The beneficial use of podcasts in the teaching of English to students in qualifying education

Auteur : Fontaine, Elisa
Promoteur(s) : Renson, Audrey; Van Linden, An
Faculté : Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres
Diplôme : Master en langues et lettres modernes, orientation germaniques, à finalité didactique
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Note to readers

This dissertation discusses the qualifying education within French-speaking Belgium. However, these recent years have marked the beginning of major changes regarding that peculiar type of secondary education. Therefore, whilst this dissertation acknowledges these modifications, some of which are still ongoing, it was chosen when writing this dissertation not to discuss those changes. Consequently, only the features which remain unchanged are discussed in this paper.

Then, it is worth noting that, because the experiment discussed in this paper was implemented and targeted a peculiar type of secondary education within French-speaking Belgium, a significant part of the documents investigated were written in French. As a consequence, it was decided, to ensure the clarity of the reading experience, to translate the findings pertaining to that sort of literature. This is indicated, throughout the dissertation, by appropriate footnotes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
EdR	Etat des ressouces
FL	Foreign Language
FTC	Final Task of Communication
FOCOM	Formation Générale Commune
L1	First Foreign Language
L2	Second Foreign Language
LC	Listening Comprehension
MeP	Mise en Perspective
OBG	Option de Base Groupée
OE	Oral Expression
RdP	Résolution du problème
SeGEC	Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique
SP	Situation-problem Didactic Framework
T1	Teacher 1
T2	Teacher 2
T3	Teacher 3
WBF	Wallonia-Brussels Federation

1   Introduction

One of the first concepts I got to learn about, during my training as a future teacher, was that we are meant to provide students with the necessary tools to be able to "take an active part in society as a whole"[1] (Décret Mission 1997: 4). In other words, educators must train the citizens of tomorrow. This quote has been deeply engraved in my mind ever since, as it raised many questions as to what was exactly expected of aspiring teachers like me. I have since come to realise that it mainly implies that there must constantly be an evolution in the act of teaching itself. This, to correspond to the ever-growing expectations of society and the future lives of students. It, thus, implies, among many other requirements, that teachers must dutifully inform themselves on the new tools at their disposal and the new technologies being developed to perfect their teaching. Therefore, when I was reflecting on a topic to base my dissertation on, I kept this reasoning in mind. I have consequently looked for something that was not yet covered by academic research and that would be useful to students while still being in touch with their reality. I have since come to the realisation that podcasts have the potential to become such a tool, due to their many advantages.

One of the many means teachers, specifically of foreign languages, may indeed resort to while creating their lessons are the various textual genres which exist. The latter do constitute a real asset within educational resources, despite being rather new to the history of teaching methods. Speaking of textual genre, one might, therefore, refer to *podcasts*. The great varieties and sorts of the latter demonstrate, indeed, various social practices and frameworks which may be used within a class to teach grammar, vocabulary or idiomatic expressions. This, in a rather new way for students as well as for educators, to whom this genre might be fairly unknown. The latter also has the potential to perfectly inscribe itself within the 'action-oriented approach' as recommended by the Council of Europe in its *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). This, due to the possible practical and, broadly speaking, project-based applications[2], which could

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[1] My translation.

[2] This will be further investigated in the possible improvements related to the experiment at the end of this dissertation.

be envisioned with podcasts. Hence, the interest in this dissertation in such a rich textual genre. It will, after the previously stated definition of textual genres, try to give an in-depth definition of the specific genre of podcast.

Then, even if the research carried out in this paper might be further investigated within the French-speaking Belgian school system as a whole, I would like to give an explanation as to why I have chosen to limit the former to the sole qualifying secondary education. Two major factors have contributed to this decision, one being based on an academic perspective and the second on personal reasoning.

When I began to further define my research topic and decided to focus on textual genres, podcasts for instance, I had just finished an internship with students following a qualifying curriculum. I thus began to look up what had been written about this peculiar school field. At that time, there were arguably few papers which had discussed the matter, especially within foreign language teaching, which contributed to motivate the orientation of this dissertation on that specific type of education. Moreover, I must confess that my personal experience during my various internships within the qualifying option was particularly enjoyable, as it provided me new teaching perspectives, which I have thus decided to further explore within this paper. The latter must, however, be considered rather as another attempt to define the already existing research on qualifying education, rather than being viewed as offering definite answers to such a complex subject.

This dissertation first begins by giving a brief outline of the educational system in French-speaking Belgium, the targeted region for the following research and experiment. It then provides a framework for textual genres in general, followed by the more specific genre of podcast, with a particular highlight of the related conversational type. This paper then investigates whether legal provisions, related to foreign language teaching in Belgium, give any account of these textual genres. It is able to do so through a brief survey and experimentation carried out in different parts of Wallonia. This paper thus depicts and justifies the methodology that has been used throughout the research and provides the analysis based upon the results of the latter. The limitations and improvements of such a project are then discussed in the last chapter. A short conclusion finally ends this dissertation along with some suggestions for future investigations.

1.1 Hypotheses and research questions

The main aim of this dissertation remains to prove whether, as its title suggests, podcasts might be effectively "beneficial in the teaching of English to students in qualifying secondary education". To that effect, it investigates a number of specific research questions and assumes a series of related hypotheses, which also inform its organisation into different chapters, with a peculiar focus on the survey and experimentation. These questions served, indeed, as the core of the following research and were designed to cover as dutifully the subject and its many nuances as possible. The limitations of such hypotheses cannot be denied. It was, indeed, not always possible to find an answer to the latter due to some shortages in specific scientific literature and data. Moreover, the participation rate of schools and teachers who showed a real interest in such a project has also not permitted to give significant results and, thus, answers. Hence, the primary conclusions, which need to be considered more as an opening to further investigations than as definite answers to the main aim of this paper. Table 1 gives an account of the above-mentioned hypotheses, this presented in the order of appearance of the latter.

Table 1 - Hypotheses and research questions

H1	The textual genre of the podcast is not clearly defined in scientific literature.	Q1	Is the textual genre of the podcast clearly defined in scientific literature? If so, what is the definition?
H2	Legal provisions related to foreign language (FL) teaching do not refer to podcasts.	Q2	Is the textual genre of the podcast mentioned in the various legal provisions related to FL teaching? If applicable, to what extent is it referred to?
H3	The general concept of textual genre is known by seasoned FL teachers.	Q3	Have experienced FL teachers ever heard of the concept of textual genre? If applicable, what is their knowledge of the latter?
H4	FL teachers know the textual genre of the podcast, but do not actively use it in their classrooms.	Q4	Have FL teachers ever heard of the textual genre of the podcast? If so, do they use the latter in their classrooms?
H5	'Ready-made' didactic sequences may encourage FL teachers to take part in experimentation.	Q5	Can 'ready-made' didactic sequences constitute a motivation for FL teachers to engage in experimentation with podcasts? If applicable, to what extent?
H6	Students of qualifying secondary education do not know the textual genre of the podcast.	Q6	Have students of qualifying secondary education any knowledge of the textual genre of the podcast? If so, what is their knowledge of the latter?

H7	Students of qualifying secondary education might find podcasts helpful regarding their language proficiency.	Q7	Are podcasts helpful regarding language proficiency, according to students of qualifying secondary education? If so, beneficial to which linguistic skill(s)?
H8	There is a real asset in the transposition of authentic content into educational material.	Q8	Is there a real asset in the transposition of authentic content into educational material? If so, to what degree?
H9	The production of a podcast is beneficial for the teaching of English to students in qualifying secondary education.	Q9	Is imposing the task of creating a podcast beneficial in the learning of English for students in secondary qualifying education? If so, for which skills? The listening and speaking skills?

1.2 Outline of the educational system in the French-speaking Belgium

1.2.1 Introduction

Because this dissertation mainly focuses on the implementation of the textual genre of the podcast within classes of the secondary qualifying education of Wallonia, it first gives a brief overview of the whole school system within this French-speaking part of Belgium. After a general outline, this dissertation further dives into the secondary qualifying branch of the Walloon educational system. In that regard, this dissertation first gives an account of the general features related to this peculiar educational section. It then sheds light on the specific requirements of foreign language classes towards students who have chosen secondary qualifying education, as it is of great importance to later in this dissertation.

1.2.2   General outline of the Walloon school system.

The school system in the French-speaking part of Belgium is one of division. As stated by the *Loi modifiant certaines dispositions de la législation de l'enseignement* (1959)*,* the educational system within Wallonia-Brussels Federation is, indeed, split between two main networks, namely the "réseau officiel", which encompasses every school "organised by the State, provinces, communes, associations of communes or by every person governed by public law"[3] (2). Schools under the supervision of Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement (WBE) pertain to the "réseau officiel", for instance. The legal document further states that every other school belongs to the "réseau libre" (Loi modifiant certaines dispositions de la législation de l'enseignement 1959: 2). An example thereof are schools belonging to the Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholic (SeGEC) are part of the "réseau libre". If major differences exist between the two networks, the core structural organisation of secondary education remains globally the same.

In Belgium, the six secondary years of high school are split into 3 degrees, which are, as stated in the *Loi relative à la structure générale et à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire* (1971)*,* respectively, called the "first (years 1 and 2), the second (years 3 and 4) and the third (years 5, 6 and eventually, in the case of qualifying education, year 7) degree" (2)[4]. From the third year, as detailed in the *Arrêté royal relatif à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire* (1984), students may choose among a variety of academic pathways, namely the "general, technical, artistic or professional" orientations (7). These are organised within two main sections, serving each a slightly different purpose. The "transitional section" typically prepares students to follow a higher education, whereas the "qualifying section" usually gives students a qualification, which eases their entry within working life (Communauté française de Belgique 1984: 7). The "general and professional orientations can solely be organised within the transitional section for the former and qualifying section for the latter, [whereas] the technical and artistic options may be found within both sections" (Communauté française de Belgique 1984: 7).

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[3] My translation.

[4] Some nuances related to the structure of the qualifying education itself need to be discussed. See the next subchapter.

1.2.3 Focus on the secondary qualifying section

Speaking of the structural organisation of the qualifying section, this dissertation will not, as stated in the notes to readers, discusss the ongoing changes which are, sometime, still ongoing[5].

First and foremost, it is worth mentioning that, when choosing a study option, students from the qualifying education are free to pick among 10 main business sectors. The WBF in its *Circulaire générale relative à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire ordinaire et à la sanction des études* (2024) describes the latter as being, namely the agronomy, industry, construction, hotel and catering, clothing and textiles, applied arts, economy, personal services, applied sciences and fine arts sectors (35-36)[6]. Each of these domains are further split into specific groups, within which pupils are free to select their study option from (Arrêté de l'Exécutif de la Communauté française exécutant le décret du 29 juillet 1992 portant organisation de l'enseignement secondaire de plein exercice 1992: 16-17). This dissertation, which places a particular emphasis on FL classes, and, specifically, the implementation of an experimental approach within English classes, thus focuses on students following an option which is language driven. In that particular regard, it has been determined that the 'reception and tourism agent' option, which belongs to the group 'tourism' within the 'economy' sector, allegedly fit the prerequisite of such an experiment.

Then, a clear distinction needs to be drawn between the two main course types pupils of the qualifying education need to take, no matter which option they have selected. According to the *Arrêté royal relatif à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire* (1984), the "formation générale commune" (FOCOM) refers to "subjects taken in common by all pupils belonging either to the

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[5] These changes encompass, among other things, the implementation of a '4th complementary year', which is defined by the *Circulaire générale relative à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire ordinaire et à la sanction des études* (2024) as a "un parcours aménagé avec un Programme Spécifique de Soutien aux Apprentissages (PSSA) ciblé sur les difficultés de l'élève." (475). Another major modification, defined by the *Décret relatif à l'enseignement qualifiant* (2022), to qualifying education resides in the addition of 'unités de qualification', which validation is mandatory in order for students to receive their 'certificat de qualification' (3). For any information on the matter, one may refer to the *Décret relatif au parcours d'enseignement qualifiant* (2022) and the *Circulaire générale relative à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire ordinaire et à la sanction des études Année scolaire 2024-2025* (2024), as well as any other future document discussing the qualifying education.

[6] My translation.

same form or section of education, or to several forms or sections of education"[7] (9). These courses thus point to more 'general' school subjects, which are not specific to one sole option but common to all pupils. The "option de base groupée" (OBG), on the other hand, strongly varies depending on both the business sector and the group to which the study option belongs. It is, usually, those courses and, therefore, their evaluations which give the technical or professional qualifications and, in some cases, certificates necessary for professions pursued by pupils (Décret relatif au parcours de l'enseignement qualifiant 2022: 3-4).

1.2.4 FL classes within qualifying education

Because this dissertation explores the benefits of a specific textual genre, namely that of the podcasts, in the teaching of English among students of the qualifying education, a brief overview of the structure and requirements of FL classes as a whole is provided in the following subchapters. The latter discuss, indeed, the influence of institutions such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) on the shaping of FL courses, as well as the targeted level by each degree of secondary qualifying education.

1.2.4.1 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the action-oriented approach

Before mentioning FL classes within French-speaking Belgium, it is worth mentioning an institution which has had a major influence on the latter, as well as on European countries in general. The Council of Europe (2001) had, indeed, initially developed "the Common European Framework [to provide] a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (1). Beyond providing a sort of "common ground" regarding most of the educational resources related to FL teaching, it is also the broad scope of the CEFR that is here to be highlighted. Then, the Council of Europe in its *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Companion Volume* (2020) goes further by detailing that the CEFR aims "to provide a common descriptive

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[7] My translation.

metalanguage to talk about language proficiency" (27). This shared metalanguage takes the form of six Common Reference Levels, which, as the Council of Europe broadly describes, are "the Basic user (A1 and A2), Independent user (B1 and B2) and Proficient user (C1 and C2)" (2020: 36). These various levels and their descriptors, which are detailed in the CEFR, are of great importance, as they are used to determine the level of language proficiency of learners based on what they "can do" in each of the linguistic skills[8] (Council of Europe 2020: 28). In French-speaking Belgium, FL classes, no matter which educational network, namely "officiel" or "libre"[9], and type of education, general or qualifying, are intrinsically linked to the CEFR and, thus, the above-mentioned Common Reference Levels. The latter are, indeed, to be found in the various legal provisions surrounding FL teaching, which are discussed in the following subsection.

Then, beyond solely providing common language proficiency levels, the CEFR *advises* a pedagogic approach when it comes to FL teaching. It is important to note that, as Guimarães-Santos (2012) reminds, the Council of Europe does not "prescribe a methodology and [further] states that its aim is not to promote a particular teaching method"[10] (3). Hence, the highlight put on 'advising' rather than 'prescribing' a pedagogic approach, which is here, namely the action-oriented approach. Speaking of the latter, the Council of Europe describes it as an approach which

> [...] views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. (2001: 9)

One key concept within the action-oriented approach lies, indeed, in the notion of "tasks", which is, again, described by the Council of Europe as "the actions [which] are performed by one or more individuals strategically using their own specific competences to achieve a given result" (2001: 9). Rosen brings the concept of "tasks", as defined in the CEFR, in relation to FL classes. She asserts that it is, indeed, the number of tasks that learners are able to fulfil, which determines their level of linguistic competence (2010: 488). Furthermore, another central concept in the definition of the action-oriented approach is that of learners being considered as "social agents". This means that,

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[8] See 1.2.4.2 for a detailed overview thereof.

[9] See 1.2.2 General outline of the Walloon school system.

[10] My translation.

in the words of Rosen, teachers should, according to the CEFR, no longer strive to "train a 'passing stranger' capable of communicating in expected situations; [they should rather] want to help a learner become an effective user of the language, a European citizen capable of integrating into another country"[11] (2010: 489). In other words, the action-oriented approach goes beyond the mere act of communication. Puren (2006a) explains that, indeed, the former differs from the previously advised by the CEFR 'communicative approach' in the sense that it shifted from "an action *on* the other through language" to "an action *with*[12] the other [...] in which speech acts are only a means"[13] (37). This change of consideration towards language learning, and thus teaching, is quite innovative, as it places learners in a real collaborative act of learning (Rosen 2010: 489). However, despite the ground-breaking nature of the action-oriented approach, Puren warns that teachers should not abandon every other pedagogic method just yet (2006b: 44). The author further asserts that, indeed, the real matter when it comes to FL teaching lies in the ability to "select, articulate and combine [teaching methods] according to the variety and variability of the didactic environments" (44). Thus, this paper attempts to prove how the textual genre of the podcast has the potential to inscribe itself within the previously advised communicative approach as well as the now recommended action-oriented approach by the CEFR.

1.2.4.2   The influence of the CEFR on the qualifying educational system of French-speaking Belgium

As mentioned above, a variety of documents related to FL teaching are, indeed, more or less influenced by the Common Reference Levels as defined by the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001: 1). In French-speaking Belgium, these documents impacted by the CEFR include, to a certain extent, the educative frameworks of both the "officiel" and "libre" networks. These specific documents show, indeed, the level of language proficiency expected from pupils at the end of each degree of secondary education and for each of the linguistic skills. As the document *Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à l'Issue des Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques: Langues*

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[11] My translation.

[12] My emphasis.

[13] My translation.

Modernes, states, the latter encompass the "listening (LC), speaking with and without interaction (OE) reading (RC) and writing (WE)"[14] competences (2017: 9). To do so, however, the various educative frameworks show the use of an intermediate version of the Common Reference Levels prescribed by the CEFR. Figure 1 shows the expected level of language proficiency expected in qualifying education.

	Technique de qualification			
	Formation commune 2H		Formation commune 4H	
	2e degré	3e degré	2e degré	3e degré
CA	A2 (-)	A2 (+)	A2 (+)	B1 (-)
CL	A2 (-)	A2 (+)	A2 (+)	B1 (-)
EE	A2 (-)	A2 (+)	A2 (-) *	A2 (+) *
EOEI	A2 (-)	A2 (+)	A2 (-) *	A2 (+) *
EOSI	A2 (-)	A2 (+)	A2 (-) *	A2 (+) * [15]

Figure 1 - Expected level of language proficiency in the 2nd and 3rd degrees of qualifying education

Regarding the second and third degrees of qualifying education, the various levels required for each linguistic competence varie, indeed, between A2 (-) and B1 (+) and only apply to foreign language classes within the FOCOM courses. Therefore, according to the above-mentioned description of the Council of Europe, pupils within qualifying education should demonstrate language proficiency located between that of a "basic" and "independent" user. It is, however, important to take into consideration that, when speaking about FL classes among the qualifying

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[14] My translation. LC stands for listening comprehension; OE for oral expression; RC for reading comprehension; WE for written expression.

[15] Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à l'Issue des Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques: Langues Modernes (2017: 14). The document further explains that competences marked by the symbol "*" indicate that the higher level of proficiency is targeted in skills pertaining to the **reception** (LC and RC).

It should also be mentioned that the expected levels depicted in Figure 1 are valid for both educative networks across French-speaking Belgium.

curriculum, a peculiar focus is shed on oral competence, be it with or without interaction (Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à l'Issue des Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques: Langues Modernes 2017: 12). When it comes to the specific speaking skill, the Council of Europe describes the A2 level as being the ability for learners to

> [...] understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance [...]. [To] communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. [To] describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. (2020: 175)

The simple and routine character of the oral interactions as depicted and expected by the Council of Europe and the various Walloons Legal provisions has, therefore, been kept in mind when choosing and, thus, adapting the textual genre of the podcast. This is discussed to a fuller extent in later parts of this dissertation.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

One of the central concepts discussed in this paper is certainly that of the *textual genre.* It lies, indeed, at the very base of the analyses presented in this dissertation. The textual genre of the podcast is, indeed, intrinsically tied to that concept. The first part of this theoretical framework defines the former, whereas the rest of this chapter focuses on the latter by exploring the various features of this specific textual genre. It also tries to draw up a potential operational definition of the textual genre of the podcast, as it is the core element of the experiment discussed later on in this paper, as well as the subject of the research question number one. Finally, this chapter investigates whether the above-mentioned genre is actually acknowledged by the different official documents related to the Belgian French-speaking educative system.

2.1.1 Textual genre

2.1.1.1 General definition

The concept of textual genre is of great importance, be it in this specific dissertation, as mentioned above, or in the didactic world as a whole. Bulea declares, indeed, that "*the [concept of] genre is*

a fundamental subject in language teaching"[16] (2013: 211). However, before determining the exact scope and importance of this notion within FL classes, one should first consider outlining the latter even if, as Simons (2019a: 41) declares, "it is not easy to clearly define the notion of textual genre [itself]" (1). Before considering any extensive description of the latter, it is, thus, worth mentioning the definitions of each term composing the concept of textual genre. Therefore, according to the dictionary *Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, a "genre is a particular type of literature, painting, music, film, or other art form which people consider as a class because it has *special characteristics*"[17], whereas "textual means relating to written texts, especially literary texts". A first contradiction and limit can here be seen between these two definitions. If the first refers to a variety of components, each with specific features and allegedly related to an art form, the second solely refers to written ones. Then, the nature of these "special characteristics" is still to be determined, as it remains, indeed, quite unclear with such a vague description. Hence, the difficulty of defining the concept of textual genre, especially in the didactic field.

Nevertheless, both the French- and English-speaking scientific worlds, among many others, have studied the question and, thus, provided a large amount of, sometimes similar or divergent definitions of the term *textual genre* (Renson in press). The latter cannot, however, be mentioned without a reference to the hereby related operational definition, as proposed by Simons. The former stands, indeed, as a summary of the principal already existing definitions surrounding the intricate notion of textual genre. Simons proposes, therefore, to consider the concept as

> [a] group of relatively stable written, oral or ***audiovisual*** language productions that are part of a given society, culture, and period. Mastering the characteristics of a textual genre is a tool for acting in a given communication situation, both in reception and in communication. (Simons 2019a: 48)[18]

The following paragraphs are dedicated to the analysis of the most significant components of this definition.

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[16] Original emphasis. My translation.

[17] My emphasis.

[18] Original emphasis. My translation.

One of the first striking elements of this description lies, indeed, in the "relatively stable" nature of textual genres. If Jacquin asserts that "genres may evolve depending on the use of the speakers", she also acknowledges that they obey "description criteria that are both internal (linguistic characteristics and textual structures of the [latter]) and external (function of the texts, communication situation, context of use)" (2019: 11). The criteria Jacquin mentions here constitute, thus, the "relatively stable" feature of the various existing genres. Speakers should aim to learn those in order to be the most effective in a given communication context. This idea of evolving textual genres is not restricted to the sole structure of the latter, as it also echoes the words of Maingueneau (2007), who asserts that textual genres are, indeed, "[c]onstantly evolving with the societies of which they are a part [of]" (30). Hence, the addition of the relatively new audiovisual component in the operational definition, as proposed by Simons. However, Guimarães-Santos insists on the '*relatively* stable' aspect of textual genres, as, according to her, even though they possess certain "generic features", they "always have unique characteristics, which derive from the producer's choice based on his particular production situation" (2012: 3). This variation within the use of language is also to be observed within FL classes. Hence, the importance of FL teachers to introduce and initiate pupils to a variety of genres because, as Dolz and Schneuwly further explain, "given the extreme variability of language practices, [the latter] can be seen as intermediary entities that make it possible to stabilise the formal and ritual elements of practices" (2016: 65). By familiarising and teaching the various characteristics of a genre, FL educators make sure that their pupils have the same conception of the latter. They, thus, also lessen the discrepancies which may exist in the linguistic social practices of everyone regarding said genre.

Then, the definition given by Simons refers to a variety of language productions. As opposed to the description found in *Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, "textual" does not, indeed, refer solely to written texts. In the peculiar context of textual genres, the adjective points at what Bronckart (in Dolz and Schneuwly 2016) calls "any unit of verbal production conveying a linguistically organised message and tending to produce a coherent effect on its addressee"[19]

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[19] My translation.

(63). Therefore, it is the "communication factor" which matters rather than the actual medium speakers use to spread their message. Paltridge refers, indeed, to the "textual" component of textual genres as "groupings of texts which are similar in terms of co-occurence of linguistic patterns" (1996: 237). In other words, a textual genre seems, according to the author, to be composed by the association of a variety of "texts". Lee seems to agree as he mentions the concept of "text type". The author affirms that

> [i]n theory, two texts may belong to the same *text type* (in Biber's sense) even though they may come from two different genres because they have some similarities in linguistic form [...]. This highly restricted use of *text type* is an attempt to account for variation **within** and **across** genres.[20] (2001: 39)

This confirms the view of Paltridge, as the linguistic components seem here to be rather influential when it comes to the definition of textual genre and the texts which constitute it. Simons goes further, in that regard, by distinguishing two textual elements within textual genres, namely "text types" and "texts" (2019a: 44). The author illustrates these concepts through the textual genre of 'advertising'. According to Simons, when speaking of the latter, various *text types* can be distinguished, such as "advertising posters, radio and TV spots [...]" (2019a: 58). Each of these have their own specific features, with some of which linking them all back to the main textual genre of the advertising. Simons calls, indeed, these common components the "generic invariants"[21] (2019a: 57). Regarding the actual concept of *text*, Simons further agrees with the previously mentioned claim of Paltridge, as he explains that the term refers to the "linguistic and/or iconographic embodiment of a type of text belonging to a particular [textual genre]" (2018: 6). In the previously mentioned case of advertising, a "text", as defined by Simons, could be an actual advertising poster or a peculiar radio spot serving as a listening comprehension, for instance. Thus, it could, based on the various definitions and descriptions of the "textual" component of textual genres, be claimed that there is a certain relationship between *textual genre*, *type of texts* and *text*. In that peculiar regard, Simons has designed a figure, see Figure 2, and which illustrates what he calls the "englobing/englobed relationship" (Simons 2019a: 44).

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[20] Original emphasis.

[21] My translation.

texte

type de texte

genre textuel
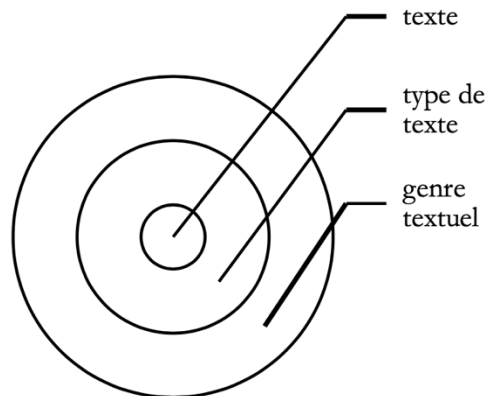
(3)

Figure 2 - Englobing/englobed relationship pertaining to textual genres as described by Simons (2019)

As demonstrated by these examples, the 'textual' dimension of the textual genre does not, again, need to be restricted to the sole written component.

Finally, the definition of "textual genre", as given by Simons, describes the latter as a "tool for acting in a given communication situation"[22] (2018: 2). The emphasis on the necessity to "act" within a specific context is intrinsically linked to the previously introduced action-oriented approach (see 1.2.4.1). If pupils need to act and, therefore, to effectively convey messages, they also require the appropriate tools to learn how to do so. Jacquin considers "genre[s] as ONE of the central means of action available to students to enable them to act as social actors"[23] (2019: 16). Textual genres may, indeed, fulfil the function of effective tools when it comes to giving the means for pupils to act. Schneuwly and Dolz, describe the various genres taught in school as "particularly successful models for representing reality"[24] (1997: 31). In that regard, Simons (2019b: 218), gives concrete applications of 'textual genres' taught in school within the active life when he asserts that

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[22] My translation.

[23] Original emphasis. My translation.

[24] My translation.

