Revisiting the Potential of Podcasting for Language Learning

What do you wish you as an instructor had more of?

Podcasts vs. Audio Files

- Accessible anytime and anyplace
- Form a part of a series
- Delivered automatically via a subscription (RSS)

"Podcasting is not putting audio files on your site and having people download them. That's called 'putting audio files on your site and having people download them'. To be a podcast, it has to be automated." (Kantor, 2006)

How does automation help in materials development?

Benefits for Language Instruction

- Organization and targeted delivery of material
- Development is much faster and easier than with traditional audio materials
- Free distribution
- Extends the learning beyond the classroom
- Web 2.0 medium that takes full advantage of the web:
    - Access to authentic materials from all around the world
    - Opportunities to use it in conjunction with other affordances of mobile technology (geo-synched podcasts)
    - Entirely shareable and viral

Benefits for Language Study

- Familiarity with the medium
- Attractive format in terms of the design, marketing, etc.
- A format that is convenient, and easy to use
- Ubiquity and portability of the medium and the ease of access.
- Availability across platforms - from a computer to a watch
- Free to download

What are the limitations?

Limitations

- Technical Issues
- Time spent on materials development or locating the appropriate podcasts
- Information Overload
- Not ideal for visual learners
- The ease of creating a podcast does not imply the ability to do so in a didactically sound manner.

What can one do with podcasts?

Taxonomy (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007)

- Develop one's own materials
    - Student-developed
    - Teacher-developed
- Using existing resources
    - Authentic materials not developed for language learning
    - Authentic materials developed specifically for classroom instruction

Podcasts and Language Teaching

Proficiency:

- Vocabulary + Grammar

Skills:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Culture

New Pedagogies

Social Pedagogies

- Access to various registers, genres, and dialects of the LL.
- Audio that is spatially and situationally established
- Authentic materials that are chronologically orientated (RSS syndication)

Multiliteraicies

- A digital medium of communication with its own register and format
- What else can be read from a podcast? About the listener? About the producer?
- An important part of XXI c. socio-cultural discourse