

The Use of Film Criticism Podcasts: A Text Genre Analysis and Potential Pedagogical Adaptations for English as a Foreign Language Teaching

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**The Use of Film Criticism Podcasts: A Text Genre
Analysis and Potential Pedagogical Adaptations for English
as a Foreign Language Teaching**

Mémoire présenté par Isabelle PETIT
en vue de l'obtention du grade de
Master en Langues et Lettres Germaniques, à finalité didactique

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Signature

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Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES AND APPENDICES.....	5
1 INTRODUCTION.....	7
2 CHAPTER 1: THE GENRE-BASED APPROACH IN LANGUAGE LEARNING.....	10
2.1 DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF TEXT GENRE.....	10
2.2 ADVANTAGES OF EXPLICITLY TEACHING TEXT GENRES IN LANGUAGE CLASSES.....	10
2.3 TEACHING LANGUAGES IN THE WALLONIA-BRUSSELS FEDERATION.....	11
2.4 ON THE IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO TEXT GENRES IN THE WALLONIA-BRUSSELS FEDERATION AND IN EUROPE	12
2.5 SIMONS' APPROACH TO TEXT GENRES AND TYPOLOGY.....	14
2.6 CONCLUSION.....	17
3 CHAPTER 2: THE SOCIAL FRAMEWORKS OF FILM CRITICISM.....	18
3.1 DEFINITION OF FILM CRITICISM.....	18
3.2 THE CRISIS NARRATIVE AROUND FILM CRITICISM.....	19
3.3 FILM CRITICISM SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT.....	19
3.4 MACRO-FUNCTIONS OF FILM CRITICISM.....	21
3.5 THE GENERIC STRUCTURE AND LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FILM CRITICISM.....	25
3.6 CONCLUSION.....	29
4 CHAPTER 3: THE TEXT TYPE OF PODCAST.....	30
4.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF PODCASTING.....	30
4.2 DEFINITION OF PODCASTING.....	32
4.3 PODCASTS USED AS PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS IN ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS.....	35
4.4 CONCLUSION.....	42
5 CHAPTER 4: THE ACTUALISATION OF FILM CRITICISM PODCASTS IN REAL-LIFE CONTEXTS AND THEIR APPEARANCE IN THE REFERENCE FRAMEWORKS AND CURRICULA OF THE WALLONIA-BRUSSELS FEDERATION.....	45
5.1 THE ACTUALISATION OF FILM CRITICISM PODCASTS IN REAL-LIFE CONTEXTS.....	45
5.2 THE PLACE ATTRIBUTED TO THE TEXT GENRE OF FILM CRITICISM AND THE TEXT TYPE OF PODCAST IN THE OFFICIAL REFERENCE FRAMEWORKS AND IN THE CURRICULA OF THE WALLONIA-BRUSSELS FEDERATION	46
5.3 CONCLUSION.....	57
6 CHAPTER 5: A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL PRACTICES.....	59
6.1 METHODOLOGY FOR THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CORPUS.....	59
6.2 METHODOLOGY FOR THE CORPUS' ANALYSIS.....	62
6.3 RESULTS.....	68
6.4 CONCLUSION.....	78

7	CHAPTER 6: ADAPTATION OF FILM CRITICISM PODCASTS FOR EFL COURSES.....	79
7.1	DESCENDING PEDAGOGICAL ADAPTATIONS	80
7.2	ASCENDING PEDAGOGICAL ADAPTATIONS	81
7.3	SOLUTIONS FOR PRESENTING PEDAGOGICALLY ADAPTED FILM CRITICISM PODCASTS IN EFL CLASSES	85
7.4	ADVANTAGES OF USING FILM CRITICISM PODCASTS IN EFL CLASSES	85
7.5	CONCLUSION	87
8	GENERAL CONCLUSION.....	88
9	APPENDICES	92
10	LITERATURE REVIEW.....	96

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES AND APPENDICES

Figures

Figure 1: Modeling of the relationship between communicative macro-functions, family of TGs, TGs, TTs, and Ts (Simons, 2018, p. 57).....	14
Figure 2: Segmentation of the discursive moments in Kermode & Mayo's Take.....	68
Figure 3: Segmentation of the discursive moments in Reel talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross.....	68
Figure 4: Segmentation of the discursive moments in The Empire Film Podcast.....	68
Figure 5: “Ascending” or “descending” pedagogical adaptations based on social references (Simons, 2025c, p. 183).....	80

Tables

Table 1: Occurrences of the “film criticism” text genre in the official reference frameworks and in the curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.	48
Table 2: Occurrences of the term “film” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.	51
Table 3: Occurrences of the term “podcast” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.....	53
Table 4: Occurrences of the term “technology” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.	54
Table 5: Table showing the explicit didactic sequence on the publicly regulated debate of Renson (2023, p. 313).....	83
Table 6: Table adapting the explicit didactic sequence on the publicly regulated debate of Renson (2023, p. 313) to FCPs.....	83

Appendices

Appendix 1: “Genre regrouping” of Dolz & Schneuwly (1998, p. 85-87) in Simons’ typology (2018, pp. 55-56).....	92
Appendix 2: <i>Six schools of contemporary film criticism</i> (McWhirter, 2016, p. 73).....	92
Appendix 3: <i>Application of Adam’s typology to the text genre of the film review</i> (Geron, 2018, pp. 311-313).....	93
Appendix 4: <i>Students’ perception of podcast</i> , (Hendrawan et al., 2025, p. 460).	94
Appendix 5: <i>Motivational impact of podcast use</i> (Hendrawan et al., 2025, pp. 460-461).	94
Appendix 6: <i>Explanation of the communicative functions included in the communicative objective set out by the official referential of the WBF</i> (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017a).....	95
Appendix 7: <i>Screenshot of podwatch’s classification of podcasted film review on 21 November 2025</i>	95

1 Introduction

Art criticism has never been as central to society as it is nowadays (Carroll, 2009, p. 1). Film reviews on TikTok, fashion show analysis on YouTube, gastronomic addresses on Instagram, book ratings on a blog, and hotel ratings via e-mail are just a few examples of art criticism found online. However, not all criticisms are created equal. Some are well-reasoned and well-argued, while others are mere reactions to a product or event. Learning their workings and underlying mechanisms at school may help raise students' awareness of irrelevant criticism and, by extension, support pupils in forming their opinions and identity. Far from merely passively being exposed to criticism, students might be led to produce criticism in real-life contexts. These may range from answering an email asking for their opinions on a product to discussing their opinions on a movie they saw. The teaching of text genres close to the family of criticism, therefore, seems relevant at a secondary education level, insofar as it teaches students to properly deliver opinions.

In the context of English as a foreign language, the text genre of film criticism can foster critical thinking and immersion in English-speaking culture and help students overcome their fear of sharing their opinions (Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15, quoting Frodon, 2008, p.14). Furthermore, teaching this text genre through the prism of podcasting enables the practice of speaking skills, which are often neglected in foreign language teaching (Renson, 2023, p. 93).

The concept of text genre has sparked my curiosity due to my first-hand experience as a pupil. I found teaching activities organised around text genre more engaging, motivating, and potentially reusable. This impression has been confirmed during one of my internships. Newly acquainted with the concept, I decided to implement it in my practice. In a form designed to evaluate the efficiency of my teaching sequence, students expressed enthusiasm for this pedagogical approach. This experience motivates me to research, analyse, and evaluate the advantages, disadvantages, and potential pedagogical adaptations of a text genre. A long-held passion for acting and cinema, coupled with a brief but enriching training in acting, inspired the choice of the text genre of film criticism. Its realisation as a podcast enables me to build bridges between my former academic training in multilingual communication and the didactic master's in foreign languages. In other words, this research topic has been seen as the perfect opportunity to apply various skills that my rich and diverse orientation path led me to acquire. This work revolves around one main question: *Are there advantages to using film criticism podcasts in the context of teaching English as a foreign language?*

Therefore, this master's thesis primarily aims to analyse the text genre of film criticism, realised as the podcast text type, to pedagogically adapt it to EFL settings. This work relies on three main hypotheses and sub-hypotheses:

1. Podcasts function as a structuring text type for the text genre of film criticism.
2. Using film criticism podcasts at secondary education levels offers real didactic advantages, because they:
 - a. develop linguistic, sociocultural, and discursive skills,
 - b. increase students' exposure to authentic input,
 - c. are grammatically and lexically rich,
 - d. teach students to develop arguments to move beyond their first opinions, thereby fostering their critical thinking,
 - e. foster students' motivation.
3. The use of film criticism podcasts in EFL settings is rarely mentioned in the WBF reference frameworks and official curricula.

The present master's thesis is structured around six chapters. The first chapter defines the genre-based approach to language learning and its importance in FWB foreign-language learning contexts. The second chapter intends to define the social framework of the text genre of film criticism as actualised in real-world contexts and to bring together previous research on film criticism to determine its communicative macro-functions and lexical and grammatical invariant features. The third chapter revolves around the presentation of the podcast text type and its use in English as a foreign language settings. The fourth chapter analyses the reference frameworks and curricula of the WBF to determine the place granted to the text genre of film criticism and the text type of podcast in the WBF. The fifth chapter presents a corpus-based analysis of three film criticism podcasts and examines their discursive structures. Lastly, the sixth chapter suggests ways to pedagogically adapt the text genre of film criticism, realised as the podcast text type.