17

[b]eing familiar with the characteristics of genres such as the Curriculum Vitae, the job interview, the social debate, the film review [...], the travel itinerary, etc. will help you to better understand the society in which you live, to fit in and to take part in it.[25] (218)

Without a proper introduction and, thus, instruction of textual genres, not all pupils will, allegedly, possess the right tools and the "socially-referenced practices" necessary to act within a given communication situation or, to a larger extent, in society. This, mainly because of the pervasive heterogeneity in FL classes. To counter this, Schneuwly and Dolz declare that "the aim [of genres] is to (re-)create situations that are supposed to reproduce those of the [reference] language practices, with a clearly marked concern for diversification"[26] (1997: 32). If teaching textual genres seems crucial, there is still a clear need for what the authors call "diversification". Simons warns, indeed, that, if teachers were to introduce only one *text type*, or worse, one *text* related to a specific textual genre, students might consider this model as the sole valid example and, thus, omitting all the nuances, which might exist in said genre (Simons 2019b: 218-219). Hence, the importance of exposing students to a variety of models when it comes to the instruction of textual genres.

Nevertheless, the limits regarding the instruction of textual genres in a school context should not be forgotten. As Schneuwly and Dolz mention, when in class, "pupils necessarily find themselves in a space of *as if*, where genre forms the basis of a language practice that is necessarily partly fictitious because it is set up for learning purposes"[27] (1997: 30). Thus, even if teachers strive to cover any textual genre as dutifully as possible, it is certainly comprehension rather than the perfect application of the latter, which remains the most important factor. This idea of didactic transposition of textual genres is further explained in a later chapter of this dissertation (see 4.2.2).

2.1.1.2   Before textual genres: communication macro-functions and families of textual genres

In the previous section, the concept of textual genre has briefly been defined and explained along other terms, such as text types and texts. Nevertheless, one should note that these are inscribed in a bigger structure. As it has been determined, textual genres are tools and mediators, which allow

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[25] My translation.

[26] My translation.

[27] My emphasis and My translation.

pupils to act in certain linguistic contexts (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 65). However, before acting and, thus, conveying their messages, students need to determine the communicative purpose they need to adopt in said context. This is embodied by what Simons calls the "communication macro-function" (2018: 5) or, in other words, the main communication aim of a selected textual genre. Therefore, the document *Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Communs Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques: Langues Modernes* (2017) considers the various types of texts as being "narrative", "descriptive", "injunctive or prescriptive", "explanatory" and "argumentative"[28] (15). To that list, Simons adds the "informative" function (2018: 5). Because of the great variety of genres which exists, these communicative aims can be used, as described by Dolz and Schneuwly to form "groupings of textual genres" (2016: 85), also called "family of textual genres" by Simons (2018: 5). However, as Dolz and Schneuwly further explain, once the main communicative function has been determined, it does not mean that the families of textual genres, thus created, are isolated from each other (2016: 87), as some underlying communication purposes might exist. In the case of the already mentioned textual genre of the advertising, Simons identifies the aim to be "injunctive" without hiding possible secondary functions to be "descriptive" or "argumentative", for instance (2018: 5). Therefore, the various families of textual genres established are to be viewed as descriptive rather than definite. Simons (2019a: 57) proposes a summary of this intricate structure, which is shown in Figure 3.

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[28] My translation.
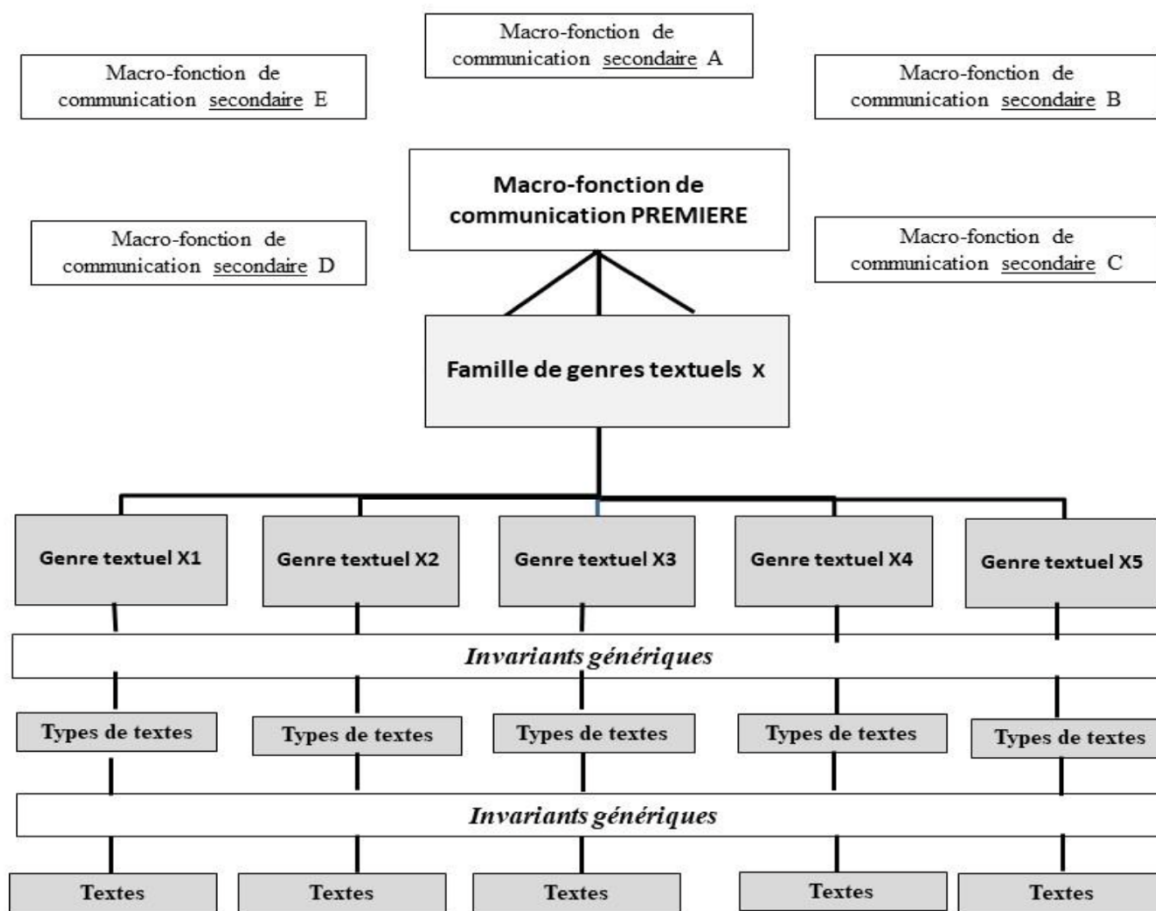
(6)

Figure 3 - Overall structure of "communication macro-functions", "family of textual genres", "textual genres", "type of texts" and "texts" as presented by Simons (2019)

Figure 3 above encompasses the global structure related to the concept of textual genre. Nevertheless, the term family of textual genres, which articulates the concepts of both communication macro-function and textual genre, still needs to be defined. Simons asserts that "[textual genres] can be grouped into *families* […] when they present certain common characteristics or 'generic invariants'"[29] (2018: 5). The textual genres grouped into these broader categories or families might be, in the words of Simons, considered as "brothers and sisters, but

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[29] Original emphasis. My translation.

also first- and second cousins" (2018: 5). On the one hand, this means that some textual genres within one 'family' might strongly be linked together due to a significant set of generic invariants. On the other hand, some textual genres might have, "despite some common features, major differences whilst still being considered to be part of the same family of textual genres" (Renson in press). To illustrate this intricate notion, Simons takes the example of the strongly related "radio and TV news", which cousin might be the "log book" due to some similarities (5). However, as Simons further declares, it is not easy to decide "which criteria to use to form the various family of textual genres" (2019a: 67). There are, thus, no definite set of families available, as it seems hard to define the groupings of genres and the textual genres themselves.

2.1.2   The textual genre of podcast

2.1.2.1   Introduction

Because the global structure surrounding textual genres has been detailed in the previous subchapter, this dissertation proposes to transpose the same taxonomy and structure, as proposed by Simons (see Figure 3), on to the textual genre of the podcast. However, despite referring to scientific literature, it should be highlighted that the following descriptions are but a humble attempt at defining the various concepts, which are presented in the following subsections. Whilst this dissertation tries to find an answer to research question one (see 1.1), it has already been established that a clear and definite definition of any textual genre proves to be difficult. This is mainly due to its constant evolution and sometimes blurry border with other similar genres. Therefore, one needs to be cautious and critical when reading the following descriptions, as they are most likely prone to undergo changes.

2.1.2.2   The textual genre of the podcast: towards an operational definition

First, to define the term 'podcast', the definition of the latter, as found in the dictionary, might prove to be a good starting point. Thus, the *Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary* considers this peculiar textual genre as "an *audio file* similar to a **radio broadcast**, that can be

listened to on a *website* or *app* on your *phone*, *computer*, etc.".[30] If the similarity with "radio broadcast" will be established and nuanced in later parts of this dissertation, it could still be mentioned that this preliminary definition only focuses on the medium, which is linked to podcasts. However, as it has already been determined in the previous subsections, textual genres, as a whole, are not solely to be described through the material form in which they are to be found. If the latter remains important, other key features, such as the "very content" (Patterson in Berry 2022: 401), communication intent and context, the actual producer(s) of a podcast, along with other generic invariants, are also worth including in an operational definition of this textual genre. Therefore, the following paragraphs are dedicated to the identification and detailing of these invariants.

The description of the term podcast, as mentioned in Collins, referred to the latter as being an "audio file" and being available on platforms such as "website[s]", "app[s] on your phone" or on a "computer". Balanuta (2021) claims that, indeed, originally "the term *podcast* was built from an etymologic [sic] point of view as a hybrid, a combination of *iPod* – portable music player and *broadcast* – live streaming"[31] (32), which, so far, seems to agree with the already stated definition of the found in the dictionary. However, as Balanuta further details, "media trends have witnessed the development of the podcast as a product that can be both played as an audio or as a *video* file, changing, in some extent, the essence of the term and behavioral [sic] patterns associated with the medium"[32] (32). It seems, thus, that the textual genre of the podcast is not restricted to its sole audio form. A progressive evolution within the textual genre has introduced the video format, which, in turn, has slightly affected the global behaviours, which were then shaping podcasts. Al Quasim and Al Fadda (2013), had, indeed, already identified podcasts as being "pure audio podcasts, video podcasts or enhanced podcasts; i.e. pictures, slideshows, PowerPoint, etc" (31), demonstrating the versatility of the genre when it comes to its medium.

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[30] My emphasis.

[31] Original emphasis.

[32] My emphasis.

However, one legitimate question remains regarding the distinction between the audio and video formats of podcasts: are they to be considered as part of the same textual genre, or should they be considered independent of each other, thus creating the textual genres of 'audio podcasts' and 'video podcasts'? To this question, Balanuta argues that "the video form of the podcast is mostly used for visibility and further distribution facilities" (2021: 37). The author goes further by claiming that the main difference to exists between both formats is that video podcasts "lac[k] the same amount of flexibility, derived from the very essence of the 'portable' notion, as the audio-only option" (2021: 38). In other words, because video podcasts imply that the listener becomes a 'watcher', it, consequently, hinders the greater flexibility allowed by audio podcasts. In any case, because of this sole contrast between both formats, the latter might be seen as belonging to the same textual genre, namely that of podcasts.

Moreover, the importance of the actual medium on the operational definition of podcasts cannot be overlooked, as it impacts the very relationship between the producer and the listener of said genre and, thus, the communication context surrounding both. One of the specificities of podcasts lies, as Bamanger and Alhassan (2015) remind, in the "downloadable" (63), but also, as Rime et al. (2022) further detail, "streamable" (1261) character of the latter. This means, as Balanuta (2021) highlights, that "podcasts can be distributed and consumed across a variety of platforms, the internet and associated applications [, which] can create a fertile environment for their distribution and consumption" (33). Therefore, it could be asserted that, among many other things, as Rime *et al.* (2022) point out, the very format of podcasts allows listeners to

> [...] have complete control over the type of programme one could listen to, the possibility to 'time-shift' and 'placeshift' [sic] [...] that is, to play the content whenever and wherever, but also being able to fast forward [sic], rewind, or listen to a programme again. (1264)

The fact that listeners might personalise their listening experience is also to be found in what Rime et al. call the "episodical predisposition" of podcasts (2022: 1265). Users might, indeed, choose which episode they wish to listen to, further appropriating the medium. In other words, podcasts, thanks to their platforms and "downloadable", "streamable" and "episodical" characters, give relative freedom to their listeners, be it regarding the very choice of content or the way of consuming the latter. Consequently, these features constitute the first generic invariants of the textual genre of the podcast.

Furthermore, another influential dimension of podcasts lies in the definition of the latter, as described by Rime et al. (2022), who assert that podcasts may be "produced by *anyone who so wishes*"[33] (1270). The idea that, indeed, everybody may record and, thus, produce a podcast, is central to the definition of the latter. Winer (in Berry 2022) points out that, originally, "[podcasting] was something amateurs would do[,] NOT professionals [...] [It] would open up media to all kinds of people whom it wasn't open to before"[34] (401). According to the author, podcasts constitute, consequently, a form of democratisation within the so far, allegedly, restricted world of media. With this broader access to the production of podcasts comes, in the words of Berry (2021), a certain "**informality**, a sense by which hosts just chat to you (or each other) and you don't feel the pressures of time limiting a conversation, nor the sense by which environments change our behaviours"[35]. In other words, according to the author, podcasts allow more spontaneous encounters and discussions because of the absence of any time limit or formal context, which might be observed in other textual genres. Regarding the latter, Berry (2022) acknowledges how formal textual genres, such as the radio, have begun to propose their programmes in the form of podcasts, but that despite their efforts, there remains, even then, "a sense of the informal" to this form of content (403). Beside the freedom this peculiar genre provides to its listeners regarding its consumption, it seems that a relatively equal emancipation is attributed to the actual content of the various podcasts available.

Consequently, this informality proves to be heavily influential regarding the register or tone used within that textual genre in the sense that, as Berry (2022) explains, the peculiar context surrounding podcasts "allows for us to speak more openly (for example we swear in the podcast but not on air!)" (402). The author goes further by stating that, beyond register, it is the whole atmosphere of the podcast which might be impacted. The "informality" thus created explains, indeed, how "sounds of domestic life [...] might intrude into the recordings", for instance (402). All this contributes to create, what Nuzum (in Balanuta 2021) calls the "idea of 'experience'"

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[33] My emphasis.

[34] Original emphasis.

[35] Original emphasis.

rather than that of pure content when listening to a podcast (35). Berry (2022) goes further by explaining that, "[p]odcasts can meander, explore small details, and indulge the listener in a journey" (403), thus meeting the idea of experience as introduced by Nuzum. Balanuta (2021) states, indeed, that these various features allow for podcasts to touch on "broad subjects" (36), which, as a consequence, reflects, according to Rime et al., on the variety "of genres and subgenres in the 'podverse'" (2022: 1267). This "informality" and proximity between listeners and producers of podcasts, be it through the very register or themes discussed, need, thus, to be integrated into the operational definition of the genre.

Finally, based on the previously discussed features of the textual genre of the podcast, an operational definition of the latter might be drawn. Beside the preliminary description given by *Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* two already existing interpretations are also worth considering, as they both encompass the main generic invariants of podcasts, whilst each bringing significant nuances to the latter. On the one hand, Balanuta (2021) proposes the following definition

> [...] a podcast may be more granularly defined as an on-demand listening experience, mediated through audio or video platforms, which involves heterogeneous formats and generous thematic designs that can be authored by producers of multiple backgrounds. (38-39)

This description seems complementary to that of Rime et al. (2022) who argue that a podcast might be considered as

> [...] a piece of episodical, downloadable or streamable, primarily spoken audio content, distributed via the internet, playable everywhere, at any time, produced by anyone who so wishes. (1270)

Therefore, if these interpretations, including that of the dictionary, were to be collated, it would give the following operational definition:

> Podcast is a textual genre, produced by both professionals and amateurs, thus bidding both heterogeneous formats and various thematic designs thanks to a more *informal* structure. They are found under audio or video forms, usually in the form of downloadable or streamable episodes, which might be accessed on the Internet or on a variety of apps to provide an on-demand listening experience that can be accessed anywhere.

The main generic invariants of the podcasts, which were previously discussed in this chapter, have been kept. The informal nature of the textual genre was, however, integrated into the definition above, as it was judged missing in the interpretations of both Rime et al. and Balanuta.

Nevertheless, some cautions need to be taken when considering this operational definition. The latter is, again, but a mere summary of various scientific work previously conducted on podcasts. This definition is, thus, as the genre evolves, prone to change and be further defined. Then, it should be kept in mind that this dissertation used the textual genre of the podcast within a peculiar context, namely that of secondary education. The latter implies, therefore, some necessary changes to the operational definition. The didactic dimension in which the textual genre of the podcast might be inscribed will be discussed later in this paper (see 4.2.2).

2.1.2.3 The different types of podcasts

What has been defined in previous chapters as 'types of texts' echoes the various available types of podcasts. It seems, nevertheless, that *no consensus* was reached among the experts in the field regarding the classification of said types. This subsection firsts exposes the many taxonomies used when referring to the latter, before explaining the categories which were selected to be taught during the experiment discussed in this paper.

First, when speaking of types of podcasts, experts have each established a variety of categories to describe the latter, which nevertheless all point towards a similar direction. Therefore, Borboran lists the types of podcasts as being the "interview, monologue, co-hosted and story-based podcasts" (2020), whilst other experts have established many other kinds related to this specific textual genre. Logue in *Podcast -Towards an Inclusive Definition* (Balanuta 2021) has, indeed, identified 7 types of podcasts, namely the "interview, solo, conversation among co-hosts, roundtable, non-fictional storytelling, fiction and a combination of formats" (32). At first, both classifications seem similar. However, it is interesting to note the nuances and additions introduced by Logue regarding the first list mentioned. The author splits, indeed, what Borboran calls "story-based podcasts", into "non-fictional storytelling" and "fiction" formats. Then, Logue also suggests the possibility of combining various types together to create another one. In identifying types of podcasts, Rime *et al.* add the notion of "repurposed media" (2022: 1267), which is described by the website Resound as being a type of podcast which "reus[es] existing content, like blog posts or interviews, and convert[s] it into an audio format for podcast episodes" (2023). Many other types of podcasts might be highlighted. What needs to be kept in mind, here is what Duò calls the overall "flexibility" of the textual genre in itself (2023). Consequently, the taxonomy surrounding

the types of podcasts is, and might never be, definite, as new types keep emerging alongside the very evolution of the textual genre.

Then, with every type of podcast comes its generic invariants. Because of the complexity and the changing nature of the classification surrounding this peculiar textual genre and its various types, this dissertation mainly focuses on the "conversational" and "interview" podcasts (Duò 2023). The former was, indeed, the aim of the final task during the experiment carried out in this paper. Nonetheless, the blurred lines of this specific type with that of the interview podcast have constituted one of the limitations of said final productions. Hence, the importance of defining both types to, first, have a better understanding of the issue then encountered, but also to develop a potential solution to said problem.

The conversational podcast is strongly embedded in the podcasting world, as it frequently comes back in the various lists summarising the types of podcasts. This, be it both under the "conversational" or, as mentioned by the website Resound, the "co-hosted" terminology (2023). This peculiar kind of podcast is described by Borboran as "involv[ing] two hosts that [sic] will have conversation" and who "share their experiences and have a back and forth when needed" (2020). The website Resound (2023) goes further by claiming that one of the main features of the co-hosted podcast lies in "[t]he chemistry between cohosts [...] [Their] banter, jokes, and camaraderie create a sense of familiarity and make listeners feel like they're part of the conversation". In other words, the relationship between the co-hosts is important to the entertaining dimension of the conversational podcast. This allows, in turn, for the informal nature of the textual genre and the notion of "experience" surrounding podcasts to fully develop (see section 2.1.2.2). The specificities regarding the structure of such a podcast have been summarised in Figure 4[36].

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[36] Both the overall structure and definitions of the various elements were found in the article *How to Write Podcast Scripts: Tips and Templates to Structure Your Episodes* (2022).
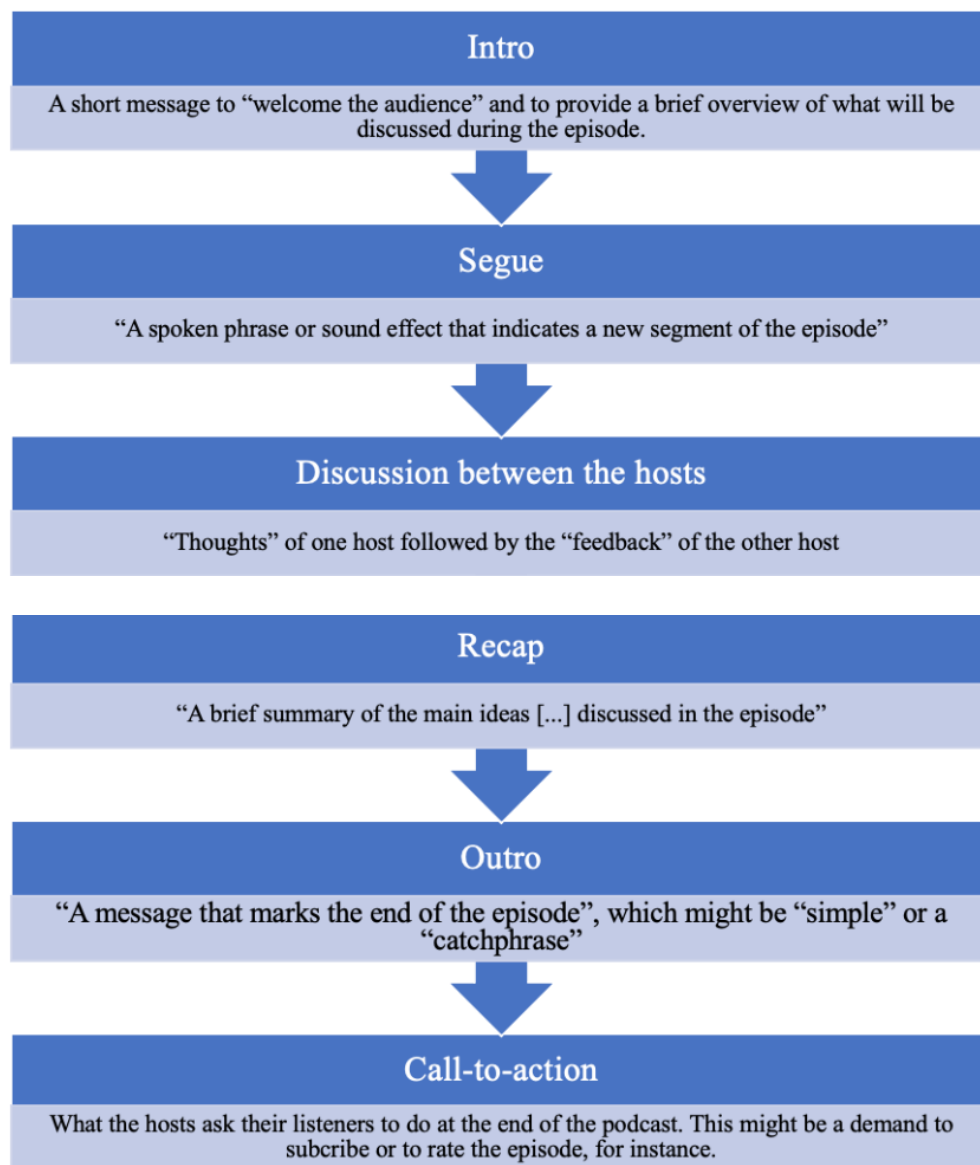
Figure 4 - Structure of the Conversational Podcast

Despite the conversation being at the heart of this structure, the latter is, nevertheless, quite similar to that of the interview podcast. Hence, the difficulty of differentiating both types of texts.

In almost every list attempting to establish the various types of podcast, that of the interview comes, indeed, almost always forward. The website Resound qualifies this peculiar type as one of the most popular among listeners (2023). The article goes on to describe the interview format as "offering fascinating *conversations* between hosts and guests for [the] audience to enjoy". This claim points out the conversational nature of this type of text, which is also to be found in co-

hosted podcasts. Borboran goes further by explaining that the interview is a format where "guests are usually *experts* in their field, and the host asks them *questions* relevant to their experience"[37] (2020). The main characteristics of the interview format are consequently the status of guest(s) standing as experts and the question-led nature of the discussion to bring forth certain topics (Resound 2023). The most significant differences between the interview and the co-hosted podcasts lie, therefore, in the proper introduction of guests and the nature of the discussions conducted. These additions regarding the interview podcast have been highlighted in Figure 5[38].

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[37] My emphasis.

[38] Both the overall structure and definitions of the various elements were found in the article *How to Write Podcast Scripts: Tips and Templates to Structure Your Episodes* (2022).
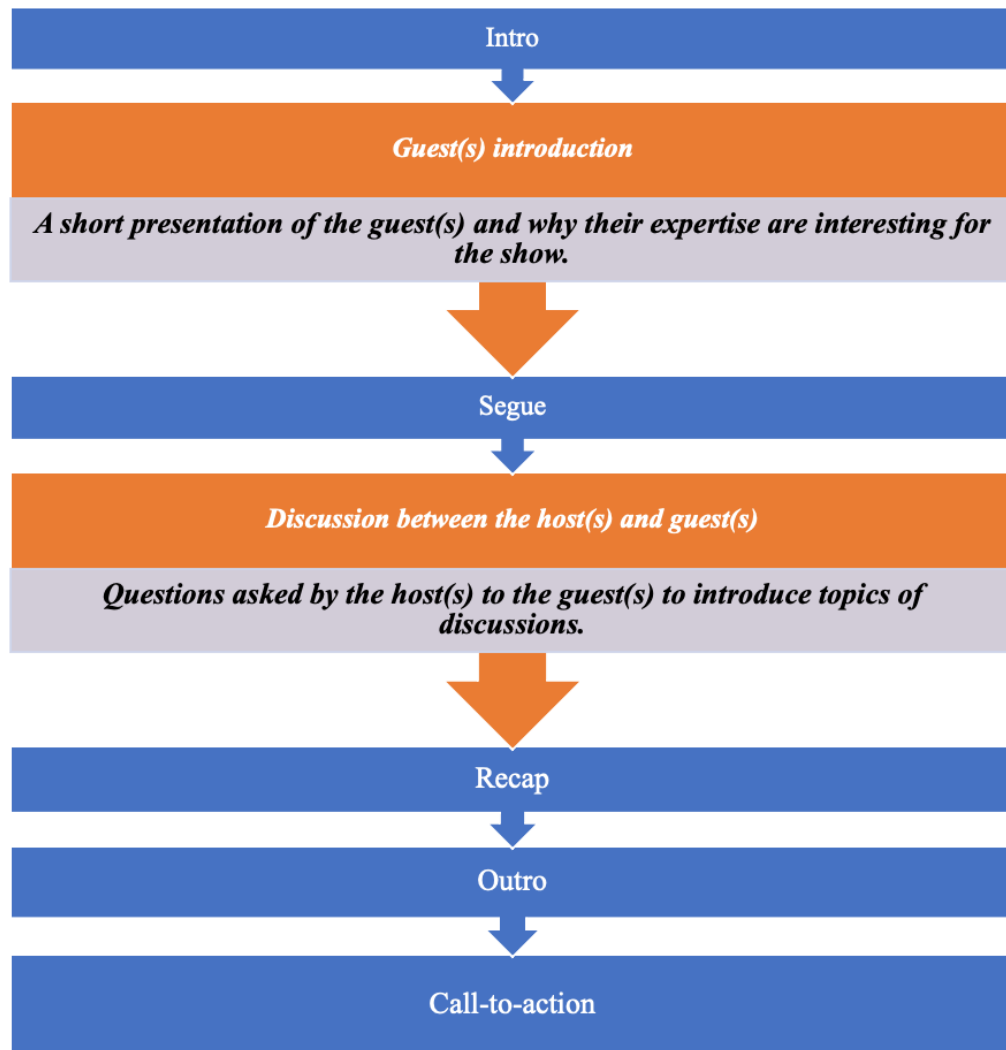
Figure 5 - Structure of the Interview Podcast

Between the conversational and interview podcast, it seems that the core elements structuring both scripts remain fairly the same. In that regard, Rime et al. go as far as considering both types as equivalent to each other (2022: 1267). However, interview podcasts imply the compulsory introduction of guests in order for the interview to be carried out, which does not mean that co-hosted podcasts might never require this structural element as well. In the conversational podcast *SmartLess*, for instance, the three co-hosts are regularly inviting guests to "share stories, and have spontaneous, hilarious conversations" (Resound: 2023). Because the co-hosted format might also invite guests, the main nuance between the two types of podcasts is to be distinguished elsewhere. It might, arguably, lie in the purpose behind the invitation of guests and the very nature of the

discussion between the various people involved, be it (co-)host(s) and/or guest(s). Interview podcasts, as their name implies, focus mainly on question-led conversations, whereas co-hosted podcasts allow for a freer discussion to happen. Indeed, the status of the guest also differs from one format to another, the person invited to an interview podcast being, according to the website Castos, mainly there to share a "unique expertise and experience" (2024). Because of the many similarities between these two specific types of podcasts, it sometimes proves to be difficult to distinguish them from each other, which reflected in the productions of students at the end of the experiment.

