understanding of the course content. Second, most participants claimed that podcasting helped them learning and memorizing materials. Finally, some participants said that

the support from the educational podcast episodes made them feel more in control of their learning.

To summarise, educational podcasting used as supplementary tool succeeded in enhancing the overall learning experience, providing an additional source of content to learners and enabling them to be more in control of their learning.

This research study took approximately three months to write and a great amount of work to create the educational podcast series “A cup of tea with Alex”. Although the results of this analysis are often in line with the existing literature of podcasting, there are certain limitations to this research study. This research is based on the experience and perceptions of a class of Italian adults who attended a 20-hour English course which used the educational podcast that I created. The data collected are not sufficient to provide a complete picture of the use of educational podcasting in Italy. However, it must be acknowledged that this thesis is conceived as the last task to be carried out in order to show one’s abilities and skills at the end of a MA journey, and that any university student has limited amount of time and resources to develop their thesis.

In addition to the limited number of participants, another limitation of this research study may lie in the type of research I conducted. As illustrated above, the data were collected through two surveys handed to the participants or sent by e-mail. Even if the results obtained with this procedure are good examples of the experience and perceptions of the respondents, they do not provide an in-depth analysis of the respondent’s thoughts. A better solution would have been that of conducting semi-

structured interviews with the respondents. A semi-structured interview is a research method that is more flexible than a structured interview, or a questionnaire. The interviewer must prepare a set of questions in advance to explore the main themes of their research, but during the interview, they can ask new questions tailored to the situation. This method generally allows researchers to gain deeper insights into the topic and adapt a more flexible approach. On the other hand, it takes a greater amount of time and energy on the part of the researcher.

Despite these limitations, the research study illustrated in this thesis can indeed be a valid source of information concerning the use of educational podcasting as a supplementary tool in a language course. In conclusion this research study successfully helped to gain understanding of the issue under investigation and has paved the way for new research on educational podcasting both in language teaching and in other educational fields.

# Appendix

1)

## Questionario

Nome candidato:

1) Sai cos'è un *podcast*? (Cerchia la tua risposta)

- Sì
- No
- Non ne sono sicuro

2) Hai mai ascoltato un *podcast*? (Cerchia la tua risposta)

- Sì
- No

3) Se hai risposto sì alla precedente domanda rispondi ai seguenti quesiti:

- Qual è l'ultimo *podcast* che hai ascoltato?

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- Dove lo hai ascoltato e attraverso quale dispositivo (telefono, mp3, computer portatile ecc.)?

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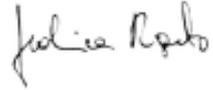
4) Hai mai sentito parlare di *podcast* educativo? (Cerchia la tua risposta)

- Sì
- No
- Non ne sono sicuro

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## 1.1) Authorizations

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a)

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*Giuseppe Piva*

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*Ugo*

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*Maurizio Giurato*

b)

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*Maria Luisa*

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*John Peter*

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*Tanya A. Flea*

c)

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d)

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*Dora Barbara*

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*Arcolin Alex*

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*Arcolin Alex*

e)

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*Francesca Bocca*

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*Stefania Sica*

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*Antonio Valente*

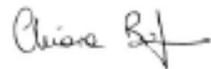
f)

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manfredi".

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chiara Biffi".

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stefano".

g)

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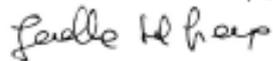
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h)

2)

## **Percezioni riguardanti il podcast educativo "A cup of tea with Alex".**

Caro lettore, ti sarei grato se potessi completare questo questionario anonimo riguardante la tua esperienza con il podcast "A cup of tea with Alex". Completando il questionario accetterai che le tue risposte vengano utilizzate ai soli fini di ricerca, per lo sviluppo della mia tesi magistrale. Grazie in anticipo per il tempo che dedicherai a questo mio progetto.

Arcolin Alex

\*Campo obbligatorio

1) Indica il tuo genere \*

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Uomo
- Donna

2) Indica la tua età \*

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- 0 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 56 - 65
- + 66

3) Indica la tua occupazione \*

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Studente
- Lavoratore
- Disoccupato
- Pensionato
- Altro:

4) Hai usufruito del podcast educativo "A cup of tea with Alex"? \*

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Sì
- No

5) Se nella precedente domanda hai risposto no, non sarà necessario rispondere alle successive domande. Prima di concludere ti chiedo solo di motivare la tua risposta. Scrivi perchè non hai usufruito del podcast:

6) Dove hai ascoltato maggiormente il podcast (a casa, in ufficio, nei mezzi pubblici ecc.)?

7) Attraverso quale dispositivo hai ascoltato il podcast (puoi indicare anche più di una risposta)?

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- Smartphone
- Mp3
- Computer fisso
- Laptop (computer portatile)
- Tablet
- Altro:

8) Mentre ascoltavi il podcast facevi altro (multitasking)? Se sì, cosa?

9) Quanti episodi del podcast “A cup of tea with Alex” hai ascoltato?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Meno di 5
- Più di 5
- Tutti

10) Nel caso avessi saltato qualche episodio del podcast, qual è stata la ragione? Indica il motivo per cui non hai usufruito di uno o più episodi (Puoi indicare anche più di una risposta):

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- Mancanza di tempo
- Inutilità dell'episodio
- Difficoltà tecniche e di utilizzo
- Dimenticanza
- Altro:

11) Quanti minuti del podcast ascoltavi in media?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Solo la parte iniziale (2/3 minuti)
- Solo la parte contenente l'argomento a cui ero interessato/a
- Tutto il podcast
- Altro:

12) Quante volte hai ascoltato in media ogni episodio?

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- + 3

13) La maggior parte delle volte:

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Ascoltavi il podcast in streaming
- Scaricavi la puntata e poi ascoltavi l'episodio sul tuo dispositivo
- Entrambe le modalità
- Altro:

14) Hai trovato difficoltà nell'utilizzare il podcast? Se sì, quali?

15) Eri motivato/a a utilizzare il podcast? Esprimi il tuo grado di motivazione da 1 a 5  
Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- 1 (Non motivato)
- 2 (Molto poco motivato)
- 3 (Poco motivato)
- 4 (Motivato)
- 5 (Molto motivato)

16) Ritieni che il podcast ti abbia aiutato ad apprendere meglio i contenuti del corso?  
Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Sì
- No
- Non è stato rilevante
- Altro:

17) Ti piacerebbe poter usufruire nuovamente di podcast educativi in futuro?  
Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- Sì
- No
- Forse
- Altro:

18) Quali di queste affermazioni ritieni vera?  
Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- Utilizzare il podcast è divertente
- Utilizzare il podcast aiuta a ridurre l'ansia relativa alla materia studiata
- Il podcast è utile solo se accompagnato dalla lezione in presenza
- La lezione in presenza è sufficiente di per sé, l'utilizzo del podcast non è essenziale
- Il podcast aiuta a cogliere nuove sfumature relative agli argomenti affrontati
- Il podcast aiuta a memorizzare meglio il materiale
- Il podcast può servire come sostituzione alla lezione
- Il podcast permette di assorbire i materiali secondo i propri ritmi di apprendimento
- Il podcast può essere difficile da usare a causa della sua relazione con la tecnologia
- Il podcast permette allo studente di avere maggiore controllo sull'apprendimento
- Il podcast permette di migliorare la sensazione di vicinanza con il professore

- Il podcast aiuta a ripassare quanto svolto in classe

19) Se vuoi hai la possibilità di aggiungere un commento relativo alla tua esperienza con il podcast educativo

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