Regarding the form, a few precision points seem relevant to alert the reader to the choices made in the present master's thesis. Quotations from foreign language-speaking authors have been translated into English. The original version has been written in footnotes.

Moreover, the words listed below have been replaced by abbreviations.

Abbreviation	The full form
C-GS	The Catholic program for foreign language teaching in general secondary education
C-PTS	Catholic program for foreign language teaching in professional and technical secondary education
EFL	English Foreign language
FC	Film criticism
FR	Film review
P	Podcast
FCP	Film criticism podcast
RF-GS	The reference framework (for modern languages) in general secondary education
RF-PTS	The reference framework for modern languages in professional and technical secondary education
TG	Text genre
WBE-GS	The WBE program for foreign language teaching in general secondary education
WBE-PTS	The WBE program for foreign language teaching in professional and technical secondary education
WBF	Wallonia-Brussels Federation

2 Chapter 1: The genre-based approach in language learning

2.1 Definition of the concept of text genre

It is difficult to precisely define the nature of text genres (hereafter referred to as TG) (Jacquin, 2018). However, Jacquin (2018) identifies commonalities among the numerous definitions of TG. Their internal and external descriptions, as well as their evolution through use, are recurring elements that define them (Jacquin, 2018). The internal and external features of TGs refer, first, to their structural and linguistic realisation and, second, to their intended communicative purposes and contexts of use (Jacquin, 2018). When comparing six existing definitions of TGs in the French- and English-speaking scientific literature, Simons (2018, p. 48) adds to the commonalities identified by Jacquin the invariable anchoring of TGs in society and culture. Based on these observations, Simons (2018) formulates an operational definition grounded in the recurrent features identified across various definitions of TGs used in the research field. According to the author,

“[a] text genre is a relatively stable grouping of written or oral language production that is inscribed in a society, a culture, and a given time period. Mastering the features of a text genre is a tool that enables one to act in a given communicative situation, whether for reception or production.”¹ (p. 48)

2.2 Advantages of explicitly teaching text genres in language classes

The didactic use of TGs enables didactic activities to be centred around a genre, thereby “avoiding the dispersion of the different linguistic activities worked on separately in class, and the loss of meaning in the student’s work due to excessive fragmentation of the [learning] objects” (Jacquin, 2018, p. 15)². Moreover, Jacquin argues that teaching TGs and their associated social or political communicative contexts at school enables students to activate their knowledge in the contexts of the taught TG. In this regard, teaching TGs equips students with the tools necessary to become social actors (Jacquin, 2018; Simons, 2018).

Teaching TGs, therefore, aligns with the goals of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (hereafter referred to as CEFR), which promotes an action-oriented perspective. This perspective,

¹ Personal translation of: “Le genre textuel est un regroupement de productions langagières, écrites ou orales, relativement stables, qui s’inscrivent dans une société, une culture et un temps donnés. La maîtrise des caractéristiques d’un genre textuel est un outil qui permet d’agir dans une situation de communication donnée, tant en réception qu’en production” (Simons, 2018, p. 48).

² Personal translation of: “éviter l’éclatement des différentes activités langagières travaillées isolément en classe et la perte de sens du travail de l’élève due à une trop grande fragmentation des objets” (Jacquin, 2018, p. 15).

“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. While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 9).

Far from merely aligning with the Council of Europe’s action-oriented approach, the explicit teaching of TGs also promotes greater equality in classrooms (Jacquin, 2018). In a field study, Renson (2023) confirms the benefits of explicit TGs teaching in EFL classes. In this study, students from different classes were taught either explicitly or implicitly. The posttest results for students who received explicit teaching demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching TGs explicitly (Renson, 2023). Indeed, as the author concludes, “the explicit approach enables the students to mobilise linguistic and generic skills in the short term and to activate them again over the medium term” (Renson, 2023, p. 430)³.

2.3 Teaching languages in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

Since the 1990s, the Belgian educational system has adopted a competence-based approach (Simons, 2018). This approach views knowledge as a set of tools that enable students to complete a “contextualised, original, complex, open and goal-oriented task”⁴ (Simons, 2014, p. 14). This approach expects students to articulate knowledge (declarative knowledge), skills (procedural knowledge), and attitude (interpersonal and social skills) to complete complex tasks (Fagnant, 2024).

This competence-based approach is transposed into the didactics of foreign languages through the adoption of the communicative approach (Simons, 2018) with its 4 skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (Simons, 2025a), which could be expanded to 5 skills if speaking is divided into interactive or non-interactive speaking. The broad definition of this approach reflects its aim of providing teachers with guidelines, rather than confining them within a strict methodology (Simons, 2025a). Moreover, it organises pedagogical activities around students’ perceived needs and emancipation (Simons, 2025a, pp. 19-20). From this perspective, languages are taught as tools enabling students to communicate in plausible and authentic contexts. In this regard, teachers

³ Personal translation of: “l’approche explicite a permis aux élèves de mobiliser des compétences linguistiques et génériques à CT [court terme] et de les mobiliser à nouveau à MT [moyen terme]” (Renson, 2023, p. 430).

⁴ Personal translation of: “pour résoudre une tâche contextualisée, inédite, complexe, ouverte et finalisée” (Simons, 2014, p. 14).

assume the role of guides supporting students throughout the learning process (Simons, 2025a, p. 20-21).

This pragmatic perspective calls for additional skills that students must master in EFL classes. Linguistic skills (focused on the accuracy and the richness of language) are enriched by sociocultural (understanding cultural references and implicit meanings), sociolinguistic (managing the pragmatic use of language), discursive (logical articulations of ideas), and strategic (strategies to compensate for linguistic insufficiencies) skills (Simons, 2025a, p. 20). In this regard, TG could serve as organising features not only for communicative but also for discursive skills, as they provide students with a fixed, authentic, and socially constructed framework for organising their arguments and ideas.

2.4 On the importance given to text genres in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and in Europe

TGs are seldom mentioned in the official curricula of the WBF issued prior to 2017, or in the CEFR (Simons, 2018, pp. 40-41). With only five occurrences of the collocation “text genre” across the 375 pages of the Belgian reference frameworks and programs, it can be argued that the concept of TG is underexploited (Simons, 2018). Moreover, the official curricula of French-speaking Belgium never define the concept of TG (Simons, 2018). This underutilisation may reflect the definitional debates surrounding the concept in the research field, as well as the lack of instruction of TG in teachers’ initial training (Simons, 2018). By contrast, the collocations “text type” and “text production” are more frequently used in the aforementioned documents (Simons, 2018). Similar observations can be made following the analysis of the occurrences of the collocations of “text genre”, “text type”, and “text production” in the CEFR. Simons, therefore, concludes that the concept of TG is not defined in either the Belgian or the European official curricular frameworks (Simons, 2018).

In an analysis of the actual curricula, Renson (2023, p. 132) also notes the absence of the concept of TG from these documents. However, although TGs have never been directly mentioned or defined, examples of TGs are often given as examples of expected final tasks (Renson, 2023, p. 133). These occurrences of TGs reveal their “importance [...] in foreign languages teaching”⁵ (Renson, 2023, p. 133) and prove the need to provide teachers with original, authentic final tasks. However, the official curricula fail to provide language teachers with solutions

⁵ Personal translation of: “l’importance des GT dans l’enseignement des LE”

to achieve this goal, instead restricting themselves to listing TGs assigned only to certain proficiency levels (Renson, 2023, p. 133).

In the CEFR, TGs are mentioned only in relation to upper-intermediate levels (B2 and above). This restriction of TGs to proficient levels hinders their teaching in secondary schools of the WBF, as the highest level of language proficiency attained there is B1+ (Simons, 2018). However, “an initiation to text genres can begin earlier in foreign language learning, provided that the teacher selects or adapts the text genres and types of texts, and avoids productive tasks linked to certain text genres” (Simons, 2018, p. 45)⁶.

Moreover, despite its advantages and its consistency with the action-oriented approach prescribed by the European Union, as mentioned in the second section of this chapter, the teaching of TGs remains underexploited in the foreign language classrooms of the WBF secondary schools (Renson, 2023; Simons, 2018).

This may be explained by the many obstacles posed in the teaching of TGs. Participants in Renson’s study mention these obstacles. They note the lack of education surrounding the notion (Renson, 2023, p. 219), the lack of methodological guidelines in the official curricula for implementing TGs in learning activities (Renson, 2023, p. 220), and the lack of time to work on TGs in classrooms (Renson, 2023, pp. 2020-2021). Teachers’ unfamiliarity with the concept of TG can be attributed to the absence of a clear definition in official curricula and an insufficient preparation during teachers’ academic instruction (Renson, 2023, p. 220; Simons, 2018). These obstacles lead to “a (partially) inefficient teaching of the TG [of the regulated public societal debate], but also to inequitable teaching” (Renson, 2023, p. 208)⁷. Indeed, most of the teachers surveyed in Renson’s study report that, although they have never explicitly taught the TG of the regulated public societal debate, they expect their students to produce this TG as a final task (Renson, 2023, p. 241). This implicit approach deprives students of the generic resources necessary to reproduce the TG.

⁶ Personal translation of: “une initiation aux genres textuels peut débiter plus tôt dans l’apprentissage de la LE, pour autant que l’enseignant *sélectionne* les genres et types de textes, voire qu’il les *adapte*, mais aussi qu’il renonce à des tâches *productives* liées à certains genres textuels” (Simons, 2018, p. 45).