2.1.2.4   Examples of 'texts' within the conversational type of podcast

When speaking of 'texts', this paper refers back to the hereby related definition previously given by Paltridge, namely that of "linguistic and/or iconographic embodiment of a type of text belonging to a particular [textual genre]" (2018: 6). Therefore, regarding the conversational podcasts, the above-mentioned example of *SmartLess* might stand as an illustration thereof. Another example of text within this peculiar type would be that of *Borderline Salty*, which is described by the website Resound as "a weekly podcast where [the hosts] share cooking tips, solve culinary challenges, and inspire listeners to become better cooks" (2023). The *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen* and some episodes of the *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast,* both of which were used during the experiment, are examples of co-hosted podcasts centred around the theme of travel (see 4.3.2.3). These were to cite but a few texts within the broader conversational type of podcasts and prove the diversity of the themes discussed within this kind of podcast.

2.1.2.5   Communication macro-functions related to the textual genre of the podcast

As it has been detailed in a previous subsection, every textual genre is inscribed in a larger family, which gathers several genres, more or less related to each other (see subsection 2.1.1.2). In that regard, this paper argues that podcasts might be considered as belonging to the *broadcasts* family. The latter encompasses, indeed, a variety of genres, such as TV programmes, online videos or even "audiobooks" (Rime *et al.* 2022: 1261), which could all, to some extent, be linked to podcasts, the most striking being that of 'radio programmes'. The relationship between these two genres reinforces the idea that podcasts might be associated to that specific family. Therefore, this part of the dissertation is dedicated to the description of the similarities and discrepancies connecting and,

thus, differentiating podcasts from radio programmes. The communication macro-functions of the latter are also defined.

The distinction between the two genres is everything but an easy task. Madsen (in Balanuta 2021) "initially called podcast[s] 'a new kind of radio'" (34), which proved the confusion surrounding the then emerging textual genre. However, Berry strongly claims that "[a] podcast is not a synonym for a radio programme, and whilst podcast*ing* is an activity of the radio industry, it is not merely an extension of it"[39] (2022: 399). This points out the intertwining of both genres, whilst still reminding the independence they show from each other. Regarding their similarities, Rime et al. refer to the "auditory nature" and the function of "vessels of transmission" of both podcasts and radio programmes (2022: 1264). Then, McHugh in *Podcast – Towards an Inclusive Definition* (Balanuta 2021) argues that the two genres were, initially at least, motivated by "the art of storytelling through journalistic means" (34). Berry, at last, admits that podcasts "share production practices with radio" (2022: 401). In other words, both genres require one to listen to their contents, they also share some topics and ways to deliver those, and need to be recorded to be produced. If it has already been detailed that everybody may create a podcast (see section 2.1.2.2), it is, nevertheless, worth detailing the nuances touching on the first two features, which help, indeed, dissociate podcasts from radio programmes and vice versa.

If both genres need listeners to exist, the way the latter consume the former strongly differs. Mahjouri and Purnell in *From Call to Mall: The Effectiveness of Podcast on EFL Higher Education Students' Listening Comprehension* (Al Quasim and Al Fadda 2013) highlight, indeed, how, "the latest podcast episodes can be 'automatically downloaded to any MP3 player or mobile [device] without having to go to the site'" (31). As a result thereof, this feature grants great freedom to the listener as to when and where to consume a podcast (Balanuta 2021: 35). In contrast, Rime et al. qualify genres such as radio programmes as being "format-led", which means that "a person can only choose when to tune in for scheduled content following strict formats" (2022: 1267). This

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[39] Original emphasis.

relative freedom as opposed to a more restrictive mode of consumption thus distinguishes podcasts from radio programmes.

Then, regarding the scope of topics discussed both genres, some major differences might be pointed out. Podcasts and radio programmes might both touch on a variety of subjects. However, the way those are delivered strongly varies. As it has already been established in a previous section, podcasts are motivated by a sort of "informality", thus impacting the register and tone which might be used (see 2.1.2.2). Spinelli and Dan in *What is a podcast?: Mapping the Technical, Cultural, and Sonic Boundaries between Radio and Podcasting* (Berry 2022) even go as far as claiming that "'[w]here radio might suggest and allude, podcasting is full-frontal'" (402). Radio programmes being, indeed, what Balanuta refers to as being a "formal structure" (2021: 36), they cannot implement the same degree of informality as podcasts do, if any at all. Furthermore, the very subject to be discussed and the intention behind it, greatly differs between the two textual genres. Balanuta goes on, indeed, by stating that

> [...] in radio's case the subject pallete [sic] circumscribes to broader notions of public interest and editorial rigours that fit the format of the station and its media codes, whereas independent podcasters often tend to concentrate on a specific micro-agenda, without searching an outcome for general public. (2021: 36)

Thus, if radio might discuss various subjects, these still need to obey certain formal rules and to bring something tangible to the listeners, such as information, arguments, or entertainment. On the other hand, podcasts *might* offer these to their listeners, as they are free from formal obligations regarding both the handling of and the subjects themselves.

Finally, radio programmes and podcasts share the same main communication macro-functions. Hence, their belonging to the broadcast family. Based on the previously mentioned claim of McHugh in *Podcast – Towards an Inclusive Definition*, asserting that both genres find their roots in a journalistic tradition (Balanuta 2021: 34), it could be argued that the main communication intention of that specific family of textual genres is to inform. However, as Simons states and as it has been detailed, to each textual genre might be attached (a) secondary communication macro-function(s) (see 2.1.1.2). Therefore, both radio programmes and podcasts, depending on the type of text one refers to, may show signs of narrative, argumentative or any other functions. In the case of the *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen,* for instance, it could be asserted that beside

informing their listeners, the hosts try to convince and, thus, to give arguments as to why the former should choose to visit the destination being discussed.

2.1.3   The textual genre of the podcast within legal provisions

2.1.3.1   Within the CEFR

In a previous part of this dissertation, the CEFR has been identified as another influential institution regarding FL teaching in French-speaking Belgium. If the former does not have a prescribing function on the latter, it is worth reminding that the CEFR does still give a variety of suggestions regarding FL teaching. In that regard, it is deemed interesting to investigate whether any reference to textual genres or to podcasts are made in the two documents of the Council of Europe. Both of the latter do, indeed and as opposed to school curricula and programmes, refer more often to the term *genre,* namely 7 times in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001), and 31 times in the *Companion Volume* (2020). However, as Simons noted, it seems that any occurrence of *genre* in the sense of textual genre is only to be observed at a high level of linguistic skills (2019a: 44). A similar investigation was carried out regarding the term *podcast*. It does not appear in the document from 2001 but occurs twice in its *Companion Volume* from 2020, in the C1 level of "note-taking" competence and is referred to in the descriptor as follows

> Can select relevant, detailed information and arguments on complex, abstract topics from multiple oral sources (e.g. lectures, **podcasts**, formal discussions and debates, interviews), provided the delivery is at normal speed. (105)

Podcast is here considered as a source which learners might take note from. Hence, its presence in the "note-taking" competence. Moreover, because it has been determined that podcasts are a relatively new textual genre, its absence from the 2001 version of the CEFR is not surprising. Nevertheless, its apparition at the sole "note-taking" C1 level confirms was had already been observed by Simons, namely that, according to the Council of Europe, textual genres seem to be accessible only for higher language proficiency levels (2019: 44).

2.1.3.2   Within Walloon school curricula

The place of textual genres, and more specifically that of podcasts in Walloon school curricula, might also be investigated and questioned. The notion of textual genre has, regarding the latter,

actually been thoroughly researched by Simons (2019a), who came to the conclusion that the notion is nearly *absent* from curriculum guidelines and programmes related to FL teaching in French-speaking Belgium (40). The author further notes, however, that terms such as "type of text" or "type of production"[40] occur 54 times across Walloon legal provisions and resemble the given definition of textual genres (2019: 40). Therefore, when investigating the occurrence of the item *podcast*, it was those sections, among similar other such as 'type of support'. Documents from both the "officiel" and "libre" networks (see 1.2.2) related to qualifying education were used to carry out the research regarding the presence of the textual genre of the podcast. Table 2 summarises, thus, the findings across the different school curricula and programmes.

Table 2 - Occurrence of the term 'podcast' within the French-speaking school curriculum and programmes in Belgium

	School curriculum	School programmes	
Occurrence of the term:	Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques. 165 pages. (WBF : 2017)	Programme d'Etudes Langues Modernes. Enseignement Secondaire Ordinaire Humanités Professionnelles et techniques 2e et 3e Degrés. 384 pages. (WBE: 2020)[41]	Programme Langues Modernes Formation Générale Commune 2e et 3e degrés Professionnel et Technique de Qualification. 129 pages. (FESeC: 2017)[42]
Podcast	0	1	0

[40] My translation.

[41] This document is related to the 'officiel' network.

[42] This document is related to the Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique, which is part of the 'libre' network.

As demonstrated in Table 2, out of all the documents which have been investigated, there is but one occurrence of the term 'podcast', namely in the Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement document *Programme d'Etudes Langues Modernes. Enseignement Secondaire Ordinaire Humanités Professionnelles et techniques 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés* (2020). The latter refers, however, to podcasts in the peculiar instance of

> [t]he flipped classroom [, which] reverses the traditional concept of the classroom: students carry out simple cognitive tasks independently (possibly outside the classroom) using video clips, personal reading, virtual visits, **podcasts**, etc. (139)[43]

Podcasts are here considered rather as a resource to be autonomously used by students in the peculiar case of "the flipped classroom". There are, indeed, no references to podcasts being used during both the receptive (CL and CA) or productive competences (EO with and without interaction and EE). Therefore, because it has been established that podcasts are part of the broadcast family of textual genres, it is interesting to investigate whether other similar textual genres are named and advised in the same set of documents. Consequently, the presence of terms such as *émission* (broadcast), *radio*, *video*, *interview* and *conversation* were checked[44]. The last item has also been included in the search because of the conversational podcast being targeted by the experience. Table 3 encompasses the findings related to each term mentioned.

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[43] My translation.

[44] The search for these items was conducted using the French terms due to the nature of the documents which were investigated.

Table 3 - Occurrences of the terms "Broadcast", "Radio", "Video", "Interview" and "Conversation" in French-speaking school curriculum and programmes[45]

	School curriculum	School programmes	
Occurrence of the term:	Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques. 165 pages. (WBF : 2017)	Programme d'Etudes Langues Modernes. Enseignement Secondaire Ordinaire Humanités Professionnelles et techniques 2e et 3e Degrés. 384 pages. (WBE: 2020)[1]	Programme Langues Modernes Formation Générale Commune 2e et 3e degrés Professionnel et Technique de Qualification. 129 pages. (FESeC:2017)[2]
Broadcast	2	3	2
Radio	0	1	0
Video	6	29	8
Interview	4	6	7
Conversation	16	41	23

These results need, nevertheless, to be detailed, as some occurrences are related to a variant of the searched items. The terms *broadcast* and *interview* have been found, as such under both "type of support" or "type of production". However, *radio* is solely referred to as a type of support in the example of a listening task provided in one of the appendixes of the document in which it has been found. It is, however, never described elsewhere. Then, it is worth mentioning that the item *video* has never been found as such when referring to 'type of supports'. It is, however, when being part of broader structures such as *selfie-video* and *videoconference*. In each of the documents, the former appears, indeed, a total of 6 times, whereas the latter occurred once. The other manifestations of *video* are restricted, along with the term *radio*, to a type of support in various examples of tasks. The item *conversation* being intrinsically linked to languages in general has been found under a variety of taxonomies, be it type of production, type of support, language function, to cite but a few. It is, nevertheless, important to note that the three documents which

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[45] The search for these items was conducted using the French version of the terms presented in Table 3 because of the nature of the documents which were investigated.

have been investigated specify that, every time examples of types of support are given, they are "for guidance only". This has been proved with terms such as *radio* or *video*, which are directly referred to in actual illustrations of tasks, despite being absent from the actual lists of possible supports to use for the teaching of the various linguistic skills. Thus, this allegedly opens the possibility of the textual genre of the podcast to be used in FL classes.

2.2 Conclusion

The first hypothesis, which was formulated, pertained to the definition of the textual genre of the podcast. Therefore, the hereby related research question interrogated whether there had already been an attempt, within scientific literature, at describing this notion. However, in order to be able to fully investigate the components of the textual genre of the podcast, a proper introduction to the concept of textual genres was needed. Consequently, various terms pertaining to that broad notion were introduced to then be transferred to the peculiar genre of the podcast. This was aimed to fully encompass every component, which might have contributed to the actual definition of the latter.

If description were, indeed, available, the answer to this first research question needs to be nuanced. It is worth mentioning that a variety of experts have attempted and provided promising descriptions of podcasts. An operational description of the latter was, nevertheless, established in this dissertation to encompass all the nuances, which were found in scientific works regarding that peculiar textual genre, mainly that of the informal character of podcasts. On the other hand, it was established that it was, broadly speaking, particularly difficult to give a definite description to any textual genre, which implies that podcasts were no exception to this rule. The still ongoing evolution of that relatively new textual genre, such as the addition of the video component or the multiplication of types of podcasts, each with specific features, to give but examples, hindered any fixed explanation of this specific textual genre. The first hypothesis proves, thus, to be partially true, as the notion of podcast is, indeed, defined in scientific literature. However, the clarity of this description might still be questioned due to the potential evolution of the textual genre.

The second hypothesis presented in this paper claimed that there was no mention of the textual genre of the podcast within legal provisions supervising FL instruction. To find out whether that statement was accurate, the CEFR as well as qualifying school curricula and programmes related to FL teaching within French-speaking Belgium were investigated. The findings regarding

research question 2 partially invalidate the original hypothesis, as the term *podcast* was found in two of the examined documents. However, it is worth noting that it was never referred to in the sense of textual genre, but rather as a resource for a certain form of teaching, namely the "flipped classroom", or for a peculiar competence, namely the "note-taking" skill.

Moreover, it was decided to extend the research to genres similar to that of podcast, such as the *interview, radio* or *video*. The term *broadcast*, in reference to the textual family of the former, was also investigated. The results indicated that, to various extents, nearly all the items which were checked were found in the various legal provisions investigated. Hence, the emergence of another question: if these genres are included in official documents related to FL teaching in French-speaking Belgium, would it not be interesting to add that of podcast? The latter, as it has been established in previous subsections, is subdivided into a variety of text types, among which the interview and conversational podcast. Both of these terms defining the type, *interview* and *conversation*, were found in the qualifying school curriculum and programmes related to FL. This could thus, allegedly, legitimate the implementation of the textual genre of the podcast in these documents.

3 Questionnaire

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews and analyses the results of the different surveys, which were created and handed as a complement to the experimentation discussed in a later part of this paper (see chapter 4). Originally, only two surveys were designed, as one was aimed at collecting the feelings and comments of the participating teachers, whilst the other was handed to students to gather their opinions pre- and post-experiment. However, because of the higher-than-expected non-participation rate of schools, a third survey was conducted to understand the reason(s) as to why so many establishments had refused to take part in the experiment. After an overview of the general background surrounding the three questionnaires, the methodology, content, and results thereof will be discussed in the following subsections. This chapter will also attempt to find the answers to the research questions 3 to 7, which are reminded in Table 4.

Table 4 - Hypotheses and research questions 3 to 7

H3	The general concept of textual genre is known by seasoned FL teachers.	Q3	Have experienced FL teachers ever heard of the concept of textual genre? If applicable, what is their knowledge of the latter?
H4	FL teachers know the textual genre of the podcast, but do not actively use it in their classrooms.	Q4	Have FL teachers ever heard of the textual genre of the podcast? If so, do they use the latter in their classrooms?
H5	'Ready-made' didactic sequences may encourage FL teachers to take part in experimentation.	Q5	Can 'ready-made' didactic sequences constitute a motivation for FL teachers to engage in experimentation with podcasts? If applicable, to what extent?
H6	Students of qualifying secondary education do not know the textual genre of the podcast.	Q6	Have students of qualifying secondary education any knowledge of the textual genre of the podcast? If so, what is their knowledge of the latter?
H7	Students of qualifying secondary education might find podcasts helpful regarding their language proficiency.	Q7	Are podcasts helpful regarding language proficiency, according to students of qualifying secondary education? If so, beneficial to which linguistic skill(s)?

3.2 Global background

As it has already been established, the decision to focus on one qualifying option during the experiment, namely that of 'reception and tourism agent', was deliberate (see section 1.2.3). Thus, several schools across Wallonia were contacted accordingly. Because of the potential physical implication of the student researcher in the implementation of the experiment, it was then decided

to only contact establishments within the sole provinces of Liège, Namur and Luxembourg. According to the website *Mon Orientation* (2023), this brought the number of potential participating schools bidding the targeted qualifying option to 8. Nevertheless, one of these schools was not contacted, as it was, indeed, deemed too far to ensure a dutiful monitoring of the experiment if the latter was to be implemented by the student researcher. Out of the 7 establishments which were approached, only 3 schools positively answered to take part in the project, whereas one gave an initial answer but did not go through with the experiment. The rest of the institutions did not give an answer to the request. The reasons behind this silence will be further investigated in a dedicated section of this chapter. It is worth mentioning that, out of the 3 schools, which were keen on taking part in the project, one was in the province of Namur, while the two others were in the province of Liège. Each school counted one teacher to carry out the experiment in one or, sometimes, two of their classes.

3.3   Participating teachers

3.3.1   Methodology

A questionnaire was handed out to participating teachers *after the* experiment. The main aim of the former was to investigate the knowledge of the educators regarding their knowledge of textual genres. Furthermore, other goals related to the survey were to establish the principal motivating factor in their participation as well as to collect their feelings towards the unfolding of the experiment and, thus, to identify potential points of improvements. The respondents to the questionnaire were, therefore, the 3 participating teachers to the experiment. Each of them taught English to students following the qualifying 'reception and tourism agent' option, among many other types of classes and students. The establishments of both Teacher 1 (T1) and Teacher 2 (T2) are under the supervision of the 'Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique' (SeGEC), which is, on a broader level, part of the 'libre' school network. The school where Teacher 3 (T3) instructs is under the organising authority of Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement (WBE), which belongs to the 'officiel' school network.

Furthermore, the three educators were asked about their years of service in FL teaching. T1 declared that she gathered 9 years, whereas T2 stated that she had 27 years of experience in the

field. Regarding the latter, T3 confessed that he had a "peculiar journey" regarding his service as an educator. After one year teaching in a school with an active pedagogy approach, he spent five years as an English teacher and "language lector" in Slovakia. He has been an educator in the 'officiel' school network since 2018, gathering thus 7 years of instructing in the French-speaking school system of Belgium. However, based on his global experience, T3 has a total of 13 years of service regarding the teaching field. As for the experiment itself, each educator offered to work with different students and, broadly speaking, class profiles. These are, nevertheless, discussed in the dedicated subsection (see 3.5.1).

Then, as stated above, the questionnaire was handed to teachers after the implementation of the didactic sequence. This claim needs, nevertheless, further explanations. Educators were, indeed, *not* given the survey right away. Instead, an online meeting was scheduled post-experiment with each of the instructors to carry out a sort of semi-structured interview[46]. In that regard, once the appointment had been made, the questionnaire was deliberately given to teachers 30 minutes before the online reunion. This procedure was mainly intended to prevent what Hardy and Ford refer to as "instructional miscomprehension", which is described by the authors as the difficulty, or sometimes, failure of the respondents in the understanding of the questions or instructions (2014: 140). It was, consequently, determined that the reception in advance of the questionnaire followed by an interview with the student researcher could lessen this potential miscomprehension, as opposed to the sole written answer to the survey. Furthermore, the 30-minutes period prior to the online meeting was chosen to leave enough time for teachers to familiarise themselves with the instructions, but not enough to extensively reflect on their answers to limit some biases. The latter will be discussed in a following subsection.

3.3.2 Structure of the questionnaire

The survey (see Appendix 1), as it was designed, was divided into four main categories and ensured the anonymity of the teachers. Nevertheless, before diving into the first section of the former, teachers were asked to briefly describe the profile of the class in which the investigation

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[46] The whole discussions between the three participating teachers and the student researcher are to be found in Appendix 2.

had been carried out. They were thus requested to specify the high school year, 5 or 6, of the class concerned. They also had to detail the type of FL course the experiment was implemented in, namely OBG or FOCOM (see section 1.2.3), and, thus, the number of periods dedicated to English classes students had to follow per week.

Then the first section of the questionnaire was aimed at verifying whether the fourth hypothesis regarding the potential lack of knowledge of FL instructors regarding the concept of textual genres proved to be right. Consequently, the three experienced teachers were asked if, prior to their participation in the experiment, they had already been confronted with this peculiar notion. If applicable, they had to provide a definition of the latter, using their own knowledge thereof, as well as the place they had first learnt about textual genres. To ease their answers, educators were provided with multiple-choice items to identify the possible place(s) which are listed as follows[47]:

- Legal provisions (if applicable, which one(s));
- Textbooks;
- Initial teacher training;
- In-service teacher training;
- Other.

It was deemed important to give the opportunity to teachers to identify any other place where they might have heard about textual genres. Hence, the presence of the "other" item.

The second section of the survey was oriented towards the motivation of the teachers to take part in the experimentation before the latter had been implemented in class. Because motivation is quite an abstract and subjective concept, it was quite difficult to measure the latter (Hinkins 1998: 104). Consequently, it was, again, chosen to give a list of items teachers were free to choose from. This to determine what was their main source of motivation regarding their participation in the experiment. These items were partially provided regarding what Hinkins calls "the inductive approach of item generation" (1998: 107). The potential propositions to be included in the list were, indeed, first listed based on the own experience of the student researcher after their actual

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[47] My translation.

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teaching of the experimental didactic sequence. It was then asked, to a small sample of respondents estranged from the experiment, namely fellow teachers in training as well as seasoned teachers, to list potential motivating factors which could have played a role in the participation of the educators. The answers of the respondents were then compared to the original list of the student researcher. If an item was found in both responses, it was deemed significant enough to be included in the questionnaire (Hinkins 1998: 107). Therefore, the following propositions were accepted and submitted to identify the main motivations of the participating FL teachers regarding the didactic sequence provided in the experiment:

- Interesting theme;
- Short and effective didactic sequence;
- Innovative textual genre (podcast);
- Textual genre (podcast) adapted and interesting for the course followed by my students;
- Ready-to-use tools;
- Situation-problem didactic framework[48];
- The monitoring by the student providing the experience;
- Other[49].

The same reasoning as in the first section was applied when including the "other" item. Teachers were then asked to highlight, if more than one item had been selected, the *three* main motivating factors, and to classify those preferably from the most to the least influential.

Moreover, the third section of the questionnaire was aimed at determining what had actually helped and reassured teachers *during* the implementation of the experiment. It was, indeed, judged interesting to identify what the participating educators actually required in order to feel at ease and, thus, to ensure the smooth running of the experiment. This part of the survey was also difficult to measure due to its abstract and subjective nature (Hinkins 1998: 104). However, it was then decided to ask the teachers to try to grade, using percentages, a various list of items, which might

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[48] See section 4.2.1.

[49] My translation.

have helped them during the experiment. Zero percent being not helpful at all or applicable to the educator, whilst 100% indicating the absolute necessity of the element to ensure good running of the experiment. The various propositions provided to the teachers were run through the same process as the second section of the questionnaire. Consequently, the following items were added to the questionnaire[50]:

- My students' interest in the theme of the didactic sequence;
- All the tools at my disposal;
- The involvement of the student researcher in teaching the [didactic] sequence;
- The monitoring provided throughout the didactic sequence;
- The opportunity to adapt the didactic sequence to my own teaching method;
- My students' final production;
- My students' progress in the target language;
- Other.

Because the student researcher was involved in the teaching of the experimental didactic sequence in one of the participating classes (see 4.3.1), an item was added accordingly.

Finally, teachers were given the chance to express their feelings regarding the didactic sequence itself using open inquiries. They were asked four questions to actually identify what worked best within the didactic sequence and which improvements could be made to the series of lessons they had just taught their students. That part of the questionnaire was, indeed, designed with a potential development of the didactic sequence on a larger scale in mind. In that regard, the corrections to be operated on the latter were therefore of high value and explained the importance of open inquiries. The first question was aimed at highlighting the strengths of the experiment as it was. Teachers were then asked to identify any area of improvement. The third inquiry questioned a potential future integration of the experimental didactic sequence into the official teaching of each participating FL instructor. Finally, any comments covering other aspects of the experiment were also welcomed in the last question of this brief survey.

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[50] My translation.

3.3.3 Results

This section gives an account of the answers received through the brief questionnaire administered to teachers. The results regarding each section of the survey are detailed and discussed in the following subsections.

3.3.3.1 Administrative data

The table below summarises the answers of the participating teachers regarding the class in which they decided to implement the experiment. Therefore, the educators indicated that some of their students were in Year 5, whilst others were in Year 6. Then, some classes contained students with English as first (L1) or second (L2) foreign language. Finally, teachers indicated the type of course, OBG or FOCOM (see section 1.2.3), targeted by the experiment, as well as the number of periods dedicated to English classes the participating pupils followed per week. These pieces of information are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 – Profiles of the classes taking part in the experiment and supervised by the participating teachers

Teacher	Features of the participating class	Type of course in which the experiment was implemented	English periods per week
T1	Year 6 English L1	OBG	4
T2	Year 5 English L2	OBG	4
	Year 6[51] English L2	OBG	4
T3[52]	Year 6 English L1	FOCOM	4
	Year 6 English L1	FOCOM	4

Both T1 and 2 implemented the experiment in OBG courses, which, as a reminder, target English teaching related to the qualifying option followed by students, namely 'reception and tourism agent'. Furthermore, T1 decided to instruct the didactic sequence to Year 6 pupils with English L1. On the other hand, T2 decided to involve students of both Years 5 and 6, each with English L2. T3 implemented the experiment two years in a row, each with Year 6 students with English L1; hence the two separated sets of data for this instructor. As opposed to T1 and 2, he decided to teach the didactic sequence during FOCOM courses, mixing, consequently, students of both the 'reception and tourism agent' and 'accounting' qualifying option. All students had 4 periods of English per week, but, as T1 explained, in the case of students following English L1 courses, these were split between "2 hours of FOCOM course and 2 hours of OBG courses"[53].