⁷ Personal translation of: “à un enseignement (partiellement) inefficace du GT, mais aussi à un enseignement inéquitable” (Renson, 2023, p. 208).

2.5 Simons' approach to text genres and typology

Simons (2018) argues that TGs should serve as a structuring feature, enabling teachers to regroup similar tasks under a common framework in foreign language teaching activities. This approach corresponds to the aims of the CEFR to educate social actors capable of transferring their knowledge to real-life situations (Simons, 2018, p. 46). Furthermore, this regrouping could make teachers' practices more coherent. As Simons argues, teachers expect students to produce TGs in final communicative tasks and to be exposed to TGs in the linguistic input used in class. Therefore, the presence of TGs in classrooms justifies regrouping pedagogical tasks under the banner of TGs. (Simons, 2018, p. 50).

The effective teaching of TGs in class requires an understanding of their workings. Therefore, Simons developed a typology in which he describes TGs as functioning within an encompassing-encompassed relationship (Simons, 2018). We are going to list the items of this typology, ranking them from the most encompassing to the least encompassing: communicative macro-functions, family of TGs, TGs, text types (hereafter referred to as TT), and texts (see the graph below).

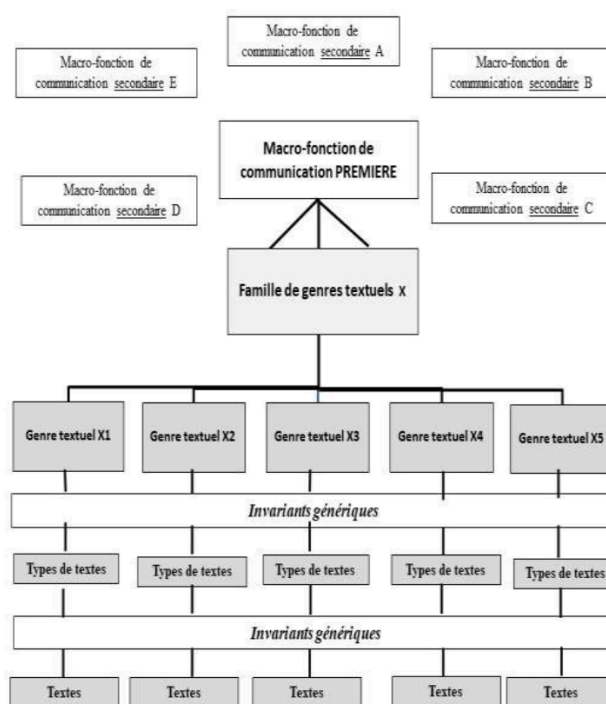


Figure 1: Modeling of the relationship between communicative macro-functions, family of TGs, TGs, TTs, and Ts (Simons, 2018, p. 57).

In this relationship, families of TGs are grouped around common communicative macro-functions. Members sharing generic invariants within those families are TGs and, if they share common invariant features, are regrouped under TTs (Simons, 2018). The following paragraphs

will outline the invariant features and functions of each component of this encompassing-encompassed relationship.

To define the communicative macro-functions that families of TGs could serve, Simons borrows Dolz and Schneuwly's "genre regrouping" terminology. Dolz and Schneuwly regroup TG according to their functions, which could be "expounding", "settling behaviour", "narrating", "recounting", or "arguing" (see Appendix 1, p. 92). However, the pragmatic aim of these "genre regroupings" leads Simons to adapt Dolz and Schneuwly's nomenclature, preferring the term "communicative macro-functions" over "genre regroupings" (Simons, 2018, pp. 55-56). This nomenclature will be used in the present master's thesis.

For TGs to belong to the same family, they must share generic invariant features (Simons, 2018), such as their common communicative macro-functions, orientation toward an audience, possible interactivity, and degree of codification. These examples are borrowed and generalized from Simons's example of the real estate announcement's TG (Simons, 2018). Therefore, additional generic invariant features beyond those previously mentioned can be identified to form a family of TGs, depending on the TG under discussion. It can be argued that this categorization is complex and nuanced, as some TGs may simultaneously encompass many communicative macro-functions or vary considerably depending on the content of the discourse (Simons, 2018, p. 61). It is thus difficult to propose a fixed and invariable categorization of TGs within the same family. The film criticism (hereafter referred to as FC), for instance, could be seen as belonging to more than one family of TGs. Following McWhirter's classification of FC into various schools of thought (discussed in greater detail in Section 2.3 of Chapter 2), which range from public-oriented to scholar-oriented FC, these schools may serve different communicative macro-functions. Scholar-oriented schools of thought could belong to the family of criticism — including, for instance, art criticism, social criticism, or gastronomic criticism — which corresponds to the primary communicative macro-function of "arguing", in Dolz and Schneuwly's nomenclature, as one of the aims of criticism is to provide arguments for evaluating the quality of a film. However, it could be argued that the primary macro-function of FC associated with a school of thought more oriented towards a wider public is "to persuade" and not "to argue". In this regard, FC could also be seen as sharing commonalities with the family of advertising, and thus as aiming to encourage or dissuade people from seeing the movie being reviewed. This example aims to highlight the difficulties inherent in classifying a TG within a family and to acknowledge that this typology seeks to categorize multi-faceted TGs. The macro-functions of the FC will be discussed in greater detail in Section 3.4 of Chapter 2.

For a discourse to be recognised as belonging to a TG, it must share invariable internal features. Based on Simons' example of the real estate announcement, it is generalised that these invariant features are related to the linguistic actualisation of TGs, and, thus, to their internal linguistic features. The structure of the message — such as the use of bullet points —, the structure of the sentences — such as the use of contractions, ellipsis, and absence of relative clauses —, the grammatical categories frequently used — such as positive evaluative adjectives, the absence of adverbs and the frequent use of abbreviations — are, among others, linguistic constant elements that a discourse must share to belong to a TG. The examples used are taken from Simons' examples of the real estate announcement, but generalized.

Interestingly, following Jacquin's observations on the definitional commonalities found in research on TGs, the recurring features described by Simons when delineating and exemplifying the features of families of TGs refer mainly to external characteristics (such as the pragmatic functions of a discourse and its context of occurrence), whereas the invariable features describing TGs refer to internal linguistic characteristics (structural and compositional features).

The belonging of a TG to a particular TT is, once again, determined by shared invariant features related to the layout of the discourse and its impact on the materialization of the TG. Some of these features, also listed by Simons (2018) in his example of the real estate announcement, include the medium of diffusion of the TG, its format, the discussed product, the presence or absence of visual features, and the quality of these visual features, coupled with the effects that the previously mentioned parameters have on the actualisation of the discourse. This assumption is supported by a definition borrowed from media studies, which defines format as “the physical arrangement of information” (Gorichanaz, 2017), while media are considered to represent the “physicality” and the production of discourse (Gorichanaz, 2017). In the present master's thesis, it will be argued that FC podcasts (hereafter referred to as FCP) are mediated through the medium of the podcast (hereafter referred to as P). Indeed, this medium determines the physicality — a recording — and the production of the TG. This medium can be organised in different formats, such as the one-to-one interview or solo commentary, among others (Berry, 2020). These formats undeniably influence the linguistic actualisation of TGs, as they determine whether interrogative sentences are used. The P medium can also shape the nature of the discourse, as there are no time constraints on the actualisation of the message. More digression or a slower pace of articulation could thus be observed in Ps, as opposed to radio. Moreover, a FC on a drama or a comedy would influence the actualisation of the TG, as the vocabulary used would differ depending on the film's genre and themes. A war tragedy or a romantic comedy, for instance, would give rise to different

lexical fields. In this regard, TTs appear to be determined by the way messages are organised, and more precisely by the way the medium, the discussed theme, and the format chosen for diffusing the discourse, influence their actualisation and structure. Therefore, it will be argued in the present master's thesis that the P, together with its format and theme, functions as a structuring TT for the TG of the FC.

Despite this brief reference to media studies, the author of the present master's thesis acknowledges the limitations of the conclusions drawn regarding formats and media. While taking into account the definitional issues surrounding Ps (addressed in Section 4.2 of Chapter 3), we intend to anchor this work in the didactic use of TG in EFL classrooms, rather than delve further into debates concerning the nature of Ps.

2.6 Conclusion

This first chapter has focused on defining the notion of TG, primarily discussing its internal (linguistic) and external (pragmatic) features, its constant evolution anchored in social and cultural contexts, its didactic uses, and its relatively stable nature.

Subsequently, the advantages of teaching TGs in EFL classes were discussed. It was concluded that teaching TGs benefits both teachers and students, as they enable didactic activities to become more structured, train students to act in society, and, when explicitly taught, foster greater equality in classrooms.

Despite these advantages, TGs remain underexploited at both the European and WBF levels, as revealed by Simons' and Renson's analysis of the pre-2017 and current reference frameworks and curricula. This could be linked to the absence of a clear definition of the concept in official curricula, as well as the lack of training on TG in teachers' scientific curricula.

Lastly, Simons' typology of TG has been outlined, and it was concluded that communicative macro-functions describe the pragmatic use of a discourse. Families of TGs are grouped according to external and contextual discursive invariants, whereas TGs organise themselves around recurring features more closely related to the internal features of the discourse, such as structural and lexical characteristics. The actualisation of TGs is influenced by the TT, which can be understood as the discourse's general layout and mode of production, such as its format or medium of diffusion.

Therefore, these observations lead us to posit that Ps, together with their formats and themes, function as a structuring TT for the TG of FC.

The following chapter of this master's thesis will focus on the definition of the TG of FC and provide an overview of the actualisation of the TG of FC in social practices. The chapter will aim to identify the communicative macro-functions of FC and its linguistic recurring features, as currently described in the research literature. Therefore, the next chapter will not focus on the analysis of FCPs, but rather on the TG of the FC as generally observed and researched in society.

3 Chapter 2: The social frameworks of film criticism

3.1 Definition of film criticism

The verb “criticise” comes from the Greek *kritikós*, which means “able to make judgments”. This Greek term is rooted in the word *krinein*, meaning “to separate, decide” (Etymonline’s Dictionary, 2025). In the Collins Dictionary, criticism is defined as “a serious examination and judgment of something such as a book or play” (Collins English Dictionary, 2025). However, the first definition given by the dictionary is pejorative, as criticism is described as the “action of expressing disapproval of something or someone” (Collins English Dictionary, 2025).

Noël Carroll defines written and spoken art criticism as “a genre of verbal discourse” that “criticiz[es] artworks” (2009, pp. 12-13). However, McWhirter, in research aimed at examining the current state of FC in an interconnected world, establishes a distinction between “film review” and “film criticism”. According to the author, “[r]eviewing is more popular than criticism and more restricted in what it can do, but also just one dimension of film criticism” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 67). Therefore, McWhirter views FC and film review (from now on FR) as intertwined in an encompassing-encompassed relationship, where FC functions as a hypernym and FR as a hyponym of the TG.

It is worth noting that this distinction is not unanimous among film studies. Bergan claims in an article titled *The film critic is dead. Long live the film critic.* that FRs belong to mass media, such as newspapers, and that FC exclusively denotes scholarly essays and publications (2010). On the contrary, Doherty labels all critical writings, whether aimed at mass media or at scholars’ spheres, as FC (2010).

3.2 The crisis narrative around film criticism

FC “has historically been a nominal function to the wider production, perception and consumption of movies” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 1). However, although historically important, the discursive genre has experienced a crisis, or is surrounded by a “crisis narrative”, in which professionals either consider their domain of expertise to be declining and then decaying, or to be momentarily experiencing the turmoil of transition (McWhirter, 2016, p. 26).

Notwithstanding the transformation of the FC genre, McWhirter points out that professional critics seem to limit themselves to print reviews when referring to the “crisis of film criticism”. The advent and democratization of the Internet played a pivotal role in the redefinition of the genre, as well as in media consumption in general, thereby both redefining and endangering the journalistic profession (McWhirter, 2016, p. 33), because “the concept of journalism is affected by technology and the people using that technology” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 37). This digital evolution forces professional film critics to acquire new skills to maintain their influence within their own industry, while Web 2.0 has enabled amateurs cinephiles to join the ranks of professional voices (McWhirter, 2016).

This newly acquired accessibility democratizes the TG, thereby broadening the community of FC participants (McWhirter, 2016). The “narrative crisis” of the genre depicted by McWhirter is counterbalanced by Carroll’s assumption that “there is probably more art criticism being produced and consumed now than ever before in the history of the world” (Carroll, 2009, p. 1). Consequently, this perceived crisis in traditional media is largely outweighed by the publication and production of digital criticism, which establish criticism as a central aspect of contemporary society (Carroll, 2009). This increase could make it challenging to find quality criticism. However, despite the variety of criticism in terms of form and nature, McWhirter (2016, p. 79) argues that “worthwhile criticism can be found at all levels” of the schools of thought delineated in Section 3.3.

3.3 Film criticism schools of thought

FC can take various forms, be addressed to diverse audiences, and embrace a wide range of formats and media. Therefore, FC must be regarded through their belonging “to school[s] of thought rather than referred to as normative (or descriptive) of an entire heterogeneous practice” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 49). This statement refers to the historical tendency to view FC as falling on a binary spectrum, with criticism based on aesthetics on one hand and on politics on the other. These criticisms were primarily discussed in academic circles. However, the authors consider it equally important to move beyond academic criticism on aesthetics and politics to adopt an

analytical perspective on “contemporary practice beyond aesthetic or political functions” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 65).

Therefore, McWhirter elaborates a taxonomy that maps the different schools of thought existing in the industry of FC “with the aim of identifying patterns across a broad range of media” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 72) – such as newspapers, magazines, websites, blogs, Ps, etc.– publishing or broadcasting FC.

Based on an analysis of 133 sources distributing FC, McWhirter creates a typology outlining six schools of thought (McWhirter, 2016, p. 72). McWhirter’s understanding of *a school of thought* in this context is a “group of writers or institutions sharing similar ideas and methods” (2016, p. 75).

Although this model (see Appendix 2, p. 92) excludes and discriminates, McWhirter highlights that his classification tends to observe tendencies in the universe of FC, without denying their interconnectivity. Notably, film critics, through their work across various media (McWhirter, 2016), can adapt their writing and tone of address to the media they are producing for, thereby engaging with more than one school of thought (McWhirter, 2016).

- The **consumer school** is composed of writers wanting to share their opinions on films they have seen. It can adopt many formats, such as “lengthy reviews/reports on comment threads and IMDb⁸, as well as more recent micro-blogging statements and debates” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 75).
- The **school of fandom** shares similarities with the consumer school but differs from it through a more spirited, and perhaps subjective, approach toward a genre, a director, or an actor (McWhirter, 2016, p. 75).
- The **populist school** describes mainstream content found within the context of “entertainment, news sources, or journalistic institutions with a certain heritage and legacy” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 78). These FC are usually published in institutionalized media structures such as *The Empire Magazine*, the *BBC*, or *The Guardian*. The audience is prioritized over critical and intellectual thought because of the media’s capital-driven structures. This school of thought is characterised by its simplicity of themes and ease of consumption. Here, the critic represents the institutions’ voice (McWhirter, 2016, p. 78).

⁸ IMDb is an online website that describes itself as “the world’s most popular and authoritative source for movie, TV and celebrity content, designed to help fans explore the world of movies and shows and decide what to watch.” (IMDb, 2025)

- The **trade school** delineates publications and authors that aim to predict movies' financial success and the audience they will attract (McWhirter, 2016, p. 77).
- The **sophisticated school** is characterised by its intelligent writing and complex analysis of a movie, while taking unversed audiences into consideration. This category blurs the lines between “amateur and professional film writing” (McWhirter, 2016, p. 77). Yet, its independence from financial interests and audiences is unclear.
- The **academic school** focuses on in-depth analysis of movies and remains independent from audiences and financial gain (McWhirter, 2016, p. 78-79).

Based on his analysis, McWhirter concludes that this model helps move beyond the binary tensions existing between socio-political and aesthetic criticism (2016, p. 80).

3.4 Macro-functions of film criticism

The functions of FC are debated among professionals. While some argue that FC has an evaluative value, some regard such evaluation as the least interesting part of their work (Carroll, 2009).

Functions differ depending on the school of thought and on the purpose of the criticism. Historically, FC functions have been debated and have oscillated along a spectrum from aesthetics at one end to politics at the other (McWhirter, 2016). Nevertheless, this tension, which has existed since the advent of FC, has not been taken into consideration in McWhirter's typology, as this debate on content and form manifests itself “across all types of FC” (2016, p. 70).

3.4.1 Persuasion and dissuasion as main communicative functions of film reviews

The main communicative macro-function of FC is primarily “to persuade” or — when the judgment is negative — “to dissuade”, as it helps art consumers navigate the range of films available in the industry (Carroll, 2009) and make their cinematographic choices (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). Those judgments, expressed by professionals, persuade or dissuade readers and listeners to visit an art exhibition, head for the theater, watch a movie, or take an interest in a particular painter (Carroll, 2009; Topa-Bryniarska, 2015; Baud, 2003). In this regard, Carroll delineates the role of critics as one of “guidance [...] concerning what is worthy in an artwork” (2009, p. 14), but also of assistance “in comprehending and appreciating the vast amount of work that confronts us” (2009, p. 2). In this regard, criticism echoes its etymological roots — to decide, to separate — helping the consumers to decide what is worth seeing, and therefore discriminating against what is deemed unworthy of attention. In other words, FC persuades or dissuades its recipient from becoming interested in a piece of art.

Research conducted by Dominika Topa-Bryniarska on 40 film criticisms of the French comedy *Intouchables* follows the same line as Carroll's argument that the main function of the FR is to persuade (2015). The author claims that criticism aims to "advise for or against the viewing of the film"⁹ (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3), while explicitly recognising the multi-faceted functions of the TG. She suggests that the primary communicative function of FC (to recommend or discourage) results from the conjunction of the informative and valorising value of the TG (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). Notably, Topa-Bryniarska uses the term "valorising value", likely because of the positive reception of the analysed movie. However, we will prefer the term "argumentative value", which we deem more suitable for encompassing both positive and negative criticism.

In a corpus-based analysis, Pierre Geron investigates FRs and builds the text genre's profile FR using Adam's typology. He thus isolates and defines the invariable features of the analysed FRs in a table (See Appendix 3, p. 93). These invariable features are related to semantics (the belonging to an event family), enunciation (the responsibility of the speaker and their identity), length, pragmatics (the communicative purpose), composition (structure and segments in the text), and style (micro-linguistic level) (Adam, 1997, p. 12). This generic profile aligns with Topa-Bryniarska (2017) and Carroll's (2009) declaration that persuasion and, in the case of negative criticism, dissuasion act as the main pragmatic functions of the FR.