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[51] One should also note that one of the podcasts submitted in this school has not been taken into account due to the wrong language used, namely Dutch.

[52] The teacher decided to implement the experimental didactic sequence two consecutive school years. Hence, the results of two different Year 6 classes.

[53] My translation.

3.3.3.2   First section: Theoretical framework

The first question, which was administered to the participating teachers, revolved around their knowledge of the concept of "textual genres". They were, therefore, asked, whether "prior to the experiment, they had been familiar with this concept". Out of the three teachers, two of them had at least heard of textual genres, whereas one of them never came across the notion. Table 6 gives an overview of the answers given.

Table 6 - Answers to Q1.1 of the survey addressed to participating teachers

	Q1a. Prior to this experiment, were you familiar with the concept of "textual genres"?	
	Yes	No
T1	X	
T2	X	
T3		X

Because of their positive answers, Teachers 1 and 2 were, consequently, asked to define textual genres using their own words. T3 was exempted from the following questions because of his negative response. Table 7 gives an account of these descriptions.

	Q1b. If so, could you explain this notion in a few words?
T1	*Le **narratif**, **argumentatif**, des choses comme ça.*[sic] (00 :02 :10)
T2	*C'est un une **production**, on va dire **écrite** ou **orale**, qui obéit à certaines **caractéristiques propres au genre visé**. Je t'avoue que nous on fait beaucoup de **lettres** par exemple. On fait en 6e aussi, un peu **d'argumentation**, voilà ce genre de choses.* [sic] (00 :02 :10)

Both educators pointed out communication macro-functions, which might be expressed by textual genres. The two teachers agreed, indeed, on the argumentative, whereas T1 also added that of the narrative macro-function. Then, T2 spoke of textual genres in terms of written or spoken production obeying certain features of said genre. She went on to give the example of the "written letter".

Furthermore, the two instructors were asked to select, among various propositions (see 3.3.2), where they had heard or learnt about textual genres. T1 chose the item "initial teacher training", whereas T2 selected the "other" item. The educator explained her answer: I can't tell you where it comes from. It's something we do on a daily basis now[54] (00 :02 :47).

3.3.3.3   Second section: Motivation to take part in the experiment

The three teachers were asked to identify the main motivating factor(s) which had encouraged them to take part in the experiment. They could choose one or more answers among a list of items (see 3.3.2). Their responses are detailed in Table 8.

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[54] My translation.

Table 8 - Answers to Q2.1 of the survey addressed to participating teachers

Items	Q2.1 What was/were your main motivation(s) for taking part in this experiment? (several choices possible)			
	T1	T2	T3	Total
Interesting theme		X	X	2
Short and effective [didactic] sequence	X	X		2
Innovative textual genre (podcast)	X	X	X	3
Textual genre (podcast) adapted and interesting for the course followed by my students	X		X	2
Ready-to-use tools	X		X	2
Situation-problem didactic framework	X	X		2
The monitoring by the student providing the experience	X	X		2
Other	X	X	X	3

Every item provided to the teachers was selected at least twice. However, during the online discussion with the educators, certain choices operated were further detailed.

T1, consequently, argued that, even if she was initially motivated by the Situation-Problem framework, students at the beginning of the experiment did

> [...] un podcast sur Liège vraiment comme s'ils présentaient quelque chose. Et le le côté conversationnel n'intervient pas du tout encore à ce moment-là. [...] j'ai l'impression qu'on n'est pas vraiment dans le même dispositif quoi du coup entre le juste je parle de Liège et puis j'ai une conversation avec un expert ou quelqu'un qui s'y connait mieux et voilà. [sic] (00 :07 :18)

Therefore, despite being, at first, interested in this peculiar framework, she found that it was not clearly related to the final task, which was required from students. Regarding the item "other", T1 stated, "je crois que le choix du thème était... donnait déjà envie et ça laissait place à beaucoup de créativité en fait là [sic]" (00 :08 :15). The theme and the creative freedom the experiment gave students constituted a major motivating factor, according to the educator.

Moreover, T2 stated, regarding the "innovative textual genre (podcast)", "the podcast, yes, I'd like to say I'd never done one, so it aroused my curiosity, so it's interesting"[55] (00 :04 :35). This put the emphasis on the original character of this peculiar genre. When discussing the monitoring provided, because the educator had previously supervised the student researcher during one of their internships T2 clarified her answer by stating, "Oui alors ça oui, je peux te le dire, mais ça c'est de l'apostériori. Parce que si je ne t'avais pas connue avant, je ne savais pas que tu aurais été aussi disponible."[56] (00:05:47). Then the educator admitted, when specifying what other factor had motivated her, that her opinion and needs were taken into consideration during the designing process of the experiment. Therefore, T2 recognised the clear bias regarding this peculiar motivating factor by stating "I'm not entirely neutral in this story"[57] (00:03:55).

Finally, T3 explained that one of his main motivations to take part in the experiment was not provided in the list of items, as he stated, "My very first motivation was to help a student doing

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[55] My translation.

[56] My translation.

[57] My translation.

her dissertation, which I think is important"[58] (00:03:42). The educator also highlighted, speaking of the didactic sequence provided by the student researcher, "what you were proposing focused on the tourism option"[59] (00 :03 :42), which motivated him to consider the latter.

Teachers were then asked, out of the items they had chosen, to sort in descending order the three factors which had encouraged them the most to take part in the experiment. Their respective ranking is to be found in Table 9.

Table 9 - Answers to Q2.2 of the survey addressed to participating teachers

	Q2.2 Based on your answers to the previous question, can you list the top three reasons (in descending order) that motivated you to take part in the experiment?		
Ranking	T1	T2	T3
1	Textual genre of podcast	Experiment tailored to her specific needs	Help given to the student researcher regarding their master thesis
2	Theme of the didactic sequence	Help given to the student researcher regarding their master thesis	Didactic sequence tailored to the needs of the 'reception and tourism agent' qualifying option
3	Ready-made nature of the didactic sequence	Curiosity regarding the innovative textual genre of podcast	Ready-made nature of the didactic sequence

The item related to the textual genre of the podcast is mentioned twice in the answers above, namely by Teachers 1 and 2. Nevertheless, those appear at different ranks, occupying, thus, respectively, the first and third positions. Then the "ready-made" character of the didactic sequence

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[58] My translation.

[59] My translation.

is highlighted by both Teachers 1 and 3, each placing this item in the third position. Furthermore, the fact that the experiment was tailored to either the needs of the educator or to the targeted qualifying option was mentioned by, respectively, Teachers 2 and 3. The former considered this as her main motivating factor, whilst the latter placed it in second place in his ranking. Finally, the opportunity to help a student researcher with their master thesis was also deemed encouraging by Teachers 2 and 3, who ranked them each as the second and first inspiring factor to take part in the experiment.

3.3.3.4 Third section: Confidence in setting up the experiment

This section was aimed at quantifying, using percentages, the various elements which might have helped teachers in their implementation of the experimental didactic sequence. The answers of the educators are listed in Table 10. T2 decided to separate the scores attributed to certain items according to the classes in which the experiment was implemented as, in her own words, "ça s'est pas passé de la même façon dans les 2 classes, souviens toi, puisqu'il y en a une où tu étais là, l'autre tu n'y étais pas" (00:08:12). Then, because T3 judged that "it's extremely difficult to put percentages on feelings"[60], it was agreed, along with the student researcher, to opt for Likert-like scales such as 'a little', 'a lot', 'not at all', for instance. To ensure a certain uniformity in the results presented, the answers given by T3 were then transformed into percentages. The latter need, thus, to be considered with caution when interpreting the results.

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[60] My translation.

Table 10 - Answers to Q3 of the survey addressed to participating teachers

Item	Q3. Could you tell me, in percentage terms, how much the following helped/reassured you when you were setting up the experiment in your class?			
	T1	T2		T3
		Year 5	Year 6	
My students' interest in the theme of the [didactic] sequence	80%	80%	70%	80%
All the tools at my disposal	80%	80%		40%
The involvement of the student researcher in teaching the [didactic] sequence	NA	100%		NA
The monitoring provided throughout the [didactic] sequence	70%	100%		80%
The opportunity to adapt the didactic sequence to my own teaching method	90%	75%		NA
My students' final production	80%	90%	80%	60%
My students' progress in the target language	50%	90%	70%	70%
Other	/	/		/

As it can be observed, "the involvement of the student researcher in teaching the [didactic] sequence" was not applicable (NA) in the case of both Teachers 1 and 3. Regarding the item "the opportunity to adapt the didactic sequence to my own teaching method", T3 stated, "Unfortunately for me, appropriating a sequence always means having given it the first time and so it will only be

applicable when... when... or if I give it again"[61] (00 :09 :16). Hence, the not applicable mention in his answer related to this item, as it was the first time he was given the chance to teach the experimental didactic sequence.

Then, the lowest score in the answer of T1 was attributed to the progress of students in the target language. This item was deemed to be helpful in the amount of 50%. The instructor detailed her answer stating that

> Je dirais 50 dans le sens où voilà c'est une petite séquence assez courte donc je m'attendais pas à voir une évolution incroyable. Maintenant plus une évolution au niveau de l'appropriation du concept de podcast plutôt que de la langue cible. [sic] (00 :11 :41)

In other words, she did not expect, from the very beginning, a strong evolution in the progress of her students, but she did observe some regarding their mastering of the textual genre of the podcast. Furthermore, according to T1, the most helpful and reassuring factor in the carrying out of the experiment was the ability to adapt the latter to her teaching method. The item scored, indeed, 90%. The other propositions were, overall, judged beneficial to the implementation of the experimental didactic sequence ranging between 70 and 90%.

Moreover, the grades given by T2 varied, across the two classes, between 70 and 100%. The highest scores were, indeed, given to "the involvement of the student researcher in teaching the [didactic] sequence" and "the monitoring provided throughout the [didactic] sequence". In that regard, T2 acknowledged the involvement of the student researcher stating, "You helped me 100% because I got the model and even after we communicated I sent you the stuff"[62] (00 :10 :19), which indicated that these factors were, indeed, the most important and helpful to her.

Furthermore, as stated above, the answers of T3 had to be converted in percentage. Consequently, the hierarchy among the helpfulness of the items, as assessed by the educator, was kept as close as

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[61] My translation.

[62] My translation.

possible to his original statement. The lowest ranking was thus attributed to the tools put at the disposal of the teacher. The latter explained his reasoning as follows:

> [...] c'était comme je disais quelque chose avec lequel je n'étais pas spécialement à l'aise. Et oui, c'était c'était... c'était pas simple de me retrouver dans tout cela donc... Oui. Ça m'a mis évidemment, ça m'a mis en confiance beaucoup plus que si je n'avais rien eu, mais c'est pas spécialement l'outil qui m'a mis le plus en confiance. (00 :07 :55)

In other words, T3 admitted, here, that the various tools were helpful, as he required something to work with. However, the tools as they had been designed and provided were, according to him, not clear enough and, thus, difficult to navigate. What is also worth mentioning is the reflexion behind the score of the item "my student's final production", which was, after conversion, approximately 60%. During the interview, T3 highlighted, indeed, "the difficulty of determining the progress of students in their final production, as, even if the instruction of the latter forbade the use of online translators, students had to record their podcast using their mobile phones"[63] (00 :10 :34). However, regarding the global progress of students in English, the instructor points out an encouraging anecdote, which explained why this item received a slightly higher 70%. He stated, speaking of one of his students who "Generally greatly struggled with oral evaluation", that during the end-of-the-year oral exam

> qui s'est extrêmement bien passé, je me dis : "mais tiens, j'ai l'impression qu'elle me ressort des petites phrases, des petites choses qu'elle a vu durant la séquence podcast". Et je lui ai posé la question après son oral et en effet elle avait réutilisé des choses. (00 :12 :48)

Teacher 2 also reported that other pupils, besides that one student, reused elements taught during the experiment, which led him to give a higher score to the hereby related item.

3.3.3.5   Fourth section: The experimental didactic sequence

This part of the questionnaire consisted of four open questions. The first aimed at determining what elements of the didactic sequence teachers particularly enjoyed. A summary of their answers is provided in Table 11.

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[63] My translation.

Table 11 - Answers to Q4.1 of the survey addressed to participating teachers[64]

	Q4.1 What did you particularly like about the proposed didactic sequence?
T1	The podcasts which were used during listening comprehension. Especially the first one.
	The final task of communication and the hereby related freedom it came with.
	Exercises involving errors to be found and corrected.
	The initial podcast on Liège.
T2	The authentic documents, despite being didacticised.
	The short length of the didactic sequence.
	The nature of the textual genre of the podcast, which allowed students to record as many times as they wished.
	Interesting regarding to exercise the speaking skill with interaction.
T3	Alternation of many different things within the didactic sequence.
	The innovative nature of Situation-Problem framework.
	The vocabulary list accompanying the two listening comprehensions.

The various educators mentioned, to some extent, similar qualities of the didactic sequence. The three teachers all referred to the podcasts used during the two listening comprehensions as well as the final task of communication. They, however, focused on different benefits related to these elements. Then, Teachers 1 and 3 mentioned, using slightly dissimilar terms, the framework which guided the didactic sequence. T1 also identified the nature of certain exercises and the first production of students as positive elements within the experiment. The second instructor found that the short length of the whole didactic sequence as well as the very nature of the textual genre of the podcast were beneficial components of the experimentation. Furthermore, the variety of exercises was considered as effective by T3.

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[64] My translation.

The second question, as opposed to the first, asked the instructors to specify some possible improvements or modifications which could be made to the didactic sequence. The various answers are summarised in Table 12.

Table 12 - Answers to Q4.2 of the survey addressed to participating teachers

	Q4.2 What changes would you make to the didactic sequence?
T1	The various lessons lead too quickly to the final task.
	Room to produce a more detailed final task.
	Add an exercise on the tone to use in a podcast.
T2	/
T3	The second podcast was too difficult to work with due to the incoherence provoked by the various cuts.
	The overall layout of the didactic sequence.
	The toolbox about the various podcasts should be better detailed.

What could be observed here is that only T1 and 3 identified potential areas for improvement. On the one hand, the former mentioned the overall length of the didactic sequence, which they deemed to be too short, and proposed, therefore, to add exercises focusing on the tone to use in podcasts. She stated, indeed, "I think maybe 1 hour more or something like that so the final task would be more complete [sic]"[65] (00 :15 :18). On the other hand, T3 stated that the second podcast was "too difficult" and, at times, "incoherent in its content". He also referred to the layout, which he qualified as "something typical of experiments carried out in the context of research" and could, thus, be modified to resemble something more appropriate for a school context. He ended by questioning whether the toolbox on podcasts (Appendix 7.1) would be sufficient for somebody with no prior knowledge of that specific textual genre and suggested adding some complementary information. T2 had no "peculiar comment to make regarding any potential improvement".

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[65] My translation.

The last question was aimed at determining whether teachers could envision, in the future, using a similar didactic sequence to their students. They all declared that they were favourable to such an idea, but all stated that they would still modify certain aspects of the various lessons to best fit their own needs.

Regarding any final comment, T1 highlighted the overall innovation of such a didactic sequence designed around the textual genre of the podcast, stating,"that is a change from maybe the videos too, where [pupils are] very influenced by the images"[66] (00 :18 :10). T2 asserted that she was relieved to see the positive outcome, in terms of results, regarding the lessons. She, however, stated

> Je comprends les collègues qui n'ont pas donné suite parce qu'avec quelqu'un sorti de nulle part. Voilà, je, je ne suis pas. Enfin je suis-je suis à peu près sûre que j'aurais dit non aussi. (00 :14 :41)

In other words, she identified the possible refusal of other teachers regarding the experiment due to its peculiar nature.

3.3.4 Analyses

3.3.4.1 Knowledge of textual genres

One of the hypotheses presented in this paper questioned the actual knowledge of experienced teachers about the concept of textual genre. Therefore, the theoretical part of the questionnaire was aimed at confirming or denying that claim. The answers given by the participating teachers offer a nuanced response to the research question above. Out of the three respondents, two have, indeed, asserted that they had heard or learnt about this peculiar notion, which invalidates, partially at least, the lack of knowledge which was speculated in the hypothesis. Nevertheless, the given definitions of textual genres indicate a certain fuzziness in the understanding of the latter. There is, indeed, a clear focus in the two descriptions of the concept, on the communication macrofunctions related to textual genres. Whilst those functions are, indeed, related to the notion, they do not constitute the sole defining factor of this peculiar concept. The response of T2 proves to give further insight into the latter. However, her conception is restricted to the sole productive

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[66] My translation.

aspect of textual genres, whereas it has been identified, within the operational definition given by Simons (see section 2.1.2), that a textual genre "is a tool for acting in a given communication situation, both in **reception** and in **communication**"[67] (2019a: 48). Despite highlighting the oral or written nature of textual genres, it seems that a certain misconception persists around the purpose of this tool, which indicates a certain lack of understanding regarding this peculiar concept. Furthermore, a potential explanation of these gaps might be found in the knowledge of teachers regarding textual genres. To the question "Where did you hear about that concept", the answers are either in the initial teacher training or unknown to the participating teachers. However, knowing that Teachers 1 and 2 have, respectively, nine and twenty-seven years of experience in the field, it might account for their limited understanding of textual genres. Neither of them seems, indeed, to indicate that this concept was taught during in-service teacher training. This suggests that there might not be any active instruction regarding textual genres bid for FL educators when they have finished their original training. This needs, nevertheless, to be considered with caution as there were, actually, but three respondents to the questionnaire, which cannot, thus, act as a representative sample of all FL teachers in French-speaking Belgium.

3.3.4.2   Motivation to take part in the experiment

The answers of the participating teachers to the second section of the questionnaire helped identify their main source of motivation to take part in the experiment. Therefore, based on their responses, it can be argued that the textual genre of the podcast constitutes one of the principal motivating factors according to the teachers, as all three of them indicated that it contributed to their participation. This might suggest, as the various teachers had never worked with the targeted textual genre prior to the experiment, that innovations are particularly motivating for educators and their participation in studies. One of the hypotheses (see Table 1) which is formulated in this paper is that, despite their knowledge of the textual genre of podcasts, FL teachers tend to not actively use the latter in their classrooms. The fact that none of the participating educators had ever worked with podcasts prior to the experiment confirms this claim. The other items (*interesting theme, short and effective didactic sequence, textual genre (podcast) adapted and interesting for*

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[67] My emphasis.

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the course followed by my students, ready-to-use tools, the Situation-Problem didactic framework, and the monitoring by the student providing the experience), might also be considered as having a significant impact on the participating rate of educators. Each of the item were, indeed, chosen at least twice by the various FL instructors. Then it appears that a major influential factor had been omitted, as two teachers, namely 2 and 3, referred to the help provided to the student researcher and placed it in their top three motivating components. The possibility of helping students is allegedly especially encouraging to instructors. Furthermore, it seems, similarly to the previous item, that the "ready-made" nature of the tools provided also had a significant impact on the participation of the teachers, as both Teachers 1 and 3 ranked it as the third most significant element of their participation in the experiment. Consequently, it might be argued that not being involved in the designing process of the content of the experiment does not hinder but rather encourages educators to participate in the former. However, the response of T2 seems to affirm otherwise, as she indicates that it is rather the possibility to give input as to what she and her students need, which motivated her. Nevertheless, only three educators accepted to implement the experiment, which challenges the broad extension of these motivating factors to all FL teachers within French-speaking Belgium. The section dedicated to non-participating schools (see 3.4) might serve as a starting point even if a questionnaire on a larger scale might be needed to dutifully verify these claims.

3.3.4.3   Helpfulness of the elements constituting the didactic sequence

The previous subsection is dedicated to the identification of various motivating factors *prior* the participation of teachers in the research, whereas the third section of the questionnaire aimed at describing the actual elements which were helpful to educators *during* the experiment. In that regard, the monitoring provided by the student researcher appears to be the most helpful resource according to the educators, as it received an average score of 83.3% from the latter. This item is followed by both the interest of students in the theme of the didactic sequence as well as the final production of students. Both were given, indeed, the average score of 77.5% by the participating teachers. This suggests that the impact of the experiment seems to be reassuring and, thus, essential to the instructors. This is confirmed by the average score of 70%, which was attributed to the overall progress of the pupils, highlighting, therefore, the attention of the FL educators to the

linguistic improvements whom students benefited from. The tools put at the disposal of the teachers received an average score of 66.6%, which might indicate that whilst certain instructors found them an interesting resource, some did not consider them as a per se crucial component in the smooth running of the didactic sequence. This is, again, supported by the score received by the item "the possibility to adapt the lessons to my own teaching method". If solely the percentages given by Teachers 1 and 2 were taken into account, the item would have received the score of 82.5%, which proves that, to these educators, this factor was allegedly of great importance while implementing the didactic sequence. However, T3 stated that this item was not applicable and, to some extent, not significant to his teaching of the various experimental lessons. A clear contrast is, therefore, here to be observed in the answers of the three educators, which suggests that some of them, depending on their instruction style, prefer different degrees of freedom in the carrying out of the pilot didactic sequence. Then, it appears that, according to T2, the most important factor to the good running of the experiment, beside the monitoring by the student researcher, was the involvement of the latter in the actual teaching of the didactic sequence. Nevertheless, an average score could not be attributed to this item, as the educator was the sole recipient of this element. A hypothesis might still be made based on the results of the previously discussed items related to the provided tools as well as the possibility of adapting the various lessons to a specific teaching method. It might, thus, be argued that some teachers might want, in future experimentations, to have the teaching model of the student researcher as the basis for their own implementation of a pilot didactic sequence, whereas others might consider it as an obstacle. This would need to be further investigated.

3.3.4.4   The experimental didactic sequence

Teachers expressed a variety of positive elements and modifications to be made regarding the different lessons. Therefore, based on their answers, some main topics ought to be observed. If, overall, educators liked the use of authentic yet didacticised (see 4.2.2) material, T3 still highlighted the necessity to stay coherent in the modifications operated on the original podcast. Then, the several sorts and types of exercises seemed to have been appreciated by the participating teachers, with T1 suggesting, nevertheless, that one could have been added to work on the tone to be used within a podcast. This is intrinsically linked to the length of the didactic sequence. On the

one hand, T2 pointed out that she would not have wished a longer set of lessons, whereas the two other educators highlighted how such a short length led to compulsory restrictions. It was suggested that a longer didactic sequence might have allowed for an in-depth theoretical introduction to podcasts (T3) and a more detailed final task (T1). This means that educators would, allegedly, prefer a longer and more polished set of lessons rather than a short and, in certain aspects, incomplete experiment. This constitutes, indeed, one of the main limitations of the research presented in this paper. However, this is discussed in a later section (see section 5.2.1).

Regarding the possibility of integrating the experimental didactic sequence to their regular teaching, all educators expressed a favourable stance. Nevertheless, they all admitted that they would change certain details related to the set of lessons. This, to better adjust to the needs of their students, as well as their own, which mirrors the previously established need to be able to adapt of the various tools to their own teaching method.

3.3.5   Biases

The existence of possible cognitive biases needs to be acknowledged, as they might have influenced, to a greater or lesser extent, the responses of the three participating teachers.

The first possible bias which might be identified is described by De Landsheere (1979), as the "social desirability". The latter refers to "[a]n individual [who] tends to conform to the values and beliefs generally accepted in the social group to which he or she belongs, or at least to express himself or herself and give answers in line with these values, so as not to lose the esteem of the group"[68] (76-77). In the case of the questionnaire submitted, it means that teachers might have claimed to know what the concept of textual genres meant because they thought it was more socially acceptable to say so, for instance.

Another clear bias worth mentioning would be the relationship between the student researcher and T2. Because the latter knew the former prior the experiment, it might have impacted the answers given in the questionnaire. The instructor was, indeed, given the chance, unlike other participating

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[68] My translation.

teachers, to give a certain input in the designing of the various lessons, which might, thus, have encouraged her to give positive responses regarding the actual running of the experiment. Then the potential fear of disappointing the student researcher by pointing out something negative might also have been influential.

The last bias, which is worth highlighting would be what Oppenheim (in Renson, in press), describes as the tendency of the interviewer, here embodied by the student researcher, to push the answers in a certain direction. This, as the author points out, might occur in the manner the interviewer might ask a question or approve a response, thus indicating that it was what was expected. This bias is to be observed, in the transcriptions of the various online meetings with the three participating teachers and needs, therefore, to be acknowledged.

3.4 Non-participating schools

3.4.1 Methodology

After the refusal of four out of seven schools regarding the experiment, it was decided to create a very brief survey to determine the reason for their negative response regarding their potential participation. The questionnaire was, thus, sent towards the end of the school year to people who had previously been contacted about the experiment, including thus, both school headmasters and, sometimes, FL teachers. Despite three schools providing an answer, solely one of them filled the survey in.

3.4.2 Structure of the questionnaire

The survey was made up of one main and hereby related secondary inquiry, with both aimed at determining the reasons for the refusal to take part in the experiment. Therefore, respondents were first informed of the anonymity of the questionnaire and were then provided with a multiple-choice list of items to choose from to express their feelings towards the experimental didactic sequence. These items were determined according to the answers of a sample of estranged respondents to identify the potential most significant elements which could attest to the refusal of non-participating teachers. The various elements are the following:

- Lack of time to take part in the experiment

- Theme of the [didactic] sequence

- Textual genre (podcast) deemed too vague/unknown

- Textual genre (podcast) deemed uninteresting for the targeted qualifying option

- Tools provided deemed not adapted to my usual teaching

- Lack of monitoring by the student providing the experience

- Didactic framework chosen (Situation-Problem)

- Other[69]

If respondents chose more than one item, they were then asked to rank those in descending order to try and establish the most influential factor which, justified their refusal.

3.4.3 Results

As mentioned above (see section 3.4.1), out of three respondents, only one used the questionnaire provided to give their answers, whilst the other two gave simple responses through an email. The latter were, therefore, transferred as items to fit the first question of the survey. The original statements of the respondents were, nevertheless, not included in the secondary question related to the first one, as no hierarchy was specified among the elements cited. A summary of the answers collected is provided in Table 13.

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[69] My translation.

Table 13 - Answers to Q1 of the survey addressed to non-participating schools

Items	Q1. What were the main obstacles to your taking part in this experiment?		
	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3
Lack of time to take part in the experiment	X		X
Theme of the sequence			
Textual genre (podcast) deemed too vague/unknown			
Textual genre (podcast) deemed uninteresting for the targeted qualifying option			
Tools provided deemed not adapted to my usual teaching			
Lack of monitoring by the student providing the experience			X
Didactic framework chosen (Situation-Problem)			
Other	X	X	X

Both respondents 1 and 3 pointed out the "lack of time" as being an important factor to their negative answers regarding the experiment. Respondent 3 also mentioned the lack of monitoring provided by the student researcher, writing, "I think the best thing is to give a call when you don't

receive a reply to an email. That seems to me to be the most effective"[70]. All three respondents referred to items which were not provided in the list. Therefore, Respondent 1 admitted that there were already "a lot of projects which were taking place" in their school. Respondent 2 indicated that the email address, which the student researcher had used to contact them, was no longer in use. Finally Respondent 3 also mentioned that they forgot to pass on the information to the appropriate service targeted by the demand.

Regarding the secondary inquiry, only Respondent 1 established a ranking. The latter identified, as main discouraging factor to take part in the experiment, that the student researcher had contacted them too much in advance, which led to the request being forgotten about. They then mentioned the lack of monitoring from the student researcher and claimed that it probably "stemmed from the fear to be considered as annoying"[71] with the demand. Respondent 1 ended the classification by pointing out that they were afraid to "waste time with an experimental didactic sequence, which had not yet been proved beneficial"[72].