While those two corpus-based studies have been conducted on FC corpora written in French and, therefore, might not fully capture the reality of the TG of FC as orally produced in English-speaking areas, they remain significant for highlighting the TG's main communicative functions, which likely share more commonalities than differences with their English counterparts. Moreover, although this present master's thesis aims to analyse FCPs rather than written or print-based reviews, it is arguable that, despite their differing medium and formats, these two realisations of the TG share common communicative functions.

3.4.2 The argumentative function of the film review as a support for the persuasive function

The argument-based nature of the FR, along with its evaluative nature, is, for Carroll, the distinctive feature of art criticism, distinguishing the TG from other discourses around the arts. Other discourses on art could include, for instance, a description and analysis of the impact of economic considerations on artists' color choices, or an in-depth analysis and description of an artwork (2009). Therefore, the art philosopher defines criticism as an "evaluative discourse supported by reasons" (Carroll, 2009, p. 15). The anchoring of FC in evaluative and argumentative

⁹ Personal translation of "(dé)conseiller de voir le film" (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3)

discourses is regarded here as an indicator of its performance of an argumentative secondary communicative function.

Furthermore, Topa-Bryniarska defends the position that the primary persuasive value of FRs emerges from the interplay of the informative and argumentative functions of the TG. Indeed, the FR is a consumer product designed to influence consumers to reinforce or diminish their views of the artwork being criticised (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017). This persuasion is achieved through arguments that aim to captivate and, eventually, inform the recipient (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017).

Pierre Geron, in his outline of the RF TG, does not consider argumentation to be one of the TG's main communication functions. However, it is noteworthy to highlight that he recognises that argumentative segments do appear in the TG (2018, p. 313).

Nevertheless, the arguments used in FRs differ from a classical exposition of logical facts. Indeed, when analysing the argumentative scope of journalistic FRs, Topa-Bryniarska concludes that the argumentation of the FR aims to impress the reader, and therefore could be labelled as being an “impressive” type of argumentation (2023). Although this process aims to keep recipients captivated, it does not depict a neutral reality and is coloured by judgment (Topa-Bryniarska, 2023). This argumentative function, therefore, works in concert with the persuasive function of the FR to better support it.

3.4.3 The informative function of the film review

Using a corpus of 15 FRs published in British dailies, Dorothée Baud posits that information about the discussed film always appears in FC (Baud, 2003). Indeed, Topa-Bryniarska, when referring to Wolny-Zmorzynski, Kaliszewski, and Furman's (2006) segmentation of FC, considers FC to be constructed around three main discursive acts: the “informative part, analytical-critical part, and evaluative part”¹⁰ (2015, p. 416). In a corpus-based analysis, Geron also observes that informative segments are constant features of the TG's composition (2018).

Since researchers in discourse analysis acknowledge the presence of informative segments in the TG, it can be inferred that the TG of FRs performs an informative secondary macro-function.

¹⁰ Personal translation of: “partie informative, partie analytico-critique et partie évaluative”(Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 416, quoting Wolny-Zmorzynski et al., 2006)

3.4.4 *The multifaceted functions of film reviews*

It could therefore be concluded, using Diamanti's terms, that FC is characterised by its hybridization. The author defends the point of view that:

“this text type epitomises formal and structural hybridity sharing the features of four main genres: (a) opinion journalism, for its subjective stance, persuasive tone, authorial ethos; (b) cultural criticism, for its evaluation of art/media, aesthetic language, genre conventions; (c) editorial/column, for its informal tone, authorial positioning, public commentary; (d) narrative journalism, for its blend of factual structure with personal commentary and rhetorical devices” (Diamanti, 2025, pp. 158 –159)

Therefore, following Simons' (2018) typology, which states that the main communicative macro-functions are persuasive, argumentative, narrative, and informative, FRs appear to primarily perform a persuasive function, resulting in the combination of the informative and argumentative functions.

3.4.5 *A stable but hybrid genre sharing commonalities with the family of advertisement*

The TG of FC presents invariable features. Topa-Bryniarska (2015), in her research on the TG, uses Maingueneau's typology (2007). She classifies the journalistic opinion, which includes that of FC, as being an “established genre of a routine type”¹¹ (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 413). This genre relies on established routines and is characterised by the “stabilization in the form of norms, of constraints related to verbal activities that take place in a specific social situation”¹² (Maingueneau, 2007, p. 30). Other genres grouped under this category include the magazine, the radiophonic interview, or even the doctor's appointment, among others (Maingueneau, 2007). Topa-Bryniarska further refines her classification by assigning FC to the second type of institutionalized modes of genre, which are ruled and structured by socially accepted and context-dependent procedures that organise the discursive parameters of the TG (Maingueneau, 2007).

This subcategory, despite following preestablished social routines, allows for creativity and innovation to emerge (Maingueneau, 2007). In other words, despite the stabilized nature of the TG, its structure, information layout, and linguistic means are subject to change depending on the reviewer (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). Baud notes this freedom in the form and the content of the criticism (2003). FRs can indeed be rich in anecdotes, digressions on subjects unrelated to the

¹¹ Personal translation of: “les genres institués de type routinier” (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 413).

¹² Personal translation of: “stabilisation, sous forme de normes, de contraintes liées à une activité verbale qui s'exerce dans une situation sociale déterminée”(Maingueneau, 2007, p. 30)

review's theme, discussions of actors' private lives, or socio-political or psychological analysis (Baud, 2003). Among the routines invariably found in the FR are the presence of informative segments about the discussed film and a judgment on the discussed artwork (Baud, 2003).

Moreover, Topa-Bryniarska highlights the exclusively persuasive value of FRs, which leads her to conclude that the TG shares similarities with the discursive genre of advertisement, as it aims to “seduce in order to establish the audience as the target and recipient of the discourse”¹³ (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 2)

3.5 The generic structure and linguistic characteristics of film criticism

The various functions of the TG of FR lead Diamanti to conclude that “the film review could be seen as a hybrid text type to be situated within the broader field of opinion journalism and cultural criticism” (2025, pp. 158–159). The functional hybridization of FRs, possessing persuasion among its communicative goals, manifests itself in the realisation of the TG (Baud, 2003).

3.5.1 The structure of the criticism

FC can be segmented into different discursive moments, each endorsing a particular role in the communication act. Carroll considers the criticism to be articulated around “the description, classification, contextualisation, elucidation, interpretation, and analysis of the artworks on the docket” (2009, p. 13).

This structure is condensed into an informative part, followed by an analytical and a critical part, by Topa-Bryniarska, who refers to the work of Wolny-Zmorzynski et al. The recurring main structure of FC is organised around an “informative part focused on the object of discourse, an analytical and critical part, based on the content of discourse, and an evaluative part concerned with the valorisation”¹⁴ (Wolny-Zmorzynski et al., 2006, in Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3). It is important to note here that the term “valorisation”, employed by Topa-Bryniarska, does not include negative criticism in her nomenclature. A more neutral term, such as “argumentative value”, is preferred in the present master's thesis.

Most importantly, Baud isolates the invariable elements of FC in the British press. Her study reveals that film critics always discuss movies that the audience has not yet seen, as FRs are

¹³ Personal translation of “séduire pour instituer le public en cible et destinataire du discours” (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 2).

¹⁴ Personal translation of: “partie informative focalisée sur l'objet de discours, partie analytique et critique, portant sur le contenu du discours et partie évaluative fondée sur la valorisation” (Wolny-Zmorzynski et al., 2006 in Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3)

published on Fridays, which is the day films are released in Great Britain (Baud, 2003). Notably, the FC in our corpus does not always have this feature (see Chapter 5, p. 63). In fact, two out of three of the analysed FCPs criticise movies released before the publication of FC. Another invariant feature observed by Baud in her discourse analysis is that all the criticisms across the different dailies contain the mention of a few actors' or directors' names, the films' genre, and some elements of the storyline, as well as comments made by the journalist (Baud, 2003).

3.5.2 *The lexical features of film criticism*

When discussing the particularities of the vocabulary used in FC, it is important to note that, although the TG includes cinematographic lexical fields, their use is not particularly technical (Baud, 2003). Interestingly, formal and informal registers co-occur in FC (Baud, 2003; Topa-Bryniarska, 2017).

Topa-Bryniarska's corpus-based analysis of the French comedy *Intouchable* reveals that the persuasive function influences the word choice of FRs (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). Before discussing Topa-Bryniarska's studies further in this section, it is worth noting that her studies have been conducted on reviews written in French. Therefore, not all her findings may be relevant to this study. However, other features may be independent of the language spoken. Her findings reveal that valorising presuppositions (expressed with evaluative adjectives, assertive sentences, and adjectives emphasising the critic's message) stage the information in order to convince or dissuade the reader of the value of the analysed artwork (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). In discourse analysis, presuppositions are "statements assumed to be known by the person being addressed"¹⁵ (Noyer, 2013, quoting Krieg-Planque, 2012). Therefore, positive criticisms are stated as general truths that are difficult to contradict and exert a greater persuasive influence on the recipients of the discourse. Such discursive means serve to convince the recipient of the movie's inherent value without making them doubt the truthfulness of any statements.

Furthermore, due to the strong anchoring of FR in emotion's expression and, consequently, its emotive and "impressive" argumentative structure, this TG contains terms that convey emotional value and appreciation (Topa-Bryniarska, 2023). This type of argumentation often conjures up vocabulary associated with enthusiasm and dissuasion.

Another strategy observed by Topa-Bryniarska is the use of lexico-syntactic means to grant universality, unanimity, and importance to the discourse (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). This strategy is

¹⁵ Personal translation of: "proposition supposée connue de celui à qui l'on s'adresse" (Noyer, 2013, quoting Krieg-Planque, 2012).

characterised by the use of generic quantifiers such as “the public”, “the cinematic sphere”, “everybody”¹⁶, alongside statistics, high figures, and generic inclusive pronouns, such as “*on*” and “*nous*”. This strategy erases the identity of the speaker or writer, positioning them as a voice representing public opinion, and resulting in an enunciative erasure of the speaker or writer (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 419).

In a lexicological and structural analysis of the TG, Zheltukhina et al. reveal the FC’s structures and lexical recurrences. This study focuses on a corpus of FRs from *The Esquire* and *The GQ*, two American men’s magazines (*GQ*, n.d.; Granger, 2007). The researchers note that although the word “movie” is American and its synonym “film” is British, both words are used interchangeably by the authors of the American magazine (Zheltukhina et al., 2020). The authors also observe that the lexical field of the FR always includes nouns referring to the genre of the movie (such as action film, comedy, documentary, etc.), hence confirming Baud’s statement that referencing the movie’s genre is an invariable feature (Baud, 2003). Other nouns used refer to the realisation of a movie, as well as to its actors and director, or to more precise or technical aspects inherent to the cinema industry (such as *premiere*, *debut*, *script*, *win an award*, etc.) (Zheltukhina, 2020). When summarising the film plot, the most recurrent nouns are *protagonist*, *twist*, and *flashback* (Zheltukhina, 2020), alongside the lexical items useful in summarising the movie.

Positive and negative adjectives, such as *boring*, *enjoyable*, *compelling*, and *downright silly*, are also densely mobilised in FC, as they enable critics to formulate their judgment (Zheltukhina, 2020). Significantly, the most commonly used evaluative adjectives are extremely basic, such as *good*, *classic*, or *great*. This analysis shows the predominant simplicity ruling over the TG. FC is not the only TG that displays such linguistic simplicity and poverty. Indeed, Renson (2023), when analysing the language functions for expressing opinions in regulated public debates, observes “the lexical poverty of the analysed social framework with regard to the linguistic variety, as opposed to the linguistic diversity often demanded by teachers in foreign languages classrooms”¹⁷ (Renson, 2023, p. 75).

Interestingly, the adjectives used depend on the film’s genre. A drama is, for instance, described as *depressing* or *poignant*, while adjectives such as *hilarious* or *heartly* are generally used in reviews of comedies (Zheltukhina, 2020). Adjectives employed in co-occurrence with the word

¹⁶ Personal translation of “tout le monde”, “la sphère cinématographique” and “le public” (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 419).

¹⁷ Personal translation of “la pauvreté lexicale des pratiques sociales de référence analysées par rapport à la variété linguistique souvent exigée des enseignant.es de LE en classe.” (Renson, 2023, p. 75)

performance — such as *brilliant*, *first-rate* — are used to comment on acting, while the same word is often paired with the verb *to play* (Zheltukhina, 2020). The script could also be described as *banal* or *complex*.

3.5.3 *The grammatical features of film reviews*

The grammatical features of FRs, such as the use of modal verbs and assertive sentences, reveal the main communicative intention of FRs: to persuade or dissuade. Valorising presuppositions (such as assertive sentences and modal verbs) present the information to persuade (or dissuade) the recipient of the analysed artwork's value (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015).

Injunctions (e.g., “You must see this film”) and inclusive collective pronouns (such as “we”) tend to generate closeness between the speaker or the writer and their audience (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 5), which corroborates Zheltukhina et al.'s findings on the recurring presence of modal verbs in FRs (2020). However, it is important to note that verbs expressing opinions are never marked by modality and, therefore, never used with modal verbs (Baud, 2003), but are generally used to strengthen the assertiveness of the arguments (Baud, 2003).

Recurrent grammatical features of FC, such as comparisons and inclusive personal pronouns, serve the argumentative function of the TG. Indeed, FC does not function as an independent discourse, as it inevitably relies on the cinematographic discourse used in the analysed artwork (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). This interdependency manifests through the grammatical means used to criticise the film, such as the “comparison, the allusion and the reported speech”¹⁸ (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). Zheltukhina et al. also observe the recurrence of comparison in FC and note that “[f]ilm reviews usually compare famous actors, directors, as well as popular films” (2020, p. 12). This frequent use of comparisons generally creates the *ethos*¹⁹ of the critics, who present themselves as film experts, drawing on many cinematographic references (Baud, 2003). This expertise enables them to compare many movies using comparative structures (Baud, 2003). This aligns with Topa-Bryniarska's observation that FRs recurrently adopt an associative strategy. This strategy consists of drawing on a presumably shared knowledge of film culture by comparing the work analyses with opposing or similar films, directors, actors, and genre-like movies (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). This strategy aids the addresser of the discourse in asserting their authority in

¹⁸ Personal translation of : “comparaisons, allusions et discours rapporté” (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 417)

¹⁹ The *ethos* is the image that the speaker constructs and shows of himself (Provenzano, 2025, p. 21).

the field under discussion, while constructing their “*ethos* of knowledge”²⁰ and legitimacy (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 421).

Information in FRs is generally given in the present tense. Zheltukhina et al. (2020, p. 12) and Baud (2003) note the use of the present simple to summarise the storyline.

3.5.4 Other resources found in film reviews

Diamanti observes that “journalistic FRs on *The Guardian* website (Note 1) often exhibit high degrees of figurative language, irony, and culture-specific references” (Diamanti, 2025, p. 157). The numerous cultural references, whether to British popular or high culture, used by journalists show their endeavour to present themselves as specialists, but also tend to create a certain complicity with their audience (Baud, 2003).

3.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to present the TG of FC and to list the generic and linguistic invariants observed in research. This chapter has demonstrated that although FC is often seen as declining in print, it is actually central to society thanks to the emergence of Web 2.0, which has democratised criticism and has enabled untrained individuals to publish or broadcast their own FC.

While FC has historically been considered a scholarly analysis adopting either an aesthetic or a political analytical perspective, McWhirter proposes a new classification that encompasses all types of criticism. This classification system delineates FC produced by amateurs (consumer and fandom schools), journalists (populist, trade, and sophisticated), and scholars (academic). Each school of thought has different functions, structures, and assets. These differing functions may affect the linguistic realisation of the different types of FC. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that FC may manifest differently in real-life contexts.

It has been observed that FC persuade or dissuade their recipients of the value of the artwork under discussion. This definition leads us to conclude that the main communicative macro-function of FC is to persuade or to dissuade. This function is realised through the combination of the informative and argumentative values of FC. However, when discussing the macro-functions of FC, we must be aware that these depend on the school of thought of FC.

The FC can be seen as close to the TG family of advertisements because, despite its codified nature, it displays creativity and innovation. The TG is structured around three main discursive

²⁰ Personal translation of: “*ethos de savoir*” (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015, p. 421).

acts: an informative, an analytical-critical, and an evaluative act. In terms of vocabulary, FC uses terms from the film industry. Despite the representation of this cinematographic lexical field, no technical terms are used. The persuasive function of FC influences the words used. Depending on their opinion of the movie, critics conjure up positive or negative evaluative vocabulary, as well as terms related to emotions. Notably, the adjectives used to describe the movies are lexically poor, indicating the greater importance of content over form in real-life contexts. In terms of grammar, modal verbs, the present tense, and comparisons are often used.

The next chapter will first introduce the podcast medium, which is considered a text type through which the TG of FC can be realised. Secondly, it will discuss the advantages of using podcasts in EFL classrooms.

4 Chapter 3: The text type of podcast

4.1 A brief history of podcasting

As radio is regarded either as a direct ancestor or as a sibling (Rime et al., 2022) of P, it is relevant to briefly discuss the medium of radio. Although radio was initially designed as a one-to-many communication medium, it became increasingly individualised and personalised in the 1990s, with listeners increasingly participating in programs (Rime et al., 2022), thanks to the increased organisation of competitions or giveaways, for instance.

In the 2000s, radio lost its appeal as portable media players emerged, which enabled listeners to create tailor-made playlists (Rime et al., 2022) and thus to break away from radio's linearity (Rixon, 2018). In other words, consumers could now listen to audio content without being subject to a fixed schedule. "Such developments have allowed the ending of the 'tyranny' of the schedule, allowing the listener to download and to listen to radio programmes and services as desired" (Rixon, 2018, p. 189). This new competition for radio allowed anyone to broadcast their content without being bound by the logistical constraints of traditional broadcasting — such as airtime or equipment — and led to the development of more radio stations (Rixon, 2018).

People eager to access information and entertainment at any time thus turned to Ps, which combined the "companionship" of radio with the portability of portable digital media players (Rime et al., 2022, p. 1264). This evolution raised questions regarding the relationship between radio and Ps. It was difficult to determine "whether a new aural medium was appearing, or whether radio was, yet again, evolving in relation to new technologies and changes within its environment

as it had at different moments over the past hundred years” (Rixon, 2018, p. 165). Moreover, Berry (2025) highlights that the main distinction between radio and Ps is most likely their different modes of consumption. Indeed, “we consume them differently and they operate in a different space” (Berry, 2025).