3.4.4 Analyses

Based on the answers received, the main discouraging factor, according to the respondents, is the lack of time to implement the experiment in one of their classes. Both respondents 1 and 3 agreed on the matter, the latter ranking it as the third most influential factor regarding their refusal to participate. It also seems that the monitoring of the student researcher regarding getting in touch with the various schools and teachers was deemed as insufficient, according to both Respondent 1 and 3. Regarding Respondent 2, a technical issue related to their email address seems to be at stake.

These answers bid a strong contrast to those of the participating teachers. The monitoring provided by the student researcher is, indeed, the highest scoring motivating factor based on the answers of

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[70] My translation.

[71] My translation.

[72] My translation.

the three educators. Another contrast can be highlighted in the time dedicated to the implementation of the experimental set of lessons. Two out of three participating teachers deemed them too short to achieve to a fuller extent what they intended, whereas non-participating schools judged the didactic sequence to be too time-consuming, to be carried out at all. Further investigations are, however, needed to confirm or to refute the various claims made by both parties.

3.5   Students

3.5.1   Methodology

Two questionnaires, each ensuring the anonymity of the latter, were addressed to the participating students across the three schools. The number of pupils per participating class is detailed in Table 14 below. One was handed before any activity related to the experiment had taken place and was aimed at establishing the knowledge of pupils regarding the textual genre of the podcast as well as determining their self-perception of their language proficiency. That first survey acted, thus, as a form of pretest (see Appendix 4). The second questionnaire greatly resembled that of the first and was distributed right after the final task of the didactic sequence and is, therefore, to be considered as a posttest survey (see Appendix 5). The answers to both the pre- and posttest were compared to try and identify any changes that had occurred as a result of the implementation of the didactic sequence.

Table 14 - Number of students per class and responding to the pre- and posttest quetionnaires

School		Profile of the students	Number of students per class	Number of responding students (Pretest)	Number of responding students (Posttest)
School 1		Year 6 English L1	6	5	5
School 2		Year 5 English L2	3	3	3
		Year 6[73] English L2	3	3	2
School 3	Class 1	Year 6 English L1	18[74]	14	16
	Class 2	Year 6 English L1	26[75]	21	17
		Total	56	46	43

It should, however, be noted that only the recto side of the posttests of the second class of School 3 were handed back to the student researcher.

3.5.2 Structure of the questionnaire

3.5.2.1 Pretest

The first section of the pretest asked students to assess their level of English proficiency, using smiley faces, for each of the previously mentioned linguistic skills, namely the "listening,

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[73] One should also note that one of the podcasts submitted in this school has not been taken into account due to the wrong language used, namely Dutch.

[74] Including 5 students in the 'reception and tourism agent' qualifying option.

[75] Including 12 students in the 'reception and tourism agent' qualifying option.

speaking, reading and writing" competence (see section 1.2.4). The distinction between speaking with and without interaction was, however, not specified in the table given to pupils. Therefore, the smiling face indicated that students estimated to be proficient at that linguistic skill; the neutral face stood for average language proficiency regarding competence, whereas the sad face indicated that students deemed their level of English as being weak in that peculiar skill. For each of their answers, students were given the opportunity to leave a comment to detail their responses.

Students were then asked if, prior to the experiment, they had already heard about the term 'podcast'. They were then demanded to write, even with no knowledge of the latter, what that word evoked in them. Pupils could answer using full sentences or key words to do so. This was aimed at drawing a comparison between the definition of the textual genre of the podcast which has been established in a previous section of this paper (see section 2.1.2.2) and the actual representation students had about this specific concept. Furthermore, pupils were then asked to specify if they listened to podcast(s) and, if applicable, which one(s). That inquiry was designed to see if the textual genre targeted by the didactic sequence was significant regarding the actual habits of students.

The penultimate inquiry of the pretest questioned whether students would consider podcasts as interesting material to be used during the English FL classes. They were then asked to further detail their answers, be it positive or negative. This was to determine if there was any original interest in the textual genre before the experimental didactic sequence. The last open question gave the chance to further comment on any aspect of the survey.

3.5.2.2   Posttest

The posttest shares a similar structure with that of the pretest questionnaire. Students were, indeed, asked, using the same table (see 3.5.2.1), to assess their level of language proficiency. This was mainly to determine if the didactic sequence had operated any changes in the self-perception of the pupils regarding their linguistic competence.

Similarly to the pretest, students had to specify what the word 'podcast' meant to them. That question was aimed at verifying whether certain theoretical aspects of the textual genre had been integrated and understood by pupils.

The third question of the survey tried to determine if, after the experiment, students were motivated to listen to podcasts. In the following inquiries, pupils were asked to further detail their answers. On the one hand, if they were, indeed, favourable to listen to podcasts, they needed to specify which genre interested them the most. On the other hand, if pupils did not want to give podcasts a try, they were asked to specify the reason, which encouraged them not to do so.

Moreover, students were requested to specify whether they found any interest in implementing the textual genre in English courses and to explain their reasoning. It was, again, aimed at determining if any change occurred, compared to the results obtained in the pretest, in their position after having been exposed to the didactic sequence. Regarding the latter, students were questioned about the positive elements and areas of improvements they had observed during the various lessons. Finally, pupils were given the opportunity to freely make any statement they wished in a last open question.

3.5.3 Results

3.5.3.1 Pretest

The answers to the first question received across the three participating schools were collated to determine the overall self-perception pupils expressed regarding their English proficiency. Those are summarised in Figure 15. It is worth mentioning, nevertheless, that, regarding the speaking competence, one student hesitated and indicated two smiley faces. Therefore, it was decided to keep the lowest estimation.
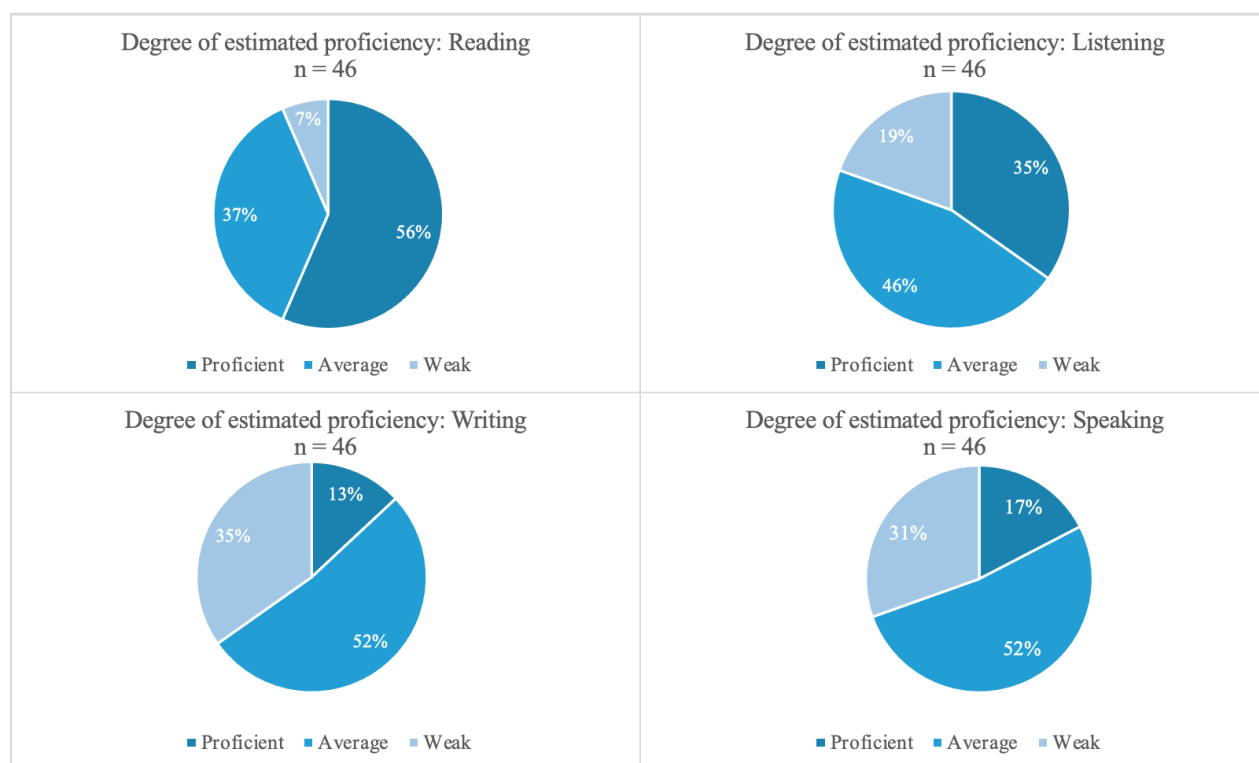
Figure 6 - Degree of proficiency estimated by students regarding the four linguistic skills (Pretest)

Out of 46 students, 56% (26 pupils) declared to be proficient, 37% (17 pupils) to have an average, and 7% (3 pupils) to have a weak level of language proficiency related to the reading skill. The figure also shows that 35% (16 pupils) of students deemed their listening competence to be proficient, whereas 46% (21 pupils) and 19% (9 pupils) declared to have, respectively, average or weak proficiency in that peculiar competence. Regarding their writing skills, 54% of students (24 pupils) declared having an average proficiency level in their ability to write in English. The number of confident students in that peculiar competence was 13% (6 pupils), whereas 33% of students (16 pupils) stated to be weak in their writing skills. Finally, similar results are to be observed about the speaking competence, as 52% of students (24 pupils) assessed their level of proficiency to be average, 31% (14 pupils) to have a weak English level and 17% (8 pupils) to be proficient regarding that linguistic skill.

Then, students were asked to determine whether they knew about the textual genre of the podcast. Their answers are shown in Figure 7.

Answers to the question: "Have you ever heard of podcasts?"
n = 46

13%

87%

■ Yes ■ No
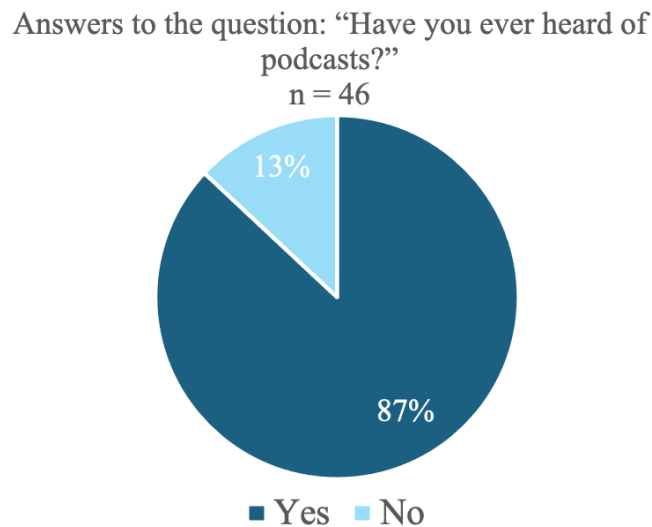
Figure 7 - Answers to Q2 of the survey addressed to students (Pretest)

It appears that 87% of students (40 pupils) had already heard of podcasts prior to the experiment, whereas 13% (6 pupils) never came across that term.

When asked to describe what the word 'podcast' in a few words, students provided many examples in the form of full sentences of key words. Three of them did, nevertheless, not provide any illustrations of podcasts. The items mentioned by at least two pupils have been transcribed and collated under various categories related to 'speech', 'the content of podcasts', 'production of podcasts', 'platform of distribution'. The occurrence of the various elements is to be found in Table 15.

Table 15 – Items related to speech, the content and production of podcasts and to platforms of distribution provided by students as answers to Q3 (Pretest)

Items related to speech	
Item	Occurrence
To speak	7
To tell	5
Discussion	4
Debate	2
Conversation	2

Items related to the content of podcasts	
Item	Occurrence
Subject	10
Story	6
Question & Answer	2
Real	2
Theme	2

Items related to the production of podcasts	
Item	Occurrence
Video	8
Audio	5
To Record	5
Listeners	2

Items related to platform of distribution	
Item	Occurrence
Issue	2
Radio	2

When referring to 'speech', students mentioned the verbs *to speak* and *to tell*, respectively 7 and 5 times. These were followed by *Discussion*, which was observed 4 times as well as *Debate* and *Conversation* both of which appeared 2 times across the various descriptions. The items related to the 'content of podcasts' which were referred to the most frequently in the definitions of students, were *subject* and *story*, with respectively 10 and 6 occurrences. The element *Question & answer*, *Real* and *theme* were all mentioned twice by pupils. Moreover, regarding the 'production of podcasts', the item *video* appeared the most with a total of 8 occurrences. The items *Audio* and *To record* appeared both 5 times across the descriptions, whereas *Listeners* was mentioned twice in the latter. The most frequent items related to the 'platform of distribution' were *Issue* and *Radio* with a total of two occurrences each.

The fourth question aimed at determining if the participating students actually listened to podcasts. The various results of that question are summarised in Figure 8.
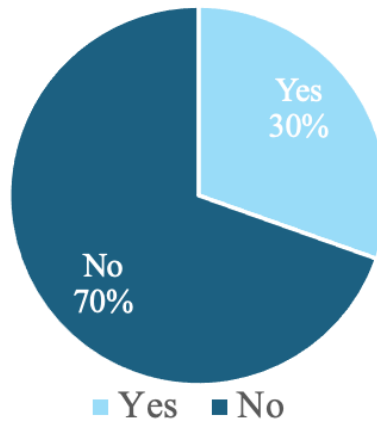
Figure 8 – Answers to Q4 of the survey addressed to students (Pretest)

A majority of students, namely 70% (32 pupils), claimed to not listen to podcasts, whereas 30% of them (14 pupils) declared otherwise.

Finally, students were asked if they saw any interest in the integration of podcasts in their regular English course would be of any interest to them.
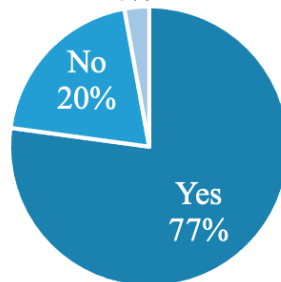
Figure 9 – Answers to Q5 of the survey addressed to students (Pretest)

Despite being described in various terms, the main motivating factors in favour or against the implementation of podcasts have been gathered under broader categories. It is worth noting that several items might have been found in the comment of one student.

Table 16 – Arguments in favour and against the implementation of the textual genre of the podcast in English classes (Pretest)

Arguments in favour of the implementation of the textual genre of podcast		Arguments against the implementation of the textual genre of podcast	
Item	Occurrence	Item	Occurrence
Skills enhancement	13	*No priority over other teaching materials*	4
Learning new things	7	*Personal choice of every student*	3
Exposure to authentic material	6	*Textual genre too different from other teaching materials*	1
Innovative nature of the textual genre	5	*Too difficult to master*	1
Vocabulary improvement	4	*Time-consuming*	1
Interesting theme related to podcast	3		
Help with linguistic difficulties	1		

The first three arguments in favour of the integration of the textual genre of the podcast appeared to be, prior to the experiment, the possibility of *skills enhancement*, with 13 occurrences, followed by the perspective of *learning new things,* and the exposure to authentic material with respectively 7 and 6 mentions. The other motivating factors were the *innovative nature of the textual genre* (5 occurrences), *vocabulary improvement* (4 occurrences), the *interesting themes related to podcasts* (3 occurrences) and *help with linguistic difficulties* (1 occurrence).

Furthermore, the elements mentioned against the implementation of podcasts in the regular teaching program of English classes were mainly related to the fact that it was judged as having

no priority over other teaching materials (4 occurrences). Other discouraging factors were that podcast should be part of the *personal choice of every student* (3 occurrences), it was also deemed *too different from other teaching materials* (1 occurrence), *too difficult to master* (1 occurrence) and *time-consuming* (1 occurrence).

3.5.3.2   Posttest

The degree of self-estimated language proficiency was, again, demanded to students after the experiment. This, to see if any improvement has been made regarding each skill. The results are shown in the figure below.
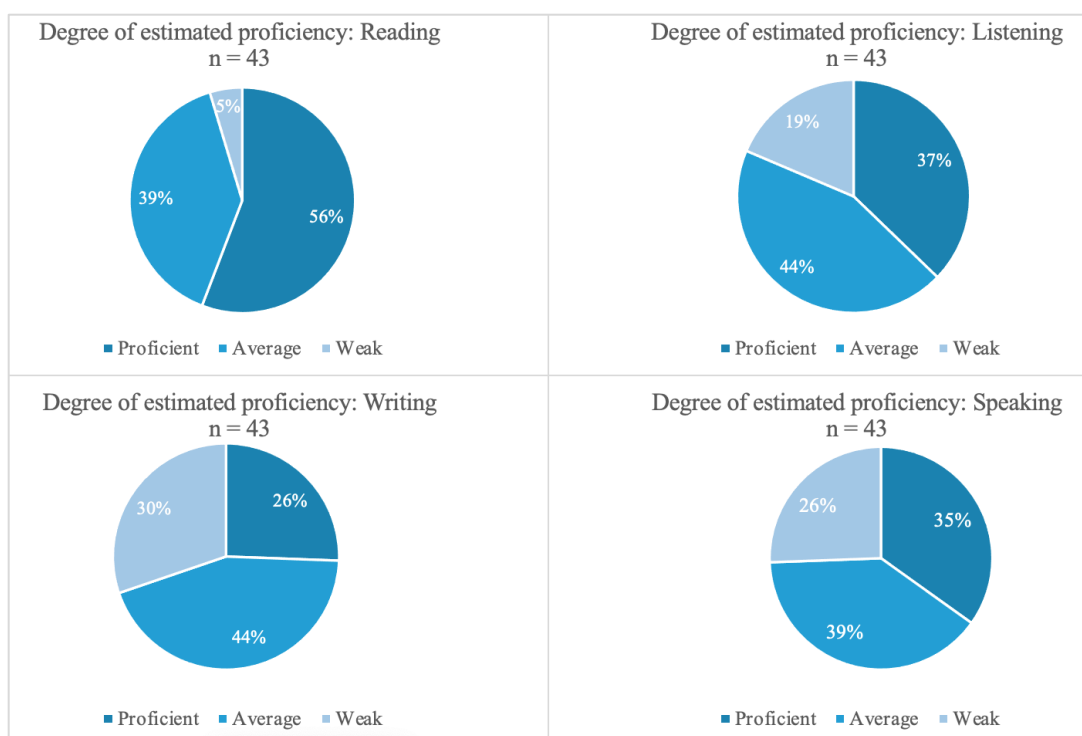
Figure 10 - Degree of proficiency estimated by students regarding the four linguistic skills (Posttest)

The self-estimated language proficiency level related to the reading skill was assessed as proficient by 56% of the students (24 pupils), whereas 39% of them (17 pupils) considered their level to be average. Roughly 5% (2 pupils) saw themselves as being weak regarding that linguistic competence. Then, participating students gave their self-perception of their mastering listening competence. Therefore, 37% of the former (16 pupils) judged themselves to be proficient, 44%

(19 pupils) to have average proficiency and 19% of students (8 pupils) considered the latter to be weak. When discussing their level of competence concerning the writing skill, 26% of students (11 pupils) estimated that they were proficient, whereas 44% (19 pupils) saw their linguistic level in that peculiar competence to be average. Out of the 43 respondents, 13% judged themselves to be weak when speaking of the writing skill. Finally, when it came to the speaking skill, 35% of the students (15 pupils) assessed themselves to be proficient, 39% (17 pupils) estimated to have an average level of competence, and 26% (11 pupils) judged that they had a weak proficiency level.

Then, students were asked what the term podcast evoked in them. Their responses were collated under the same previously mentioned categories. However, only the items with two or more mentions were listed.

Table 17 - Items related to speech, the content and production of podcasts and to platforms of distribution provided by students as answer to Q2 (Posttest)

Items related to speech			Items related to the content of podcasts			Items related to the production of podcasts	
Item	Occurrence		Item	Occurrence		Item	Occurrence
Discussion	8		*Subject*	11		*Audio*	4
To speak	8		*Information*	5		*Guest*	3
To ask	3		*History*	4		*Recording*	3
To debate	2		*Interview*	3		*Short*	2
Exchange	2		*Theme*	3		*To Listen*	2
Sharing	2		*Anecdote*	2		*Video*	2
To Tell	2		*Experience*	2			
Monologue	2		*Story time*	2			
Conversation	2						

Items related to platform of distribution	
Item	Occurrence
Radio	3

The items which were grouped under the category 'speech' were *Discussion* and *To speak* with 8 occurrences, *To ask* with 3 occurrences, *To debate, Exchange, Sharing, To tell, Monologue, Conversation* all with 2 occurrences each. The category related to the 'content of a podcast' encompassed 11 occurrences of *Subject*, 5 occurrences of *Information*, 4 occurrences of *History*,

3 occurrences of both *Interview* and *Theme*, and 2 occurrences of *Anecdote, Experience* and *Story Time.* When speaking of elements related to the 'production of a podcast', students referred 4 times to *Audio*, 3 times to *Guest* and *Recording* as well as 2 times to *Short, To listen* and *Video.* The only item which was linked to 'platform of distribution' was *Radio* with 3 occurrences.

Furthermore, the next question asked pupils whether after the experimental didactic sequence, they would listen to podcasts. Their responses are shown in Figure 11.

Answers to the question: After these lessons, would you be interested in listening to podcasts?
n = 43

No 33%

Yes 67%

■ Yes   ■ No
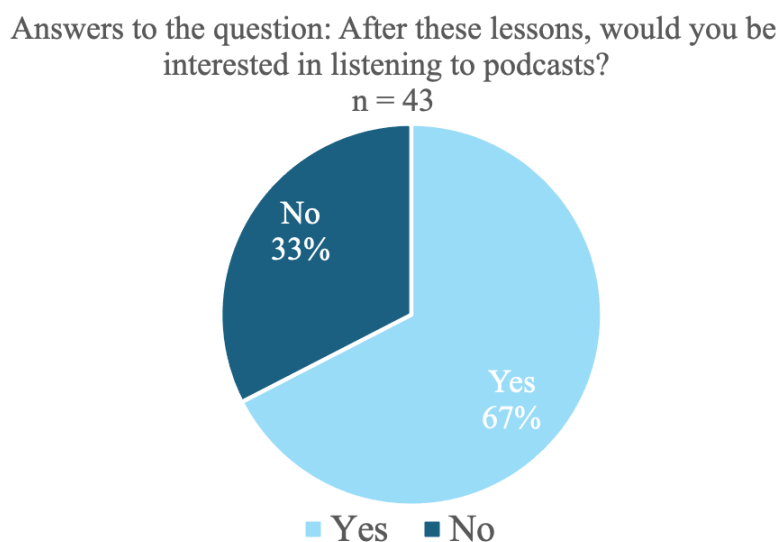
Figure 11 – Answers to Q4 of the survey addressed to students (Posttest)

Out of all the students, 67% (29 pupils) showed an interest in listening to podcasts, whereas 33% (14 pupils) expressed that the various lessons on the latter did not encourage them to do so.

Questions 4, 5 and 6 were partially answered, as half of the posttests in Class 2 of School 3 were submitted with an affected total of respondents dropping to 27. This needs to be taken into consideration when discussing the results.

The fourth central question asked whether students would like to use, after the end of the didactic experiment, the textual genre of podcast in their regular English courses. Their answers were the

following: 93% (25) were in favour of a future implementation of podcast, whilst 7% (2) of students showed no peculiar interest in the latter.

Students expressed their reasoning using various justifications. Those were gathered under broader groups, which are presented in Table 18.

Table 18 - Arguments in favour and against the implementation of the textual genre of podcast in English classes (Posttest)

Arguments in favour of the implementation of the textual genre of podcast		Arguments against the implementation of the textual genre of podcast	
Item	Occurrence	Item	Occurrence
Skills enhancement	12	*Too difficult to master*	1
Vocabulary improvement	3		
Innovative way to learn or study	3		
Playful textual genre to learn	3		
Exposure to authentic material	2		
More interesting than other learning material	2		
Motivating	2		
Allows self-expression	1		

The most popular motivating faction students referred to, when it came to the implementation of podcast, was the possibility of *skill enhancement* with 12 occurrences, which concerned almost all linguistic competences. Then *vocabulary improvement, innovative way to learn or study* as well as the *playful* nature of the textual genre were all observed 3 times across the whole justifications of students. The *exposure to authentic material, the more interesting* and *motivating* character of podcasts were all mentioned twice. Moreover, one student stated that it was the fact that podcasts *allow self-expression* which made them favourable to its implementation. The sole argument against the latter was mentioned by one other student who claimed that it was *too difficult to master*.

The results of both questions 5 and 6, about the positive features and areas of improvement related to the didactic sequence, were gathered in Table 19.

Table 19 – Positive features and potential areas for improvement identified by pupils regarding the didactic sequence

Positive features of the didactic sequence		Areas for improvement within the didactic sequence	
Item	Occurrence	Item	Occurrence
Production of a podcast	6	*The theme of the didactic sequence could be more interesting*	2
Collective production of a podcast	3	*More freedom could be allocated regarding the theme of the final production*	2
Entertaining lessons	3	*Implementation of more challenging exercises*	2
Authentic podcasts	2	*Possibility of more spontaneous interactions in final production*	1
Innovative lessons	2	*Implementation of a more extensive theoretical introduction to podcasts*	1
The targeted textual genre	2	*Allocate more time during the creating process*	1
Theme	1		

The various participating students identified the main positive feature of the experimental set of lessons to be the *production of a podcast* (6 occurrences) with some students focusing on the *collective* aspect thereof (3 occurrences). They also found the didactic sequence to be *entertaining* (3 occurrences). Other positive elements of the experiment were the possibility to listen to *authentic podcasts,* the *innovative* nature of the lessons and the textual genre of the podcast. These items were all mentioned twice by students. The theme of the didactic sequence was also deemed to be a positive feature by one of the participating pupils. On the contrary, the latter was mentioned twice as a possible area for improvement, along with the desire for *more freedom* and *more challenging exercises.* The possibility of *more spontaneous interactions*, a *more extensive theoretical introduction to podcast,* and *more time allocated to the creating process* were all mentioned once as possible areas of improvement.

3.5.4 Analyses

First, it seems that pupils have a certain theoretical knowledge of podcasts, as 87% of students were familiar with the term prior to the experiment. The actual elements provided in the various

definitions of podcasts proposed by students also pointed towards an already established understanding of the textual genre as a crucial component of the previously presented operational definition of the latter were cited. What is worth mentioning is that items related to speech were more mentioned in the posttest rather than in the pretest. This suggests that students succeeded in understanding, to some extent, the text type, which was targeted by the lessons, namely that of the conversational podcast. The latter implies, indeed, significant verbal interactions. It is also interesting to note that the pretest counted 8 occurrences of the item *video* whereas it was only mentioned twice in the posttest. This suggests that because pupils were only confronted with audio podcasts, they probably considered that these were the sole valid form of the latter. It could, thus, be envisioned, in potential future investigations, to provide one video podcast as an example of the targeted type of text.

Then, the self-perception of the students regarding their language proficiency in each of the four linguistic skills seems to have slightly been impacted by the experiment. The estimated level of both the reading and listening competence appeared to have had but subtle changes. However, it is the speaking and, more surprisingly, the writing skills which seem to have been the most positively affected by the experimental didactic sequence. There is, indeed, a slight increase in students (18%) who perceived themselves as proficient regarding the speaking competence. The writing skill also appears to have undergone the same phenomenon, with an increase of 13% of students estimating their proficiency level to be good in that competence. The various set of lessons which were taught during the experiment seem to have been beneficial to the self-perception of students. The speaking skill was obviously targeted through the textual genre of podcast, which could explain why an increased number of students perceived to have improved in that peculiar competence. However, regarding the writing skill, it could be suggested that the fact that students had to first structure their ideas before recording their podcast played a major role in the estimated improvement of students. This is further mirrored by the results of question 4. Students have, both within the pre- and posttest questionnaire, identified the main motivating factor to the implementation of podcasts within their English curriculum to be the possibility of *skill enhancement.* Therefore, it could be suggested that pupils seriously consider the textual genre of podcast as being beneficial to their language proficiency.

Moreover, a further proof of the potential significance of podcasts to students could be found in their answers regarding their potential interest in listening to that peculiar genre. As it appeared in the pretest, only 30% of students had listened to or were regularly listening to podcasts. However, by the end of the didactic sequence, 67% of students declared to be interested in the former. A nuance needs, nevertheless, to be brought up when discussing those results as, indeed, the question did not mention in which language pupils would like to listen to podcasts. Therefore, solely based on the answers to other questions, such as inquiries 4 and 5, it could be suggested that, during English classes at least, students might not be opposed starting and listening to podcasts. In the pretest, there were 6 occurrences, within the statements of students, which pointed out an interest in exposure to authentic material through that textual genre. The innovative character of the textual genre was also highlighted 5 times within the pretest. Furthermore, regarding the posttest, there were also a few responses (2) which indicated that pupils seemed to like the authentic nature of the two podcasts provided during the experiment. Other students highlighted the playful (3) and innovative nature (3) of the textual genre. This all suggests that there might be an actual interest of students regarding the listening of podcasts during their English courses. Whether they would be inclined to listen to podcasts in English still needs to be further investigated.

These preliminary observations and deductions need, however, to be nuanced. There were but 46 and 43 respondents to the pre- and posttest, which does not constitute a sample significant enough to draw definite conclusions to the various claims, which were investigated through the questionnaire. Then, as stated above, only 27 posttests were received in full. This implies that the analyses presented in this section serve more as observation of tendencies rather than definite answers to the hypotheses.

3.5.5 Cognitive biases

Similarly to the survey handed to the participating teachers, students might have been influenced by a set of, sometimes cognitive, biases. This brief section is aimed at identifying those biases.

The first bias would be, much like the participating teachers, that of "social desirability" (see section 3.3.5). Therefore, to questions such as "after this experiment, would you be interested in

listening to podcasts", some students might have given a positive answer because they thought it was what was expected and valued as response.

Another major bias would be what De Landsheere refers to as the "Hawthorne effect", which the author defines as "the psychological effect that the awareness of participating in research and of being the object of special attention has on the subject or on the experimental group"[76] (101). Therefore, it could be suggested that certain pupils, knowing that the surveys were part of the experiment, might have adapted their answers in that regard.

3.6 Conclusion

This section of the dissertation was aimed at verifying or denying various hypotheses pertaining to either the knowledge or the motivation of both participating students and teachers in an experiment which was centred around the textual genre of the podcast. The answers of non-participating schools were also judged to be of great value regarding the motivational factor to take part in an experiment.

Therefore, this dissertation claimed, as third hypothesis, that FL teachers were familiar with the concept of textual genres. It aimed, however, at determining to what exact extent educators had an understanding of the notion. Consequently, within the survey given for participating teachers to answer, a section of the survey was oriented to question the actual knowledge of FL instructors pertaining to textual genres. It appeared that some of the responding teachers were, indeed, familiar to the term, but that it was restricted to the communication macro-functions of the concept. It was established that the lack of knowledge regarding this important notion was mainly to blame on the absence of training targeting textual genres after the initial teacher training received by the various educators.

Moreover, the questionnaire provided a brief yet clear answer regarding the fourth hypothesis, which claimed that despite knowing the textual genre of the podcast, FL teachers did not actively use them in class. All participating teachers agreed that one of the main motivating factors

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regarding their participation in the experiment was the *innovative* nature of the targeted textual genre, as all three of them had never had the chance to see any form of podcast during their lessons. This, consequently, confirmed the fourth hypothesis.

The fifth hypothesis presented in this dissertation asserted that "'Ready-made' didactic sequences may encourage FL teachers to take part in experimentation". A clear answer could not be provided, as nuances were observed in the stance of both participating teachers and non-participating schools. Some FL teachers stated, indeed, that the 'ready-made' nature of the experimental didactic sequence had greatly contributed to their participation in the research presented in this paper. However, one of the interrogated educators declared that the premade lessons did not play an important role in his taking part in the experiment. Then, the rate of non-participating schools despite being supplied with a ready-made didactic sequence seems to indicate that it is not the most motivating factor when it comes to FL teachers taking part in an experiment. Finally, the small sample of schools and, therefore, teachers contacted does not permit to submit a definite response to hypothesis number five, as an investigation of a larger scale would be needed to do so.

Research question 6 investigated whether students from the secondary qualifying education had any knowledge of the textual genre of podcast and, if applicable, what was the extent of said knowledge. The hereby related hypothesis claimed that this peculiar profile of pupils had no understanding of the targeted textual genre. The answers to the survey, however, proved the opposite, as quite a great percentage of the responding students had, in fact, heard of podcast despite not actively listening to the latter. Their concrete knowledge of some of the elements making up both the structure and the content of podcasts also permitted to deny this hypothesis. Their understanding of that peculiar genre was, consequently, solely further detailed through the experimental didactic sequence.

Then, the seventh hypothesis which was formulated was that "students of the qualifying education might find podcasts helpful regarding their language proficiency" (see 1.1). This claim is, again, validated by the answers of pupils to the two questionnaires. Students showed, indeed, a positive stance towards podcasts in both the pre- and posttest stages of the survey. Their self-estimated language proficiency level also saw a positive increase, especially regarding the writing and speaking skills, which further proves the beliefs of students regarding a positive impact of podcast

on their linguistic competence. The actual benefits of podcasts will be discussed in the dedicated section of this paper when discussing the pre- and posttest productions of students (see 4.5).

4 Experimentation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is, mainly centred around the practical implications of this research and gives an account of the experiment which has been carried out for this dissertation. The main aim of this section is to try and give an answer to the final hypotheses and research questions of this paper, which are reminded in Table 20.

Table 20 - Hypotheses and research questions 8 to 9

H8	There is a real asset in the transposition of authentic content into educational material.	Q8	Is there a real asset in the transposition of authentic content into educational material? If so, to what degree?
H9	The production of a podcast is beneficial to the teaching of English to students in qualifying secondary education.	Q9	Is imposing the task of creating a podcast beneficial to the learning of English for students in secondary qualifying education? If so, for which skills? The listening and speaking skills?

This chapter starts, by introducing the didactic framework which constituted the core structure of the didactic experiment. Then, after a brief overview of the methodology applied, this section details the main components which were related to the experimental didactic sequence. Finally, the results gathered throughout the various stages of the experiment are exposed and thoroughly analysed.

4.2 Theoretical framework

4.2.1 The Situation-problem didactic framework

The pilot didactic sequence was designed around a specific didactic framework, namely that of the Situation-problem. The main idea surrounding the latter can be summarised by Pastré explaining

that there can be "learning through situations only when these involve a problem to be solved, or even constructed"[77] (2011: 12). The interest of such a didactic framework lies, indeed, in the "possibility of mobilizing the speech of the students, this from the very beginning of a sequence" (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 94). It is around this concept of problem solving, here embodied by the introduction of a communicative situation from the very beginning of the didactic sequence, that the SP framework finds its place. The peculiar structure of the latter, along its four stages which are described by Simons as the "mise en perspective", the "état des ressources", the "apprentissage" and the "resolution" (2019b: 228), are explained in the following sub-sections.

4.2.1.1   The "mise en perspective"

The "mise en perspective" (MeP) embodies the initial situation of communication mentioned above. Simons describes this stage as aiming "to place students in the perspective of what will be covered in the teaching sequence, and more specifically, in the F[inal Communication Task] (2019b: 229). In other words, the MeP mirrors what is expected from students during the Final Task of Communication (FTC). Teachers can choose, according to Simons, three main ways to carry out the MeP, which are a "light", an "intermediate" or a "heavy"[78] version of the MeP (Simons 2019b: 229). The author explains that the first option constitutes a mere "statement", whereas the "intermediate" version involves "showing an example" of the expected FTC (Simons 201b9: 229). The "heavy" version of the MeP, which was chosen for the experimental didactic sequence, directly asks students to complete a "task which would be similar to the FTC"[79] (Simons 2019b: 229). The main advantage of such a MeP lies, as Harmeling explains, in the possibility to keep a trace of what is produced at the beginning of the lessons to later exploit it (2017: 79). In the case of this dissertation, this allowed comparative analyses between both the initial and final task of communication. This version of the Mep also plays a major role on motivation of students as, according to Viau, "if we want students to understand what we are teaching them, we need to give

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them an overview before going into detail"[80] (2009: 10). A heavy MeP enables this overview by asking students to immediately try to solve an initial communicative situation, therefore letting them see the full extent of the task.

Furthermore, the MeP allows to observe the preconceptions of students regarding a given communicative situation. Pastré explains how, indeed,

> [n]o actor confronts a situation without at least some preconceived ideas, even when the situation is new and unfamiliar to him. Faced with a situation, everyone draws on their experience and mobilises a provisional operational model.[81] (2011: 20)

These preconceptions constitute a rich source of information, not only for the teacher, who might "induce the lacking knowledge necessary to solve the problem starting from the very presuppositions of the students" (Simons 2022: 40) but also for the class itself as "it helps students to build a collective representation of the given communicative situation" (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 95). Every student, as proved by the survey (see 3.5.2.1) had, indeed, their own ideas regarding the definition of a podcast prior to the experimental didactic sequence. This does not mean that those preconceptions were per se correct or incorrect, but they rather acted as a starting point to the own initial production of the students. Students are, during the MeP, free to try which of their own presuppositions do work or not in that given initial situation. That first stage, and broadly speaking, the SP as a whole, help, according to Fabre, to "create a maladjustment in the pupil that forces him or her - in order to get by - to construct new knowledge"[82] (1999: 96). It can be asserted, indeed, that students will not be able, during the MeP, to completely and correctly fulfil the initial task of communication, which, in turn, will create the need for new insight to solve the latter.

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One of the driving forces of the MeP, is, indeed, that it "directly confronts students to their own linguistic limits"[83] (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 98), thus creating the need for improvement and learning as previously mentioned by Fabre. The latter, citing Piaget, further indicates how "errors create an imbalance, which will be the start of the learning process"[84] (Fabre 1999: 162). Because they do not possess what is needed to solve the problem, here embodied by the initial communicative situation, students are forced to question their knowledge and are, consequently, encouraged to improve it. Despite the heterogeneity of language proficiency among students, Dolz and Schneuwly claim that there is no "all-or-nothing situation; each pupil succeeds at least partially in responding to the instructions"[85] (2016: 97). In other words, the MeP as it is here described, serves as a form of diagnostic for both teachers and students, pushing the former to "adapt and operate the necessary changes to fit the real capabilities of their students"[86] (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 97). This, due to the 'ready-made' nature of the experiment, was here not applicable.

Moreover, to students, being able to "make errors and to work on these" (Fabre 1999: 64) is allegedly highly valuable. Pasqualin (2020) explains how, starting with the MeP, such a didactic framework as the SP enables students to be at "the heart of their learning process" (21). Students, thanks to the heavy version of the MeP, start from their own errors, their own preconceptions to develop the missing knowledge they need to solve this initial problem. However, to do so, teachers, in close collaboration with their pupils, need to precisely list what is exactly mastered and lacking (Simons 2019b: 231). This occurs in the next stage, namely "l'état des ressources".

4.2.1.2 "L'état des ressources"

The function of this stage of the SP didactic framework is described by Simons as "helping the pupils to identify the tools they already use to solve the problem and, above all, helping them to discover the tools they will need to acquire" (2019b: 230). The "état des ressources" (EdR) is one

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of the key factors which determines whether students are motivated to further engage in the rest of the lessons. The EdR can be linked to what Viau calls "the self-perception of one's competence"[87] (2009: 36). The author defines this concept as being "the judgement that [a pupil] makes about his/her ability to succeed adequately in an activity proposed to him/her"[88] (36).

Teachers, during the EdR, are given the chance to help students determine their self-perception of their competence by *visually* and *collectively* list the resources already mastered and those which need to be learnt or improved. Simons further details that the nature of the elements listed during this stage does not need to be restricted to the linguistic skills of students only as they may also touch on "generic, strategic, cultural, relational or even civic values" (2019b: 231), which shows students that FL classes are not restricted to the sole use of language itself.

Furthermore, a peculiar emphasis should be placed, during the EdR, on what students *actually* master. Viau, as previously mentioned, highlights how the self-perception may directly impact the motivation of students regarding their participation to the lessons. This is especially true for textual genre focusing on the speaking skill, like podcasts. Viau, speaking of self-perception, states that it is usually that skill which is perceived as the weakest (2009: 41). It is, therefore, crucial for teachers to show their students that they do, especially when speaking of the speaking competence, already possess some of the knowledge to engage in and produce the FTC. Simons indicates that, without a proper EdR, the FTC "might be too complex and thus represent an unachievable challenge"[89] for students (2022: 40), which might cause them to not want to engage with the lessons at all. This contradicts the principle presented by Viau stating that "[...] the higher a student's perceived competence, the more they invest in and persevere with their learning" (2009: 39-40).

Therefore, students starting with a negative perception of their own competence after the MeP and the listing of resources, might put their motivation in jeopardy from the very beginning of the

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didactic sequence. Hence, the importance for teachers to insist on what their pupils master and on the lessons which are aimed at bridging their knowledge gap.

4.2.1.3 The learning stage

The third stage of the SP didactic framework is intrinsically linked to the previous phase, as it marks the beginning of the learning process. This, stage particularly targets the knowledge which was considered as lacking or as requiring improvement during the EdR. Dolz and Schneuwly envision this phase as a place where "workshops" centred around specific problems related to the FTC would be discussed and solved (2016: 99). However, this paper and, therefore, the experiment discussed herein, has mainly been based on the vision as depicted by Simons. He divides, indeed, the learning process into two main substages, namely the "clarification" and the "application" (2019b: 233). The explanations of Dolz and Schneuwly regarding their workshops are, however, deeply intertwined with the vision of Simons, and vice versa, the exact terminology of certain elements being, indeed, the most significant change between both versions.

During the "clarification", students are presented with a document gathering the main "language objects covered by the sequence"[90] (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 105), such as an audio(visual) file, be it authentic or didactised (see 4.2.2), targeting a specific textual genre. This is, usually followed by questions or short exercises to ensure the good understanding of students. This allows the latter to discover "the new linguistic material, which will then be further clarified and exercised"[91] (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 105). The clarification stands for the "formal presentation of new vocabulary, idiomatic expressions or grammar point"[92] (Simons 2022: 31), which might represent a difficulty or be unknown to students.

It is only after a dutiful clarification of the new material that teachers might proceed to the actual application of the latter. Hence, the importance of educators to ensure that the clarification stage

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[92] My translation.

is clear enough to students, as it directly impacts the good running of the next substage. Furthermore, teachers might also want to consider clarification as a useful means for their student to "enrich and develop" their own FTC as the "observation of the production of experts enriches the group's own attempts to produce oral texts"[93] (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 105). The exposure to documents related to the targeted textual genre is, indeed, a first opportunity for pupils to integrate some new linguistic strategies based on a concrete and valid example.

Then, the "application" consists of "fixing the newly integrated knowledge through a variety of exercises"[94] (Simons 2022: 31). Through this substage, teachers are, indeed, able to verify whether pupils have "actually acquired and are able to use" the resources introduced during the clarification process (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 106). Nevertheless, teachers should not want to mix all the resources at once. Simons suggests "alternating the clarification and application stages of each new element" (2022: 41) to guarantee the good understanding and fixation of the latter. In this regard, a clarification centred around some new vocabulary and the application thereof might then be followed by the same structure, this time oriented towards a grammar point, for instance. The precise inner organisation of this stage does not really matter as the various elements can be interchanged according to the documents and the linguistic material it covered. Teachers should, however, make sure, as Simons adds, to "regularly come back to the list during the EdR"[95] (2022: 41). This finds an explanation in the statement of Viau asserting that "[w]ithout a goal in mind, it is difficult for a student to value the educational activities offered to them"[96] (2009: 27). Continuously highlighting the progress made by students throughout the lessons may remind them of the challenge which awaits them, namely the solving of the FTC

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[93] My translation.

[94] My translation.

[95] My translation.

[96] My translation.

4.2.1.4 "La resolution du problème"

"La resolution du problème" (RdP), here embodied by the FTC, marks the "real outcome" of the didactic sequence (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 112). Students are, indeed, given the chance to mobilize every learnt resource to solve the 'problem' which had been introduced during the MeP (Dolz and Schneuwly 2016: 112). Simons considers the latter as a real place of "transfer of the newly acquired knowledge"[97] (2022: 42). Pupils, in this phase, must, indeed, not only demonstrate their good understanding of the linguistic material, but they must also show "their ability to use it in an unprecedented communication context (Dolz and schneuwly 2016: 112). The FTC is, indeed, not a mere replication of the MeP, but rather an original and more demanding version of it.

There are, it is true, a few requirements teachers should consider while designing the last stage of the SP didactic framework. This, especially to ensure a good running of the FTC. One of the main characteristics of the latter is, according to Simons, "the autonomy it should bid to students", at least to some extent (2022: 32). Viau highlights, indeed, that even though students "rarely ask for a total freedom" regarding a pedagogic activity, they still "judge the latter according to the degree of freedom it allows them to have"[98] (2009: 47). Consequently, besides compulsory guidelines such as the theme or length of the production or the number of students per group, the FTC cannot infringe on the freedom given to pupils as to what and how to exactly discuss in said task. The FTC should also not indicate which linguistic material to mobilise. The relative freedom thus given to student pertains to what Viau calls the "degree of controllability", which, he explains, refers to the "control students think they have on a specific activity" (2009: 44). Simons agrees and goes even further by stating that "students should be able to resort to their imagination as lessons progresses"[99] (2022: 32). The FTC stands as a place for students to give a full outlet to their creative thinking and showcase a certain control on their production. Therefore, trapping pupils

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[97] My translation.

[98] My translation.

[99] My translation.

within instructions which do not give them the right amount of autonomy might greatly impact the motivation of the latter towards the FTC.

4.2.2   Didactic transposition

In the theoretical part of this dissertation, an operational definition of the textual genre of the podcast has been provided (see section 2.1.2.2). However, it has also briefly been mentioned that the given definition should consider the peculiar context and, consequently, audience the textual genre was addressed to, namely that of high school students. Therefore, the question of a potential didactic transposition of authentic material, here embodied by podcasts, might arise regarding the documents provided during the stage of clarification in the didactic sequence (see section 4.2.1.3). The interrogation around the effectiveness of authentic or 'didactised[100]' material has arguably been discussed by a variety of scientific literature.

One of the challenges which might discourage teachers to use authentic material is the inherent difficulty to understand those for students. Chavez has investigated the question and concluded in her research on the topic that "that learners consider situations involving native speakers high in authenticity, contribution to learning, difficulty and enjoyment" (1998: 284). Despite highlighting here a certain perceived difficulty, the author further states that, through her investigation, she was able to observe that "learners do not appear to enjoy materials or situations because they are easy" (1998: 294). Therefore, the difficulty of authentic material might not be regarded as being, per se, an obstacle to their implementation within a didactic sequence. Nevertheless, in the case of 30 minutes long podcasts, as it was originally the case of both documents in the experimental didactic sequence, the difficulty for students to replicate such productions might still be too great. In that regard, Dolz and Schneuwly warns that authentic texts should always be considered as giving an "example" of which practices are usually featured in a specific textual genre (2016: 42). Chavez argues, indeed, that, in such cases as the two podcasts used as resource in the set of pilot lessons, "some didactization of extensive discourse appear beneficial [sic]" (1998: 299). This means that a certain adaptation of the authentic material based on the needs of students should lessen, to some

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[100] This term and the term "didactization" have been retrieved from the work of Chavez (1998).

extent, the difficulty around such listening situations. This especially as the input thus received by the pupils partake in the shaping of their final production.

Moreover, the concept of "didactization" should be seen as a compromise between the sole use of authentic or pedagogical texts. Schneuwly and Dolz assert, indeed, that textual genres taught in school are always "a variant of the reference genre, constructed within a teaching/learning dynamic, to function in an institution whose primary aim is precisely this" (1997: 34). In other words, even if teachers were to use authentic texts, because of the very school context in which the genre is being taught, the latter always mirrors a "teaching/learning" dynamic. Dolz and Schneuwly explain that the transposition of authentic material into an adapted version more fitting for teaching practices allows to

> Brin[g] the outside world into the classroom and, in so doing, to encoura[ge] the production of discourse which, while expressing the social forms of reference, is addressed expressly to the pupils and adapted to their abilities. (2016: 43)

In other words, the didactisation of texts gathers both the advantages of authentic and pedagogic texts as it provides documents which still stand as examples of some components of the targeted genre whilst showcasing attainable features which students might exploit in their own production.

Then, in the case of the experiment, it would not have been possible to include all of what Schneuwly and Dolz call the "socially-referenced practices" (1997: 24) pertaining to conversational podcasts. Therefore, the two podcasts used during the LC were didactised to keep the main structural elements of the textual genre, but also to provide texts which resembled the FTC. Consequently, the length of each podcast was significantly diminished. A transcription of both podcasts was also provided after the LC to help pupil better understand the linguistic and generic elements which were targeted by each text (see Appendices 6.3 and 6.4). According to the answers collected in the survey post experiment (see section 3.5.3.2), the provided didactised version of the podcasts did not seem to have hindered the learning experience of pupils. However, one of the participating teachers, (T3), stated,

> The 2nd [podcast] was difficult. Particularly because of the way it was edited, which, at times, you'd say to yourself. 'It went from one thing to another, it moved too quickly to another subject', and I found that much more problematic. (00:15:33)

The comment made here by T3 acts as a reminder that, despite the previously highlighted benefits of the didactisation, its overuse might still be detrimental to students. Texts need, indeed, to remain intelligible to remain of any learning use.

4.3 Methodology

The methodology regarding the selection of the participating schools has already been explained in the dedicated sections related to the questionnaire (see section 3.2). There was, indeed, no modification applied to the data already given. Consequently, this section discusses methodology pertaining to the actual distribution of the didactic sequence to participating teachers, as well as the monitoring which was provided by the student researcher.

Before the actual implementation of the didactic sequence in their respective classes, the different teachers were contacted by mail to get a first rough overview of the experiment. Therefore, they were immediately informed of the targeted textual genre, namely that of the podcast, as well as the length of six course periods which were required to fully instruct the didactic sequence. The 'ready-made' character of the latter was then also emphasised. A phone discussion followed the initial contact to give the student researcher the chance to further explain their experiment. This way, the textual genre of the podcast could be more extensively defined. The peculiar SP didactic framework was then also presented (see section 4.2.1). Teachers were given the chance to express their concerns and to ask questions about these potentially new elements. T2 took the chance, for instance, to suggest the student researcher to allow students to choose the destination to be covered during the FTC, for instance. The main interrogations which arose among the educators were related to the textual genre of podcasts, as they had never used the latter in the teaching of their FL classes before. An e-mail followed this discussion to introduce the various documents to be used during the whole didactic experiment.

After this dutiful interview to explain the project, participating teachers were then asked to "administer" the experimental didactic sequence themselves[101]. They were told that the latter

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[101] Except for T2 who had asked the student researcher to act as a model prior to their own implementation of the experiment (see 4.3.1).

would normally take up to 6 hours from the MeP to the FTC. Figure 12 gives a general overview of the structure of the experimentation, as it was planned and intended to be followed by the participating teachers.
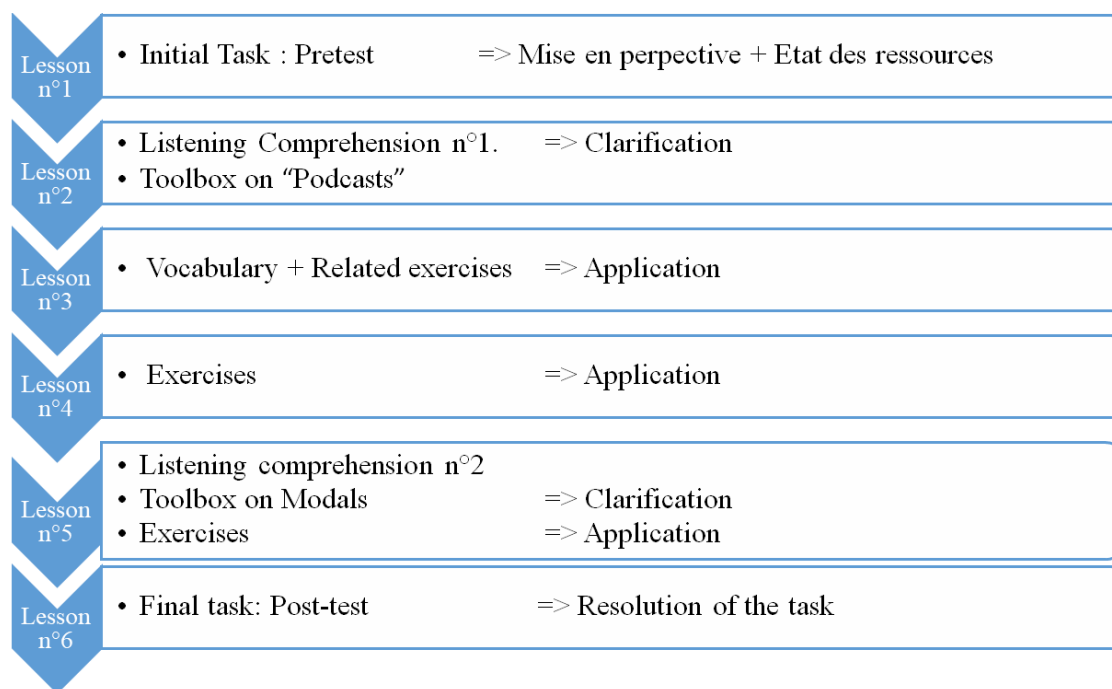
Figure 12 - Structure of the experimental didactic sequence according to the Situation-Problem framework

Furthermore, teachers were given a series of documents designed to guide them through the whole experimentation. These files, which constitute a sort of handbook for educators to use, consist of a detailed 'roadmap' of the didactic sequence (Appendix 6.1), a list of notes and precise guidelines regarding some key stages of the didactic sequence (Appendix 6.2), two didacticised tracks for the listening comprehensions (Appendices 9.1 and 9.2) along with their respective transcriptions (Appendices 6.3 and 6.4), and, finally the pre- and posttests to be distributed to their students (Appendices 4 and 5).

4.3.1 The peculiar position of the student researcher

It has been mentioned, previously in this dissertation, that the student researcher had been asked, prior the experiment, to instruct the didactic sequence in one of the classes of T2. Therefore, it was

decided, due to organisational reasons, that the student researcher would take over the instruction to Year 5 students. This decision was eased by the fact that both the student researcher and T2 knew each other because of the position of mentor the latter took during the internship of the former. This greatly contributed to the participation of T2 in the experiment (see 3.3.3.3).

Furthermore, the instruction of the student researcher served as model for the own teaching of T2. This process allowed the latter, who attended the lessons given by the student researcher, to observe, indeed, the methodology used as well as to ask any question which might have arisen regarding some aspects of the didactic sequence. This allowed the student researcher to take the comments of T2 into account and, consequently, to better calibrate the didactic sequence. This mainly took the form of suggestions to take pictures of the answers of students during certain stages of the experiment in case those data proved to be valuable for the analyses. It was, therefore, also asked to all participating teachers to provide pictures of the same exercises. Nevertheless, it has been acknowledged that the input of T2 might have constituted a major bias (see section 3.3.5).