Initially, Ps were called “audioblogs” and allowed content creators to air their programs independently of broadcasting institutions by uploading their audio recordings to their blogs and websites (Geoghegan & Klass, 2005). This practice gained ground in 2003 (Geoghegan & Klass, 2005) and quickly expanded, so that the term “podcast” became Word of the Year in 2005 (Rime et al., 2022). However, until 2003, Ps were still regarded as an Internet-aficionado’s hype. In 2005, Apple facilitated the consumption of Ps by enabling their download via iTunes (Berry, 2015), thereby reinforcing the medium’s popularity.

In the article *A Golden Age of Podcasting? Evaluating Serial in the Context of Podcast Histories*, Richard Berry argues that the P *Serial* triggered the worldwide adoption of the medium (2015). In 2014, roughly ten years after the emergence of podcasting, the true crime P introduced seriality into the podcasting’s DNA (Berry, 2015). The success of the P can, on the one hand, be ascribed to its theme — as murder mysteries spark the curiosity of the masses — and on the other hand, to the narrative with which “the audience could engage [...] intellectually and emotionally” (Berry, 2015, p. 5). This success was facilitated by the context in which the P is situated, as the evolution of “technologies, brands, social sharing and engaging content all play[ed] a part” (Berry, 2015, p. 6).

Ps, which were initially seen as a competition to radio, gradually emancipated themselves from the traditional medium to “settle down into a pattern of steady growth of niche content and on-demand listening” (Berry, 2015, p. 6). Today, Ps can even offer opportunities to the medium they once seemed to threaten. Indeed, radio stations can develop their own Ps, as the station that created *Serial* did (Berry, 2015).

The main point of divergence between radio and Ps is the control listeners and producers have over the medium. While listeners have the liberty to choose the content they want to hear at the most convenient time, producers are given the opportunity to “explore topics, formats, durations and approaches” (Berry, 2015, p. 7), which are hardly applicable to radio. This enables Ps to act as a complement to their predecessor rather than a competitor. Moreover, another characteristic of podcasting is the equal footing on which amateurs and professionals stand²¹ (Berry, 2015). In other

²¹ Notably, radio was not always restricted to professional circles. Amateurs also broadcasted. In this sense, radio was considered a hobby (Skretvedt & Sterling, 2025).

words, the quality of the content is not necessarily determined by the professional status of the content creator, and some amateur Ps are so well produced that they can rival professional Ps.

4.2 Definition of podcasting

Over the past two decades, the definition and use of Ps have evolved significantly. In 2005, Ps were defined as “audio content available on the Internet that can be automatically delivered to your computer or MP3 player” (Geoghegan & Klass, 2005, p. 5). However, as MP3s are nowadays seen more as vintage objects than as daily Ps providers, this definition has become obsolete and evolved alongside the rapid development of the medium.

In an article entitled “What is a podcast? Considering innovations in podcasting through the six-tensions framework”, Rime et al. (2022) attempt to define Ps and highlight the “grey area” surrounding their definition. The researchers argue that “drawing a definite line separating one piece of audio content from another” remains a significant challenge (Rime et al., 2022), thereby joining Berry (2019) in his assumption that no consensual definition has yet been established. Moreover, the vagueness of most dictionaries’ definitions of the term “podcast” limits podcasting to portable audio data and thus fails to draw a clear line between audiobooks and Ps (Rime et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, some characteristic features can be isolated to define podcasting. Rime et al. delineate these by identifying features that have remained constant since the inception of podcasting (Rime et al., 2022). Among these features is the medium’s accessibility, which allows it to be listened to anywhere. This is commonly referred to as “time-shifting” or “placeshifting” and refers to the possibility of rewinding and replaying the content (Rime et al., 2022). These invariable defining features of podcasting correspond to the medium’s characteristics — portability, continuous accessibility, automaticity, and ease of control — as enumerated by Geoghegan & Klass (2005, pp. 5-7).

Rime et al. (2022) define podcasting through the prism of underlying tensions. The authors pinpoint these 6 tensions as being:

1. **Personalisation and automation** — This tension highlights that, although listeners have control over what they listen to, algorithms are responsible for delivering “the chosen content and maintaining the listener’s attention and auditorship” (Rime et al., 2022, p. 1264).

2. **Independent and mainstream production** — this tension epitomises the paradox of podcasting: while aiming to give voice to any storyteller, it is also widely used by major producers such as the BBC or Spotify (Rime et al., 2022).
3. **Unique and universal content** — This tension is characterised by the numerous genres and subgenres in podcasting, such as *comedy*, *society and culture*, *true crime*, *news*, and *sports* (Edison Research, 2024). A similar diversity of genres can be found on TV or radio, which thus explains the popularity of Ps, as they offer listeners a “unique experience, with a universality of content” (Rime et al., 2022, p. 1267).
4. **Current audience and possible demographic** — This tension highlights the “global nature” (Rime et al., 2022, p. 1268) of Ps, characterised by the absence of geographic limitations to their diffusion, and the upsurge in technology ownership indispensable for consuming Ps. However accessible, Ps remain mainly consumed by elites, thereby raising questions about their apparent democratisation (Rime et al., 2022).
5. **Immersion and Interactivity** — In this tension, immersion refers to the possibility “to immerse oneself in an acoustic environment” through the use of technology (thanks to headphones, for example) or through relatable content (Rime et al., 2022, p. 1272). Interactivity is defined as the series of decisions listeners must make to find their selected P (Rime et al., 2022). Although the author presents these features as a tension, they do not stand in such a sharp opposition. However, they are crucial to defining Ps.
6. **Art and Technology** — This tension alludes to the essential interconnection between creativity (art) and innovation (technology) needed to create and diffuse Ps (Rime et al., 2022). As with the dichotomy established between immersion and interactivity, the two terms here do not represent a clear opposition. However, the author’s established opposition has been kept.

Taking these features into consideration, while adding essential technical features of podcasting, Rime et al. (2022) elaborate the following definition of podcasting:

“A podcast is a piece of episodic, downloadable or streamable, primarily spoken audio content, distributed via the internet, playable anywhere, at any time, produced by anyone who so wishes” (p. 1270).

This definition could be expanded upon by noting that Ps can focus on a particular theme, audience, or genre.

Ps can manifest in multiple formats, such as interviews, monologues, repurposed media²², panel discussions, fictional storytelling, non-fictional storytelling, etc. (Rime et al., 2022; Berry, 2020). In a blog post entitled *There are just 3 types of podcasts*, Berry (2020) classifies these various formats following a typology delineating three categories, namely, “conversations”, “narratives” and “creations”. Conversational Ps are characterised by their prepared or improvised dialogues. By contrast, the narrated structure is an invariably planned and structured monologue. Berry did not define the “creation” P in his blog post. It could be a term referring to all formats of Ps that do not fall into the categories of “conversations” or “narratives”.

In another blog post titled *Mapping Podcasts*, Richard Berry clarifies the definition of a P, while highlighting that, in the case of Ps, “the medium is the message” (2019, quoting McLuhan, 1964). Therefore, “podcasting is a platform, rather than a medium that can retain key characteristics when divorced from the system that delivered the content to us [the listeners]”²³ (Berry, 2019). In the present master’s thesis, to avoid delving into debates in the field of media studies, Ps are considered a medium, as they are the material means through which the content can be accessed (see Chapter 1, Section 2.5). This lexical and classification choice is based on Richard Berry’s (2023) attempt “to map out how podcasting can be defined as a medium”, while keeping in mind that he “do[es]n’t think this is definitive”.

Moreover, Berry (2019) lists other characteristics of podcasting, such as intimacy, innovation, informality, independence and (dis)intermediation. Ps can be an intimate undertaking, as listeners select one of their favourite topics and listen to it at a convenient moment. This intimacy arises from the medium’s informality. This informality of Ps is nurtured by the possibility of independence from press institutions, which allows storytellers to directly address their audience (Berry, 2019) and use the language of their choosing. Although Ps can be independent of press institutions, it is important to note that some are produced by them. In this case, independence is possible, but not required. Furthermore, Berry emphasises that the absence of a definition benefits podcasters, as it offers them the freedom to innovate. He adds that giving podcasting a fixed definition could “fix them [the P’s producers] in one place” (Berry, 2019).

²² An example of this category is *The Screener* (Rime et. al., 2022). This podcast remixes various news content to create a new story (BBC, 2025b).

²³ Here, medium is understood as “a channel or system of communication, information, or entertainment” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2025a), whereas a platform is regarded as “an application or website that serves as a base from which a service is provided” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2025b).

4.3 Podcasts used as pedagogical tools in English Foreign Language classrooms

Following the rapid rise of its popularity, Ps have exceeded the boundaries of media studies and reached the field of education, thus bringing with them assets such as creativity (Bozavlı, 2024), accessibility, ease of consumption and production, as well as diversity of formats, durations, and themes into classroom practice. Far from merely introducing new technology in EFL classrooms, Ps can also constitute “an innovative method for effective learning” (Bozavlı, 2024). In EFL classrooms, Ps are mainly used to enhance students’ listening skills (Rmelah et al., 2023). Nevertheless, this skill is not developed in isolation, as it also engages students’ vocabulary and pronunciation skills (Rmelah et al., 2023).