Moreover, the peculiar position thus conferred to the student researcher allowed the student to be at the forefront of the didactic sequence and, consequently, to assess what had to be improved regarding the experiment. Rabardel in *Rabardel Pierre & Pastré Pierre (dir.). Modèles du Sujet pour la Conception: Dialectiques, Activités, Développement* (Vergnaud 2006) declares, indeed, that "work activity transforms the subject who performs it and therefore is to be considered as constructive for the subject"[102] (2).

A surprising yet relevant parallel to this statement can be drawn using the work of Béguin while discussing the importance of ergonomics in the designing of machines and introducing the definition of "simulation". According to the author, the latter "is a method that can be used to predict the consequences of decisions already made" (2007: 117). The teaching of the pre-planned lessons by the student researcher might be considered as a simulation to a larger implementation of the experiment in other classes. This is, indeed, the very process which has led to the design of the document "notes to the teachers and precise guidelines" (see 4.3.2.2). The latter identified

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[102] My translation.

activities which could be considered as facultative in case of shortage of time, as it had been experienced first-hand by the student researcher. This whole process allowed what Béguin further explains, a real "response between the situation" and the "designer" (2007:119). The designer referring to the student researcher and the response being embodied by the modifications made possible because of the peculiar position of the former.

4.3.2 Detail of the handbook given to the teachers

To ensure the good instruction of the didactic sequence and to give an initial answer to the potential questions of the collaborating educators, a sort of handbook was created prior to the enforcement of the experiment in actual classes. As mentioned previously (see 4.3), which are each discussed in the following subsections. The main aim of the handbook was to serve as real support for the involved teachers. It also contributed to the 'ready-made' character of the didactic sequence, providing resources ranging from the sequence itself to the actual edited files used during the LC.

4.3.2.1 Roadmap of the didactic sequence

The first document which was given to the teachers was a detailed map of the didactic sequence (see Appendix 6.1). The main aim of the latter was to give a detailed overview of the whole organisation of the lessons. After a quick reminder of the final task, the intermediate goals were also listed to ensure that the teachers had a good understanding of the extent of the experiment. A similar but simplified list was discussed with the students prior to the first activity of the didactic sequence itself (see Appendix 7.1). Moreover, the various "Unités d'Acquis d'Apprentissage" (UAA)[103] trained during each lesson were also listed. Then, a list of all the linguistic and cultural resources as mobilised by the didactic sequence was also provided. This to ease the task of the teachers when identifying what would be needed from the students.

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[103] The term "unité d'acquis d'apprentissage" refers to "a coherent set of learning outcomes that can be assessed" and by "acquis d'apprentissage" one means "what a student knows, understands and is able to achieve at the end of a learning process". (Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à l'Issue des Humanités Professionnelles et Techniques Langues Modernes 2017 : 3).

Finally, the second part of this document provided a minute plan of what was expected to be covered by the educators during each of the lessons. Teachers were instructed to stick to these guidelines as closely as possible to ensure a coherence between the various participating classes. It was, however, not always possible for them to do so (see 5.2.1). The lessons targeted by the instructions were numbered from 1 to 6. Each stage of the SP didactic framework (see 4.2.1) were linked to the appropriate lesson and activities. The latter represented by brief instructions ("brief reminder of the previous lesson")[104] or the name of the exercises such as "multiple choices question", for instance. Similarly to the first part of the document, the UAA targeted by each activity was then specified. However, to maintain a certain clarity to the plan, the sole linguistic skill was indicated (LC, RC, EE, EO) as their communication intent had already been explained. Then, to facilitate the organisation of the teachers, the timing allocated to each exercise was also detailed.

4.3.2.2 Notes to the teachers and precise guidelines

The various notes to the teachers and guidelines provided in the related document (see Appendix 6.2) were mainly based on the personal experience of the student researcher after their teaching of the experiment (see 4.3.1). This part of the handbook needs, thus, to be considered as a form of later reflexion as to what was exactly needed by the other collaborating teachers. This was to ensure a certain coherence in the gathered results by the end of the experiment. Some precisions were also included as to when teachers needed to hand certain documents to students, this to be sure no class was favoured in the preparation of some tasks because of a different input, for instance. Due to the shortage of time experienced by the student researcher whilst teaching the didactic sequence, the notes also specified the exercises which might be overlooked to gain time. However, were encouraged to skip those only as last resort. Finally, the guidelines also provided the participating teachers with further information on the various types of podcasts, which were briefly mentioned the hereby toolbox. This was asked by T3 beforehand and, thus provided to the rest of the participating teachers.

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[104] My translation. See Appendix 6.1.

4.3.2.3 Listening comprehensions: Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen and Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast

Because it was previously determined that authentic, yet correctly didacticised input would not hinder the learning process of students in FL classes (see 4.2.2), there was a search for native speaker-produced podcasts. The latter must have been relevant regarding the qualifying option 'reception and tourism agent', which would be taught the didactic sequence. Conversational type of podcasts bringing forth linguistic material around the theme of 'travel suggestions' or 'recommendations' was also preferred during the search for exploitable material. Finally, the selected podcasts must, ideally, have showcased a clear internal structure, which could then be used by students regarding their own final productions. In that regard, both the *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen* and the *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast* were chosen as input for the two planned LC of both clarification phases of the didactic sequence (see Figure 12).

The above-mentioned podcasts were found on Spotify and lasted respectively 00:30:48 for the episode of the *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen* and 00:51:46 for that of *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast*. It was thus impossible to implement them as they were in the experimental didactic sequence. Hence, the didactisation of both audio files, which mainly consisted of editing the documents to only keep what would be exploited with the students. The final version of the podcasts lasted thus 00:04:31 for the *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen* and 00:02:24 for the *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast.* The various modifications operated on each of these documents were made with different goals in mind.

The first audio file which would be listened to by students, the *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen* (see Appendix 9.1), was made longer than the second podcast for two main reasons. On the one hand, the first LC aimed at identifying the structure of the conversational type of podcast. The different parts of the latter were easy to identify thanks the different cuts made to the original version. The part of the podcasts which were kept in the final edited version selected also showcased a set of interesting, fixed expressions and along vocabulary already known or targeted by students in the "reception and tourism agent" qualifying option. This proved to be fruitful, as T1 pointed out

> […] I think one of the things I really liked, of course, was the podcast to listen to and work on with the students. Especially the first one, perhaps a bit less than the 2nd, so that they can really get an idea of what I am asking them to do as a final task. (00:12:57)[105]

What immediately stands out in such a statement would be the "exemplary" character, as previously highlighted by Dolz and Schneuwly (2016: 42), of the edited version of the podcast. It seems to T1 that the chosen podcasts, the first one at least, really allowed students to identify the expectations related to the FTC.

Regarding the *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast* (see Appendix 9.2)*,* the cuts were, indeed, mainly made to illustrate the use of modal auxiliaries expressing the suggestion or recommendation, which was the grammatical point targeted by the experiment. This second audio file was, nevertheless, more complicated in terms of speech rate. A shorter extract was thus preferred to ensure a good understanding of the conversation carried out in the podcast, allowing the student to focus on the short but dense content of the dialogue. This difficulty was highlighted by T3 in section 4.2.2.

This perfectly showcases, again, the limitation of a practice such as the didactisation of authentic material. Because the need for the grammatical point to be illustrated through the discourse of native speakers, the simplified yet original character of the edited version has been wrongfully overlooked. However, this allows to further proves the claim of Dolz and Schneuwly when they explained that the given material had to be an "example" of what was expected (2016: 42), which was previously mentioned.

4.3.2.4   The experimental didactic sequence

At the core of the handbook given to the teachers lay, obviously, the experimental didactic sequence itself. The latter contained a variety of exercises and toolboxes designed with the intent to cover the textual genre of the podcast with a focus on the conversational type. The different lessons were imagined using the SP didactic framework (see 4.2.1), as it was judged to offer the best approach to treat such an intricate textual genre. This section is, thus, dedicated to the close reading, and thus analysing, of the body of the experimental didactic sequence, which had been

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[105] See Appendix 2.

given to participating teachers and students to the experiment (see Appendices 6.5 and 7.1). The most significant changes between both versions lay in the answers to the exercises, which are available, for clear reasons, solely on the version designed for the participating teachers.

4.3.2.4.1 First stage

The experimental didactic sequence began with a statement of the various goals which were meant to be achieved throughout the lessons because, as Viau explains, "students perceive the value of an activity, [or of a series of activities], if they can sense an academic purpose to the latter" (2009: 34). This list was aimed to be read with the students to clarify any confusions which might have arisen regarding these challenges. It was also a means for teachers to give their pupils an overview of what would be worked upon during the lessons.

Because it has already been stated that pupils do, indeed, have their own preconceptions about any given communicative situation (see Pastré in 4.2.1.1), students were asked, prior to the MeP strictly speaking, to first list their own representations about 'podcasts'. They were then instructed, under the form of a brainstorming session to share their ideas with the rest of the class to identify what were the collective preconceptions of the textual genre the podcast. This collective exercise was then followed by the heavy version of the MeP (see 4.2.1.1). Pupils were instructed to create their own podcast, per group of 2 or 3, and had to discuss the city of Liège. Their productions had a timeframe of 2 minutes minimum to 3 minutes maximum. To help them in the realization of their production, students were allowed to use brochures or, if the school allowed them, to use their phone to strictly do some research on the targeted city. Furthermore, pupils were instructed to speak about Liège to ensure a certain equity among the various schools and in the results thus obtained. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that T3 allowed some of his students to speak about the city of Namur, as the latter expressed their unease regarding the presentation of Liège.

4.3.2.4.2 Second stage

The EdR (see 4.2.1.2), was divided into two subphases in the experimental didactic sequence. As in the previous section, pupils were first asked to determine, as individuals, how they felt towards the communicative situation they had just faced and had to try to resolve in the first exercise. This task was designed to make up for the difficulty this stage might represent for teachers. One of the

main disadvantages related to the use of a SP didactic framework lies, according to Simons, in the fact that educators might encounter some troubles while trying to identify which linguistic material is already mastered or which need some training among their students (2022: 44). By proposing a form of self-assessment, teachers might already have an indication of what to specifically target or what to insist on during the next lessons. This self-evaluation took the form of a table divided into three categories, namely 'it was easy', 'I must train' and 'I did not know how to do it' (see Figure 13). Students were also free to further comment each item in a dedicated box of the table.

Figure 13 – Exercise 1.4 of the didactic sequence

This exercise of self-assessment was then followed by the proper 'état des ressources' as it was previously described (see 4.2.1.2). It was chosen to propose this stage as a blank mind map (see Figure 14) divided into 4 categories, namely 'expressions', 'vocabulary', 'grammar' and 'other'.
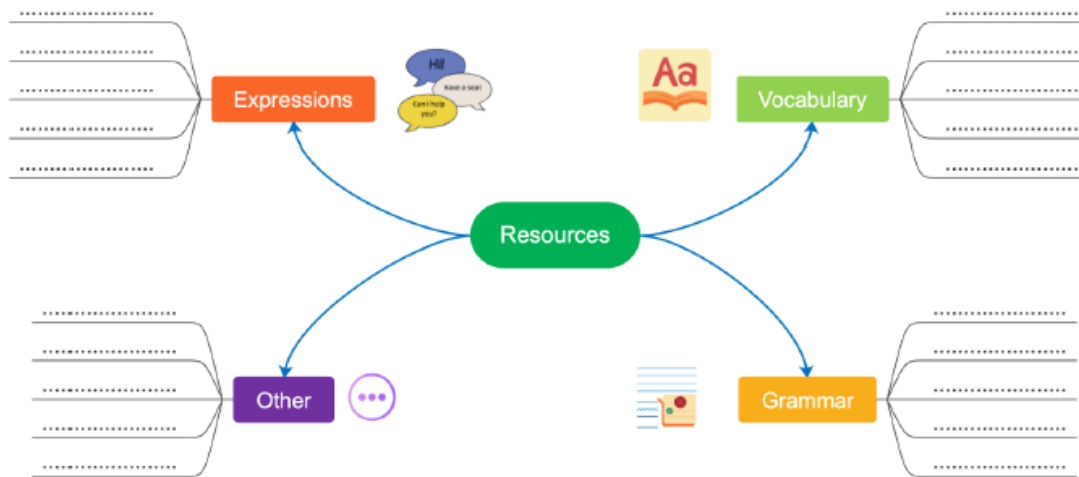
Figure 14 – Mind map representing the 'Etat des ressouces'

These categories were added to the mind map to ease the task of identification of the various resources to students. It was also judged necessary to include the heading, 'other' to give the opportunity to pupils to identify "extra-linguistic resources", as previously identified by Simons

(see 4.2.1.2). Pupils were asked, yet again, to think first individually and then to share their ideas with the rest of the class to create a collective EdR. After this brainstorming, a box underneath the mind map further highlighted the importance of the necessary knowledge, identified by students, to solve the FTC at the end of the didactic sequence. However, it was not instructed to the participating teachers, nor was it carried out by the student researcher, as recommended by Simons, to regularly come back to this mind map to remind students of their ongoing progress (2022: 40-41). Teachers were handed a pre-filled mind map (see Figure 15) to guide them and to pre-identify the main resources which are mentioned and worked upon in the rest of the lessons. They stayed, nevertheless, free to add any other resources they might judge useful and lacking in the EdR they were handed in their version of the didactic sequence.
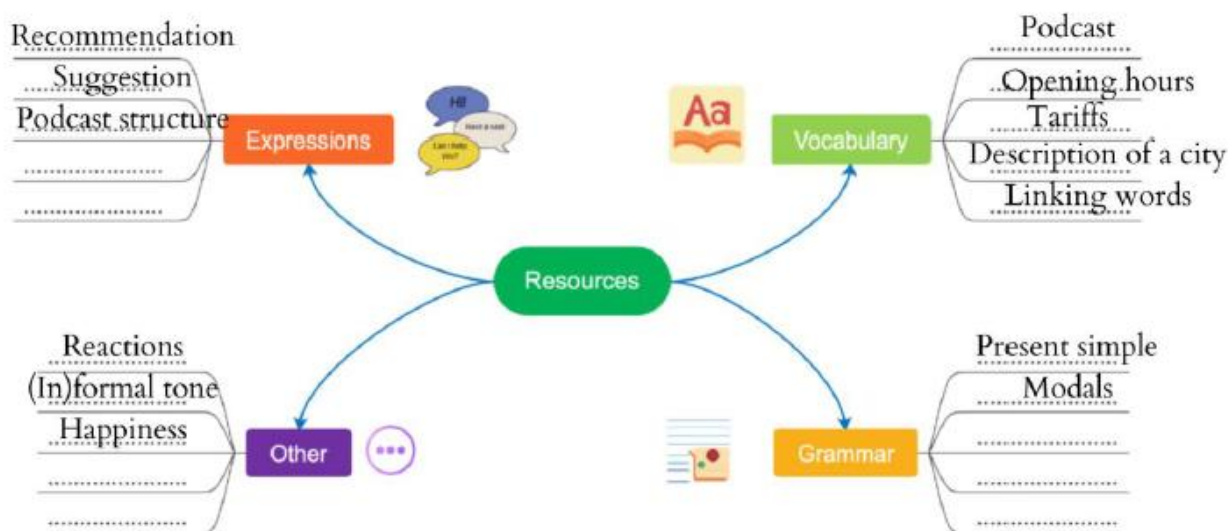
Figure 15 – Pre-filled mind map representing the "état des ressources" given to participating teachers

4.3.2.4.3 Third stage

The learning stage of the experimental didactic sequence was designed according to the recommendations of Simons, namely to "split this whole stage into small modules, which would each target a specific linguistic resource" (2022: 41). Therefore, the sequence first focused on the vocabulary and expressions needed by a conversational podcast to later work on a specific grammar point, namely the modals used to express a recommendation or suggestion.

The first clarification was brought forth through the listening of the *Travel Mug with Megan and Jen: Beginner's Guide to Miami.* The latter was adapted to specifically target the level of the students as well as to highlight the specific elements needed to solve the FTC (see 4.3.2.3). However, a quick vocabulary list was established regarding certain words or expressions, which might have still posed a difficulty for pupils. The exercises related to the LC were designed to go from an "extensive", here embodied by a MCQ, to a "selective comprehension of the LC" (Simons 2022: 31), namely the putting in the right order of the topics discussed in the podcast. Students were then asked to reflect as to why the various subjects could be important in the context of a didactic sequence around podcast. After a quick review of the answers given, teachers were asked to introduce the toolbox "what is a podcast?" which is shown in Figure 16.

TOOLBOX
WHAT IS A PODCAST?

There are different types of podcasts:

THE INTERVIEW PODCAST	CONVERSATIONAL/ CO-HOSTED PODCAST	SOLO/ MONOLOGUE PODCAST	NON-FICTIONAL STORYTELLING PODCAST
ROUNDTABLE/ PANEL PODCAST	THEATRICAL PODCAST	REPURPOSED PODCAST	HYBRID PODCAST

What type of podcast is "The Travel Mug" podcast?   Conversational podcast

What are the **important elements** of this type of podcast?

↪ Look at the list down below and try to put the different elements in the right order

1 INTRODUCTION OF THE EPISODE

2 RECAP OF THE SHOW

3 CALL TO ACTION

4 INTRODUCTION OF THE (CO-)HOST OR GUEST(S)

5 OUTRO MUSIC

6 DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE HOST(S) AND GUEST(S)

7 MUSIC INTRODUCTION

1x   15)   ⏮   ▶   ⏭   (15

0:00   30:48

4 OR 7   6   3

4 OR 7   1   2   5

Figure 16 – Toolbox "What is a podcast?"

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This was to give an overview of, on one hand, the various sorts of existing podcasts and, on the other hand, to target the conversational podcast as well as its specific structure and the interactive character thereof. To apply the theory onto a concrete example, students were asked to transpose the newly seen structure on the transcription of the *Travel Mug with Megan and Jen: Beginner's Guide to Miami.* Teachers were then asked to hand a vocabulary mind map and list (Appendix 7.2) and to go through the latter with their students. The former acted as a reminder of some useful and frequently used vocabulary words or idiomatic expressions regarding tourism and touristic activities. This, to ensure that all participants would start with the same basic linguistic material. The proper expressions used in the different parts of the podcast were then listed in a table with their translation.

The sub-stage of the application related to the clarification of the vocabulary mentioned above was constituted of 6 exercises. These went, as suggested by Simons, from "closed to more open kinds of tasks" (2022: 76). By this, the author means that, as the lessons progress, "students should be led to produce something, which is not as guided as a mere 'fill-in the gaps' type of exercise for instance" (2022: 76). It should be kept in mind that, one of the factors influencing the motivation of pupils lies in the degree of controllability they have on the tasks they are being given (Viau 2009: 44). Therefore, more challenging exercises were needed to spark the interest of students and to better prepare them for the FTC which would not be as guided (see 4.2.1.4). Consequently, tasks asking students to carry a small conversation such as imagining the introduction to their podcast or recommending a tourist local attractions were provided. It should be kept in mind, that the main aim of the SP didactic framework remains, indeed, to prepare students to the solving of the FTC.

The clarification and application revolving around the grammar point followed a similar structure. Students were asked to listen to an adapted version of one episode of the *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast - Episode 880 Travel to Tokyo Japan.* Because of the difficult character of that LC, (see 4.3.2.3), the questions regarding the understanding thereof were simplified and took the form of a true or false kind of exercise. Pupils were then led to reflect on peculiar structures expressing a recommendation or a suggestion, which was then followed by the related toolbox "How to suggest or recommend something in English?" (see Figure 17).

English Toolbox

How to suggest or recommend something in English?

⭐ Suggestion ⭐

You could/can + verb	Vous pourriez/pouvez ....
You should + verb	Vous devriez ...
Don't miss	Ne ratez pas...
Don't forget to + verb	N'oubliez pas de ...
What about + verb–ING	Et si vous ...
*I suggest that + subject	Je suggère que ...
I suggest verb + ING	Je suggère de ...

⭐ Recommendation ⭐

*I recommend that + subject	Je recommande que ...
I recommend verb + ING	Je recommande de ...

To be less direct, you can use the structure "would + verb"
I **would** suggest/recommend that
I would suggest/recommend verb + ING

⚠ *The verb following that + subject **never** takes an "-s" at the end.
Even with he/she/it !!!
Ex: I suggest that he **visit** this museum ⚠

Figure 17 – Toolbox "How to suggest or recommend something in English?"

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After a dutiful overview of the new material, students could begin the various exercises. A remark should, however, be made around the application stage of the grammar point. This phase was, indeed, made of only three exercises, which constitutes a breach with the rule as previously established by Simons about "close and open exercises" (2022: 76). The first two tasks were closed typed, whereas the third and last task was immediately of an open kind. The experimental didactic sequence, as it was, thus lacked intermediate kinds of exercise. This would have eased the transition between the various tasks, as well as ensuring a good application of the new material by students.

4.3.2.4.4 Fourth stage

The instructions related to the FTC greatly resembled those of the MeP. There were still slight modifications to be observed during this final stage of the experiment. The number of students per group remained the same between the two stages the minimum and maximum timeframe of the production was, nevertheless, increased to 3 to 5 minutes. Pupils were, indeed, judged to possess the linguistic knowledge necessary to produce a longer podcast. Regarding the use of outside materials such as brochures, the didactic sequence or Internet, if allowed, did not change. There was, however, a precision made towards the use of online translators, as it was strictly forbidden. The choice of the topic to be discussed in the podcast itself was less restricted than in the MeP. Students were, indeed, given the choice of the city they could talk about in their final production, with the sole restriction being the city of Liège as it had already been discussed in the MeP. There was, however, in this stage as it was designed, another breach with the original SP didactic framework. Despite being free to choose the city they wish to present in their podcast, pupils were still instructed to talk about a city previously seen during their FL classes. This instruction was suggested by T2 (see 4.3.1). This decision was pointed out by some students whilst answering the posttest questionnaire (see 3.5.3.2).

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Introduction

This section of the paper is dedicated to the various analyses carried out based on the pretests and posttests produced by students during the experiment. It was, first, designed to see what components of podcasts pupils would include in their creation without having been taught about that genre. One of the other goals of such an approach was also to bring forth a diagnosis as to what was mastered linguistically speaking and what needed, to some extent, to be particularly worked on with the students. On the other hand, the posttests produced by students by the end of the didactic sequence were designed to 'monitor' the eventual progress made by students. The main aim thereof was to determine whether the specific lessons about the textual genre of podcast proved to be efficient in the improvement of the productions made by students. This with a peculiar focus on the complementary lexical and grammatical material required for such a task. The following results are divided between the pre- and posttest stages of the experiment and mainly discuss the length of these productions, as well as the number of interactions per podcast. Regarding the vocabulary used and the number of mistakes made, however, the observations are presented conjointly.

4.4.2 Pretest

4.4.2.1 Length of the podcast

During the MeP (see 4.2.1.1), students were asked to produce a podcast of minimum 2 and maximum 3 minutes long. They were asked to work per groups of two to three pupils. 18 productions were, as a result, received during the pretest stage of the experiment. The length of each podcast has been summarised in Figure 18. The average duration of all podcasts has also been provided.
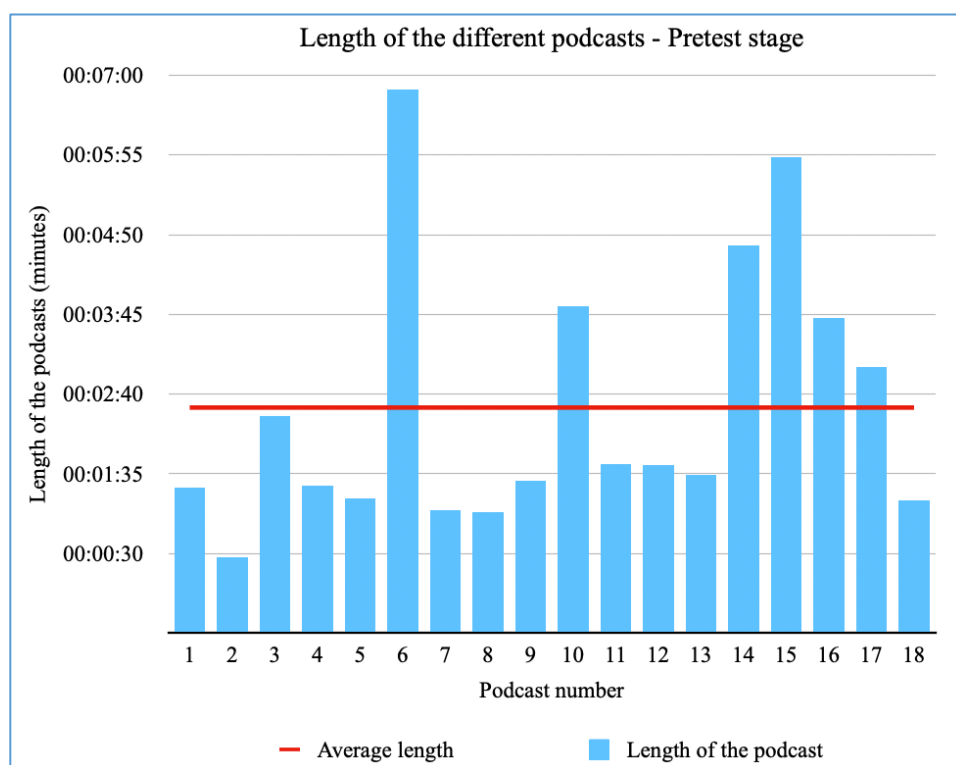
Figure 18- Length of the podcasts (pretest)

During the pretest stage, the shortest and longest podcast in terms of length were respectively podcast number 2, which lasted 00:00:27 minutes and podcast number 6, which lasted 00:06:48 minutes. Out of the 18 productions received, only one fully respected the original instructions related to the minimum required and maximum allowed time, namely podcast number 3 which lasted 0:02:22 minutes. Then, 11 podcasts did not meet the minimum length, whereas 6 exceeded it. The observed average length is situated at 00:02:28 minutes. When collated together, the total duration of the 18 podcasts is 00:44:52 minutes.

4.4.2.2   Turn taking

Because the experimental didactic sequence shed a peculiar light on the conversational podcast, spoken interactions were a prominent feature of the latter and were consequently expected in the productions of students. Therefore, the number of turns taking within each podcast created during the pretest has been reported and transcribed in Figure 19.
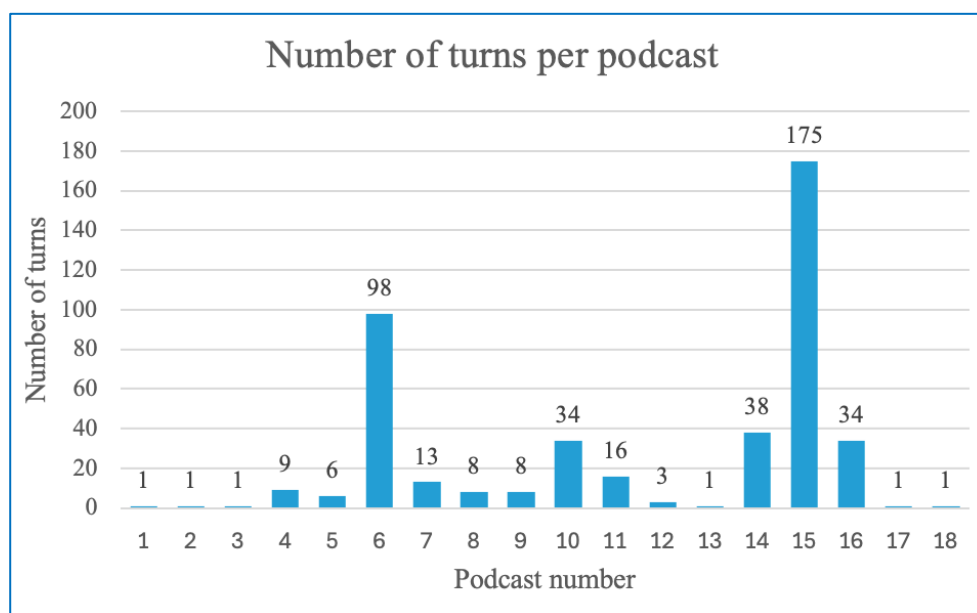
Figure 19 - Number of turns per podcast (Pretest)

It is worth mentioning that podcasts which were submitted in several parts (podcasts 1 and 12), were reported as having only one interaction because it was impossible for students to take turns speaking. Podcasts 2, 3, 17 and 18 had only one speaker resulting, thus, in only one spoken interaction, being that of the student involved. Other productions ranged from 3 turns (podcast 13) to 175 turns (podcast 15). The total number of spoken interactions amounted to 448 turns with a normalised frequency of 301,91 turns taken per 30 minutes.

4.4.3 Posttest

4.4.3.1 Length of the podcast

During the final task of communication of the experimental didactic sequence, pupils were asked to produce a podcast which lasted between the 3- and 5-minute mark. There was, therefore, an increase regarding the minimum length of this posttest production, compared to was demanded during the pretest stage. The length of the various creations made by students was also reported in Figure 20. Similarly to the presentation of the results regarding the pretest, the average length of the podcasts has also been highlighted.

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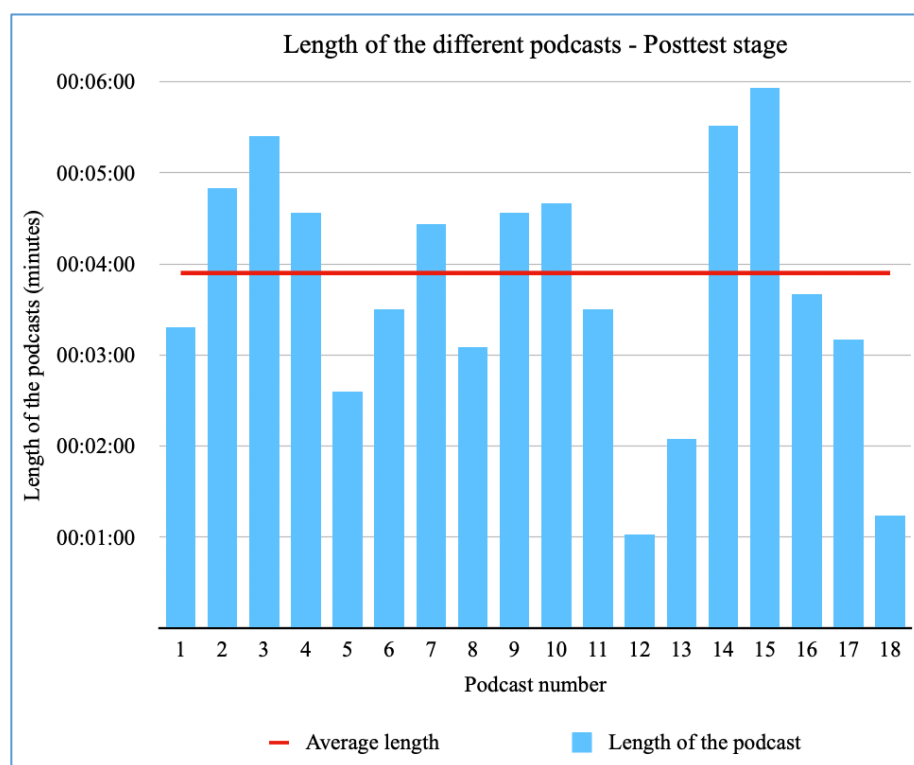
Figure 20 - Length of the podcasts (Posttest)

The shortest podcast recorded was podcast number 2, which lasted 00:01:02 minutes. Regarding the longest production, podcast number 15 lasted 00:05:56 minutes. The average length of the various files received was situated around 00:03:54 minutes. Out of the 18 podcasts submitted by students, 11 respected the limit of the 3- to 5-minute mark, whereas 4 were shorter and 3 exceeded it. Altogether, the 18 productions accounted for 01:07:05 minutes.

4.4.3.2 Turn taking

During the posttest students were also encouraged to include spoken interactions in their productions. Especially as the conversational type of podcast had been instructed in previous lessons of the experimental didactic sequence. The number of turns was, thus, reported to see if any change was to be observed between the pre- and posttest stage of the experiment. A summary of the observations is, consequently, provided in Figure 21 below.
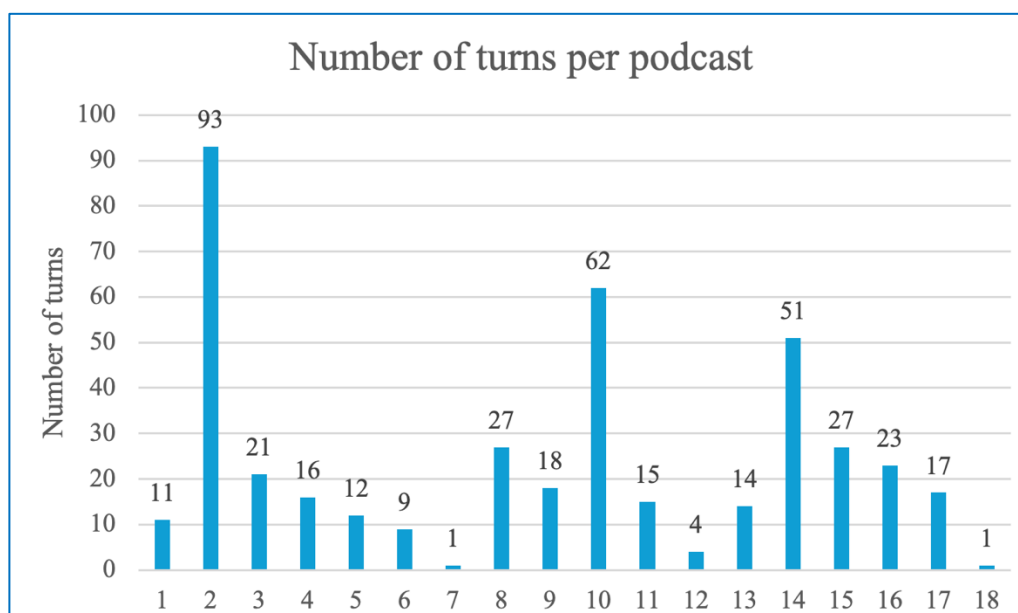
Figure 21 - Number of turns per podcast (Posttest)

It is worth noting that, both podcasts 7 and 18 were submitted in various parts and were, therefore, counted as showcasing solely one turn. The other productions ranged between 4 turns (podcast 12) and 93 turns (podcast 2). The total of spoken interaction amounted to 422 turns, resulting in a normalised frequency of 188,81 turns per 30 minutes.

The length of the various productions made by students during the final task of communication of the didactic sequence was also reported.

4.4.4 Vocabulary used

One of the key components of the didactic sequence concerned the teaching of specific lexical items which pertained to the textual genre of podcast. A list of items was also provided to students to act as a reminder of frequently used words and expressions related to their qualifying option of 'tourism and reception agent' (Appendix 7.2). Therefore, the occurrences of the various items instructed or prompted during the lessons was investigated in both the pre- and posttest productions created by students. This was aimed at identifying which lexical items was part of the already-existing inventory of vocabulary known by pupils prior to the experiment and which ones were the result of the latter.

Table 21 - Lexemes occurring in pretest and not in posttest podcasts

Lexemes	Occurrences in pretests	Occurrences in posttests
tourism	3	0
tour	1	0

Table 21 shows that only two items, namely *tourism* and *tour,* were used in the pretests, but not in the posttests.

Table 22 - Lexemes occurring more in pretest than in posttest podcasts

Lexemes	Occurrences in pretests	Occurrences in posttests
train	15	1
bar	8	1
tourist	7	5
bus	2	1
could	2	1

If the two items cited above were to be excluded, Table 22 shows that five lexemes were used more often in the pretests than in the posttests.

On the other hand, some lexemes were used more often in the final production of students rather than in their initial podcasts.

Table 23 - Lexemes occurring in posttest and not in pretest podcasts

Lexemes	Occurrences in pretests	Occurrences in posttests
public transport	0	7
specialities	0	7
stay	0	6
listening	0	5
traveller	0	5
sights	0	2
car	0	1
cohost	0	1
dive into	0	1
final thoughts	0	1
foot	0	1
metro	0	1
socials	0	1
subscribe	0	1

Within the various posttests 14 lexemes were, indeed, introduced in the final production of pupils, whereas they were absent in the first podcasts created.

Table 24 reports the number of lexemes which were more used during the posttests compared to the pretests.

Table 24 - Lexemes occurring more in posttest than in pretest podcasts

Lexemes	Occurrences in pretests	Occurrences in posttests
can	30	80
food	19	38
visit	10	32
talk about	12	22
podcast	10	21
welcome	4	15
recommend	4	13
to travel	3	12
eat	8	11
restaurant	6	11
should	2	11
enjoyed	6	9
activity	3	7
guest	3	6
follow	1	6
hotel	1	6
must-see	3	5
to book	1	5
host	3	4
expensive	2	4
don't forget	1	4
guide	1	3
café	1	3
pub	1	3
visitor	1	3
tips	1	3
suggest	1	2
plane	1	2

A total of 27 lexemes were used in both the pre- and posttests with, however, a greater number of occurrences in the latter.

4.4.5 Type and number of errors

A variety of mistakes have been observed regarding the productions made by students during the pretest stage. Those pertained to "grammar", "lexico-grammar", "lexis", but also to "words

redundancy, order, and those which were missing". Some "infelicities" also appeared in various podcasts. The types of errors reported, and the exact taxonomy thereof have all been retrieved from the *Louvain Error Tagging Manual: Version 2.0* written by Granger *et al.* However, the latter was aimed at identifying written errors. The terms used in this dissertation for the presentation, and later analysis, of the results were, consequently, adapted to fit spoken language.

The first type of error recorded was, thus, related to grammar. Table 25 below depicts the absolute frequency of the mistakes made by students during the pre- and posttests. However, because some productions contained more errors than others, it has been decided to also provide the normalised frequency per 30 minutes of the latter for both stages of the experiment. This methodology has been applied to other categories of errors reported.

Table 25 - Comparison of pretest and posttest podcasts regarding the number of mistakes pertaining to grammar and their normalised frequency per 30 minutes

Errors pertaining to	Pretest		Posttest	
	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes
Nouns (GN)	2	1.35	9	4.03
Noun number (GNN)[106]	53	35.72	124	55.48
Articles (GA)	50	33.70	88	39.37
Pronouns (GP)	48	32.35	53	23.71
Verbs (GV)	78	52.56	99	44.3
Auxiliaries (GVAUX)	15	10.11	28	12.53
Determiners (GD)	9	6.07	20	8.95
Adjectives (GADJ)	5	3.37	13	5.82
Adverbs (GADV)	3	2.02	11	4.92
Word class (GWC)	20	13.48	41	18.34

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[106] Due to the significant number of errors related to noun number, it was decided to dissociate the latter from other mistakes pertaining to nouns.

It appears that, based on the normalised frequency per 30 minutes, out of the various grammatical mistakes produced by students in both their initial and final podcasts, solely the errors pertaining to pronouns (GP) and verbs (GV) were less frequent in the posttests than in the pretests. All the other grammatical errors occurred less in the pretests than in the final productions of students.

The rate of lexico-grammatical mistakes was also investigated. Table 26 shows an overview of the findings related to that peculiar category of errors.

Table 26 - Comparison of pretest and posttest podcasts regarding the number of mistakes pertaining to lexico-grammar and their normalised frequency per 30 minutes

Errors pertaining to	Pretest		Posttest	
	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes
Nouns (XN)	0	0.00	4	1.79
Verbs (XV)	14	9.43	15	6.71
Adjectives (XADJ)	3	2.02	1	0.45
Adverbs (XADV)	0	0.00	1	0.45
Prepositions (XPR)	0	0.00	3	1.34
Countable/uncount able nouns (XNUC)	4	2.70	5	2.24

The results above indicate that, according to their calculated normalised frequency, half of the errors within the lexico-grammatical category occurred more in the pretests than in the posttests and vice versa. Mistakes pertaining to nouns (XN), adverbs (XADV) and prepositions (XPR) were, indeed, observed as more frequent in the posttests than in the pretests. However, errors related to verbs (XV), adjectives (XADJ) and countable/uncountable nouns (XNUC) occurred less frequently in the posttests than in the pretests.

Then, Table 27 shows the results of mistakes related to lexis which have been found in the various productions made by pupils.

Table 27 - Comparison of pretest and posttest podcasts regarding the number of mistakes pertaining to lexic and their normalised frequency per 30 minutes

Errors pertaining to	Pretest		Posttest	
	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes
Lexical single nouns (LSN)	36	24.26	69	30.87
Lexical single verbs (LSV)	27	18.20	54	24.16
Lexical single prepositions (LSPR)	19	12.80	61	27.29
Lexical single adjectives (LSADJ)	19	12.80	18	8.05
Lexical single adverbs (LSADV)	7	4.72	10	4.47
Lexical phrases (LP)	25	16.85	25	11.19
Connectors (LC)	16	10.78	35	15.66

Out of the various errors reported, only those pertaining to lexical single adjectives (LSADJ), lexical single adverbs (LSADV) and lexical phrases (LP) were less observed in the final podcasts of students. The other mistakes were, based on their normalised frequency, more frequent in the various posttests.

Finally, it was judged interesting to report on the errors pertaining to missing words but also word order and redundancy. These mistakes are all shown in Table 28 along with the various infelicities observed.

Table 28 - Comparison of pretest and posttest podcasts regarding the number of mistakes pertaining to words and infelicities and their normalised frequency per 30 minutes

Errors pertaining to	Pretest		Posttest	
	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes	Number of mistakes	Normalised frequency per 30 minutes
Words redundant (WR)	7	4.72	28	12.53
Words missing (WM)	5	3.37	38	17.00
Words order (WO)	11	7.41	21	9.40
Infelicities (Z)	32	21.56	29	12.98

It appears that all errors pertaining to words were more frequently observed in the final rather than in the initial productions made by students. Infelicities seems, however, to have occurred less in the posttests than in the pretests.

4.5 Analyses

First, it appeared, in previous sections (see 4.4.2.1 and 4.4.3.1) that the reported length of the various podcasts greatly varied from the productions created during the pretest and those during the posttest. As it has been mentioned above, the very instructions related to the initial and final podcasts targeted different time marks, the pretest asking for productions between the 2- and 3-minutes mark, whereas the posttest specified a minimum and maximum length respectively of 3 and 5 minutes. However, what can be highlighted is that, during the initial task of communication, only one podcast respected the instructions regarding the duration of the podcast. It was also observed that 11 did not meet the minimum length required, whereas 6 exceeded the maximum length. On the other hand, during the posttest 11 podcasts were between the timeframe which was specified in the instructions. There were still 4 productions under and 3 above said time limit. It seems, thus, that it was easier for students, during the posttest stage, to not only respect the demand related to the exercise but also to produce longer podcasts. This phenomenon might be explained regarding various factors. Pupils had, indeed, by the time of the final production, been exposed to two concrete conversational podcasts, namely one didacticised episode of both *Travel Mug Podcast with Megan and Jen* and the *Amateur Traveler Travel Podcast.* It can, therefore, be

suggested that these two examples helped students to better understand what was to be included, as well as what kind of subject to discuss in their own productions. Then, another factor which might have helped pupils in producing longer podcasts would be the vocabulary acquired during the various lessons of the experimental didactic sequence. As it can be observed in the dedicated section (see subsection 4.4.4), there was a total of 14 new lexemes which were introduced in podcasts produced during the posttest. The increased inclusion of 27 other lexemes also proves a certain increase in the practical use of the vocabulary among pupils. Because they had been taught actual lexical items related to the textual genre of podcast as well as reminded of the appropriate vocabulary to use when discussing a touristic destination, it could be argued that students possessed the necessary material to sustain longer conversations. Hence, increasing the length of their final productions.

Then, the results regarding the number of turns seems, at first, quite surprising. It has been determined, indeed, that based on the normalised frequency per 30 minutes there were more turns in the pretests than in the posttests. A first explanation might be found in the type of roles each student decided to embody within their production. It was observed that some pupils decided to record more of an interview type of podcast due to its similar nature to that of the conversational kind (see section 2.1.2.3). This is, probably the consequence of the theoretical toolbox presented to students during the didactic sequence (Appendix 7.1), which did not highlight the difference between those two similar types of podcasts. However, this distinction was crucial as the conversation carried out in those two types of podcasts greatly differs in terms of spoken interactions. The podcasts of students which were oriented towards the interview type saw pupils embodying the interviewer asking questions to their guest(s) and waiting for the answers, which as a result, accounted for less turns than in productions oriented towards the conversational kind of podcast. Another possible explanation to the lower number of turns observed during the posttest would, again, pertain to the students understanding of vocabulary. As it was previously stated, pupils showed a greater variety in terms of lexical items within their final rather than in their initial productions. Therefore, beside sustaining overall longer podcasts, it could be suggested that students were able to implement short monologues in their conversation to explain features of the destination discussed in their podcast to a fuller extent. Furthermore, the quality of the turns needs also to be discussed. In several podcasts containing a high number of turns, the latter was mainly

due to the overuse of a variety of onomatopoeia. The highest scoring podcast in terms of spoken interaction during the pretest was podcast 15 with 175 turns. However, the latter showcased a total of 29 turns composed solely of the exclamation "yeah"[107], for instance, which could be asserted does not add a high conversational value besides that of agreeing with what has just been said. Therefore, the quality of the spoken interactions also needs to be considered when discussing the number of turns in the various podcasts.

Moreover, it seems that the number of errors committed during the posttests has, overall, increased in almost every category, based on the normalised frequency per 30 minutes. It appears, indeed, that only 9 types of mistakes were less frequently observed in the posttests than in the pretest (GP; GV; XV; XADJ; XNUC; LSADJ; LSADV; LP and Z). However, even though those results seem to prove, at first, that podcasts were not beneficial to students, the latter needs to be nuanced. Podcasts produced during the posttest were, overall, longer than those created during the pretest with an average length of 00:03:54 for the former and 00:02:28 for the latter. Therefore, despite the normalised frequency of errors being higher in most categories regarding the various posttests, it is worth mentioning that students had to focus on and sustain longer conversations during the that final production. This might have, as a result, accounted for the higher number of errors.

Moreover, pupils were, indeed, free to choose the destination they wanted to discuss when recording their second podcast and had, consequently, to carry out their own research on said destination to find topics they wanted to include in their conversations. Therefore, despite being handed a list of vocabulary, the latter only pertained to idiomatic structures used in the textual genre of podcast, as well as lexical items to broadly speak about any destination. It did, consequently, not target each of the chosen destinations, which might have, thus, increased the number of lexical errors, as the specific vocabulary needed was not provided and, thus, explained within the didactic sequence.

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[107] Both sentences either beginning by "yeah" but followed by an actual sentence or sentence containing that specific exclamation were not included.

Furthermore, the latter strongly focused on a specific grammatical construction, namely that of the recommendation and suggestion. However, when looking at the highest scoring types of errors related to grammar, it can be highlighted that the latter were pertaining the noun number (GNN) and articles (GA) with respectively 55.8 and 39.37 mistakes per 30 minutes. Those types of errors were not directly targeted by the didactic sequence but mainly relied on the prior knowledge of students. However, due to the heterogeneity which might exist across schools and, more specifically, students, as well as the restricted allocated time to instruct the lessons, it could be asserted that it was difficult to prevent this kind of errors. Nevertheless, it can be suggested that a longer didactic sequence with in-depth grammatically driven exercises might have lessened these mistakes.

4.6 Biases

Similarly to the questionnaires, the experiment was exposed to a variety of cognitive biases. This section attempts to identify the main factors which might have affected the running of the experiment.

The main cognitive bias which could be identified would be that of the previously mentioned "Hawthorne Effect" (see 3.5.5). Students were, indeed, reminded of their participation in an experiment as, for instance, they were explicitly instructed to send both of their podcasts via email to the student researcher. This might, thus, have put a certain pressure on pupils and encouraged them to shed a peculiar attention to what they were producing and handing out.

Then, the bias pertaining to what Renson calls the "students' initial language skills", which she describes as the lack of homogeneity among students within "their already-existing knowledge to either the linguistic or generic dimension of the experiment" (In press). This probably mainly affected the grammatical, lexico-grammatical and lexical errors made by students.

The last bias to be identified would be related to the teaching of the didactic sequence as various teachers were, indeed, involved in the instruction of the latter. Therefore, the different educators might have, despite being handed a handbook with precise guidelines, slightly altered the way they have instructed the set of lessons, impacting, thus, the results which were observed in the experiment. The student-researcher was, in that regard, also involved in the teaching of the didactic

sequence. Therefore, the former combined the roles designer, instructor and researcher regarding the experiment, which constitutes an obvious bias.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter of the dissertation was oriented towards the actual implementation of the experiment within participating classes to provide factual data to the eighth and ninth hypotheses which were formulated.

The former questioned the potential assets in the transposition of authentic into educational material. Various experts seemed to agree that beyond being beneficial, the didactization of content produced by some native speaker was also often required. This was illustrated through the two didacticised podcasts used during the various experimental lessons. However, one participating teacher highlighted, in his answer to the previously discussed questionnaire, that an abusive didactic transposition might ruin the benefits, identified by the experts, which might be retrieved from authentic yet didacticised material. This was illustrated by the difficulties encountered regarding the second listening comprehension provided in the experimental didactic sequence. Therefore, if done correctly, it can be asserted that there is, to some extent, a real asset in the transposition of authentic material, which partially verifies the eighth hypothesis.

Furthermore, the final research question formulated in this dissertation investigated whether imposing the task of creating a podcast would be beneficial to the learning of English for students in secondary qualifying education and, if applicable, regarding which skill(s)?

A first conclusion which could be drawn from the above-mentioned results and related analyses to the experiment would be that some benefits are to be retrieved from demanding students to produce a podcast. On the one hand, there were more errors reported within the final productions of students compared to their initial productions. However, it has been established that this was probably consequent to a variety of factors, such as the vocabulary which could not have been taught in class and was, therefore, left for student to search and to introduce in their podcast. A similar reasoning is to be applied to the high rate of grammatical errors observed in the second podcast produced by students, with mistakes pertaining to elements which were not targeted by the pilot set of lessons. The ability of student to produce longer podcasts during the posttest seems that

students have, indeed, developed the necessary confidence and, perhaps, linguistic skills to at least sustain a longer conversation. Moreover, despite the number of turns in posttests being lower than that of pretests does not signify that students were less incline to communicate with each other. It can be suggested that the spoken interactions observed during the posttests were more structured than those in available in the pretest as students were given concrete examples of turn taking during the experimental didactic sequence.

Consequently, the response to the hypothesis claiming that "the production of a podcast is beneficial to the teaching of English to students in qualifying secondary education" is clearly to be nuanced. Certain elements point towards a negative answer, however other aspect of the experiment still proved to be encouraging. Then, if these results are factual, they still need to be put into perspective regarding the reported perception of both students and participating teachers, which bring forth more material to try to find a more definite response.

Finally, it should be worth mentioning that the experiment was carried out in only four participating class with a total of respectively 46 and 43 students participating to the pre- and posttest stage of the experimental didactic sequence. The latter was also designed to fit a specific qualifying option, namely that of 'reception and tourism agent'. To have a more extensive answer to that specific research question, further investigations are crucially needed.

5 Conclusion

5.1 "The beneficial use of podcasts in the teaching of English to students in qualifying secondary education"

To conclude, this dissertation made the claim that there were benefits to work on the textual genre of podcast in the teaching of English to students of qualifying education. A cross examination of both questionnaires and the implementation of an experimental didactic sequence targeting that genre allowed to, overall, confirm the original statement.

The task to verify that claim was particularly challenging. This was due to the difficulties pertaining to the definition of the textual genre of podcast, as well as the lack of the latter within official documents related to FL teaching. Besides, the uncertainty of podcasts being known by both teachers and students, the question whether they would judge the former significant was still to be determined.

However, this dissertation succeeded, to some extent, to determine that the nature of the alleged benefits was related to both the perceived improvement of language proficiency, and the factual results collected through the experiment. Both were, indeed, proved to be intrinsically intertwined despite providing, sometimes, different results.

The results and analyses provided in this dissertation showcased, indeed, the improvement of the self-estimated language proficiency of students, which was further confirmed by the participating teachers. The experiment, as it was designed and despite its many limitations, also allowed students to make further factual progress in their mastery of English.

Whilst it seems on the right track by affirming that there were real benefits to work with the textual genre of the podcast with students of qualifying education still needs to be further investigated to confirm what has here already been deducted. The experiment presented in this dissertation certainly provides the possibility to be extended to other qualifying options or, broadly speaking, to other forms of education.

5.2 Limits

Many limits have been identified throughout this dissertation. Some of them were pertaining to the actual definition of the textual genre of the podcast, which was targeted by the experiment, whilst others were intrinsincally linked to the organisation and scope of the pilot didactic sequence. This section is dedicated to the identification of said limits.

5.2.1 Time limitation

The total duration of the experimental didactic sequence was designed to fit six lessons, due to the fear of limited answers regarding the potential participation of teachers. The latter was, indeed, highlighted as one of the main discouraging factors to take part in the experiment. However, the didactic sequence was designed according to the SP didactic framework which, as Simons describes, usually require at least 10 lessons to be effective (2019b: 238). There were, consequently, modifications which were operated on the structure of that didactic framework in order to fit the 6 lessons timeframe which was allocated to the experimental didactic framework. This implied, as it was observed by the various participating teachers, that some exercises were judged missing to correctly teach the textual genre to students.

This might provide a potential explanation as to why there was an overall higher number of errors in the second podcast of pupils. Nevertheless, the real impact of the time limitation on the actual productions of students needs to be further investigated.

5.2.2 Scope of the experiment

As it was mentioned in various parts of this dissertation, the results as well as the related analyses provided were restricted to a small batch of participants. Because the experiment targeted a specific qualifying option, namely that of 'reception' and tourism agent, the scope of the research was already limited as it left 7 potential participating schools. Out of those, solely three decided to take part in the experiment which, again, contributed to further limit the number of participants to both the questionnaire and the pilot didactic sequence. Consequently, there were a total of three participating teachers and 56 students.

However, the actual number of students responding to the questionnaire and, thus, involved in the creation of podcasts were of 46 during the pretest and 40 during the posttest. This was mainly due to the "high rate of absenteeism" (T3), which was mentioned by one of the participating educators. This also certainly affected the results of the final productions as some students did not follow the, already limited didactic sequence (see 5.2), as those pupils were not taught the material required to produce a podcast. There was, nevertheless, no tracking of the students there during each of the lessons of the didactic sequence, which makes it difficult to trace the exact progress and, consequently, impact the potential absence of a pupil might have had on their performance. This might, however, be an interesting starting point for any further investigation.

5.3 Areas for improvement

One potential prospect for improvement, besides those pertaining to the above-mentioned limits, would be the use of what Simons calls the "noticing the gap" technique (2019b: 232-233). The author describes the latter as leaving the opportunity to students to see what had previously been produced, during the same stage of the didactic sequence, but by other pupils (2019b: 232-233). Simons further details how this could allow students to, first, see concrete examples of what needs to be created, but also to see that other previous pupils with the same amount of knowledge were able to fulfil the task (2019b: 233). It could, thus, be imagined showing both the pre- and posttests of pupils which were taught the experimental didactic sequence to future students taking part to a similar experiment. This might help in the motivation of students as well as bid a form of reassurance.

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6.1 Primary Literature

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