Listening to Ps in EFL classrooms aligns with the comprehension-based approach to language learning termed “Just listen... and read” by Lightbown & Spada (2017) in *How Languages are Learned*. This approach is based on Krashen’s comprehensible input hypothesis, which formulates that “acquisition occurs when one is exposed to language that is comprehensible and contains $i + 1$ ” (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 106). In other words, it is believed that students learn a language more efficiently when they receive linguistic input that is one level above their own. This assumption must be nuanced, as it implies that the training of receptive skills alone is sufficient for effective language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 165). However, while exposure to comprehensible input proves effective during the first steps of language acquisition, it needs to be complemented by teaching activities, for correct language structures to be properly acquired (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 165). Therefore, exposure to comprehensible input should be supported by activities requiring students’ active listening (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 165), such as exercises on new vocabulary and grammatical items. Indeed, research demonstrates that raising language learners’ awareness of the new linguistic forms encountered in receptive exercises increases the likelihood that learners will internalise these forms in their second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 165, quoting VanPatten, 2004). Therefore, it is possible to argue that knowledge presented in comprehensible input should be complemented with explicit teaching to raise students’ awareness of the structures being taught and maximise their chances of effective memorisation.

In their research on university students’ perceptions of Ps, Herdawan et al. argue that listening to Ps in EFL classrooms aligns with Krashen’s Input Hypotheses. Indeed, Ps allow students to be exposed to authentic, comprehensible input, fostering improvement in their vocabulary, fluency, and listening comprehension (Hendrawan et al., 2025). Nevertheless, given the limitations of the comprehension-based approach previously mentioned, it is crucial to strengthen listening activities

by explicitly teaching of the new linguistic forms to help students adopt these structures efficiently. Moreover, the Ps' level should not exceed one level above that of the students to whom the listening activities are intended. This consideration is challenging given that not all students have the same level of proficiency.

Before examining Hendrawan et al.'s (2025) research in more detail, we feel the need to clarify that the students surveyed were, on the one hand, university students, and, on the other hand, selected for their pre-existing familiarity with P listening. All the surveyed students listened to Ps outside of EFL teaching activities. We thus acknowledge that this population does not correspond to the target population of the present master's thesis. However, few studies on Ps listening in EFL settings have been conducted on secondary school students. Moreover, the surveyed students' responses are not contradicted by students who are not enthusiastic about listening to P. This could generate a selection bias. Thus, this data should be considered with caution.

In research individually interviewing “ten students from the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur” (Hendrawan et al., 2025, p. 459), Hendrawan et al. (2025) report the perceived positive impact of Ps on the linguistic skills of the surveyed university students (see Appendix 4, p. 94). Students report that their P consumption improves their listening and speaking skills, and enriches their vocabulary (Hendrawan et al., 2025). Regarding vocabulary acquisition, university students report that P listening enriches their linguistic input and exposes them to new vocabulary and idiomatic constructions, thereby facilitating the understanding of these new structures (Hendrawan et al., 2025). Moreover, students report increased confidence in their speaking abilities, as listening to Ps allows them to imitate the pronunciation and expressions uttered in the P (Hendrawan et al., 2025).

Another study, conducted on 27 school 10th-grade pupils at a Turkish school (approximately 14 or 15 years old, and thus at a secondary level), reaches similar conclusions (Bozavlı, 2024). This research confirms through experimentation the perceptions of the university students. An experience providing students with 40 minutes of EFL lessons twice a week for 12 weeks shows an enhancement of pupils' ability to understand Ps between the pretest and the posttest (Bozavlı, 2024). These results lead the researcher to conclude that intensive listening “improves high school English students' language comprehension competence” (Bozavlı, 2024, p. 319). However, these gains in listening comprehension do not seem to be retained over time. One month after the intensive P listening training, students undergo a posttest (Bozavlı, 2024). This second assessment proves less successful than the one administered directly after the intensive P listening sessions, leading the researchers to conclude that the gains from intensive P listening were only partially

retained and that none of the participants listened to Ps autonomously, which would have been necessary to retain their gains in listening comprehension (Bozavlı, 2024).

While these results are convincing, it is important to keep in mind that they were reached after 12 weeks of teaching with 40-minute lessons twice a week. Therefore, such exposure and the practice of intensive podcasting itself might be difficult to implement in the WBF educational system. Indeed, with 4 50-minute teaching periods per week, this ratio would mean devoting half of the allocated teaching time to listening, thereby unfairly neglecting the other four competences. Moreover, Bozavlı (2024) states that Ps from the “BBC Learning English Podcast” were used, but omits to explain how. Based on a rapid analysis of one worksheet accompanying a P of the “BBC Learning English Podcast”, it has been observed that this worksheet contains comprehension and vocabulary questions that check the student’s comprehension of the content and invite them to actively employ the new vocabulary and structures (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2025a). Therefore, it could be assumed, but not confirmed, that these results were attained not only through listening to the content, but also through explicit vocabulary and comprehension training aiming to draw students’ attention to new language structures, as advocated in *How Languages are Learned* (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 165, quoting VanPatten, 2004).

Therefore, using FCPs in EFL settings could benefit secondary students by providing authentic input, improving their listening skills, enriching their vocabulary, and enhancing their pronunciation. For these positive results to be achieved, the authentic input should not exceed one level above the students’ proficiency level. In the secondary schools of the WBF, the expected proficiency level in listening does not exceed B1, with communicative intentions such as informing (oneself), (making somebody) act, or understanding opinions and feelings (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017a). Therefore, Ps used as teaching material should not exceed a B2 level.

Attention to the input level and alignment with the official reference frameworks and curricula (discussed in Section 5.2) should be accompanied by appropriate teaching activities that complement the listening task. The purpose of these teaching activities, as previously mentioned, is to assess secondary students’ understanding and to help them understand and use the new linguistic structures. Training pronunciation, however, may prove somewhat challenging in EFL classrooms. However, this will not be addressed in the present master’s thesis.

To adhere to the Belgian official curricula of the WBF, these teaching activities should follow four strategies: to frame, to formulate hypotheses, to check hypotheses, and to revise hypotheses (FWB 2017a; FWB, 2017b). The “framing” strategy involves asking students to predict the content

or lexical items of the listening exercise based on information available before they hear the content, such as the title, subtitle, pictures, or other visual cues (FWB, 2017a; FWB, 2017b). When using FCPs, teachers could ask students to predict the host's opinion based on the film's title or the types of lexical items used. The next strategy entails formulating hypotheses based on sound, prosodic, or non-lexical cues and identifying keywords based on students' existing knowledge (FWB, 2017a; FWB, 2017b). After listening to a FCP, teachers could ask students to describe the speaker's tone and whether they heard any laughter or harsh opposition in the speaker's voice. Teachers could also ask students whether they heard a word repeated and ask them to deduce its meaning based on the context. The next strategy aims "to verify the hypotheses". This involves comparing the hypotheses with the content of the listening exercise, identifying the information presented, and checking its logic (FWB, 2017a; FWB, 2017b). This means understanding the content and checking students' understanding by asking them questions. This could be realised by asking students questions such as "Does the host like the presented film?" or "What arguments does he present against or for the viewing of the film?". The final strategy is to revise the hypotheses and, therefore, verify them by comparing them with the context elucidated in the previous step.

Hendrawan et al.'s investigation of the advantages of using Ps in EFL classrooms at university level reveals that not all positive impacts of using new technologies to complement didactic activities can be transferred to secondary school education. Indeed, when the authors state that "[d]igital tools such as podcasts offer learners autonomy, flexibility, and access to authentic language input, enabling them to study beyond the limits of traditional classrooms" (Hendrawan et al., 2025, p. 459), they posit that Ps can be used at university level to learn beyond the campus' boundaries. Such use in WBF's secondary schools may not be relevant. While the autonomy of secondary students is gradually fostered during compulsory education (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017), the independently completed work at home is not expected to replace classroom teaching activities. The autonomy expected of them is, at the end of didactic activities, to correctly apply knowledge without teachers' guidance (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017). However, the French-speaking Belgian referential prescribes that:

"More than ever, the succession and progression of learning, as well as the students' autonomy throughout the school curriculum, lie at the heart of the new reference frameworks. The targeted skills, the resources to be implemented, and the underlying thematic fields are organised in a resolutely spiral manner thanks to the amplification and variation of different

parameters, such as the length of supports and productions, the choice of themes, the lexical and syntactic richness, the complexity of the task, and the level of students' autonomy.”²⁴

Therefore, Ps could be used to foster autonomy in EFL classrooms, as the WBF promotes the development of this skill. Nevertheless, this autonomy should not be expected to replace in-school teaching sessions. The length, complexity, thematic focus, and linguistic richness of the P used as didactic materials could therefore be gradually increased to promote students' autonomy. Another way to promote students' autonomy could be through the organisation of self-access learning activities, during which students could choose the level and themes of their listening exercises.

Self-access learning activities are “another way of organising the class and its activities”²⁵ (Simons, 2025b, p. 9) that allows students to work at their own pace. This method grants students access to various listening and reading exercises that they can choose based on their proficiency level (Simons, 2025b, p.9). Once they have completed an exercise, students are given the solutions sheet (Simons, 2025b, p. 9). This approach to organising pedagogical activities requires the “reading/listening sheets to provide information on the lexical field targeted by the reading or listening exercise, as well as on the level of difficulty of the document”²⁶ (Simons, 2025b, p. 9). This method can increase the level of comprehensible input presented to students, foster their autonomy, and enable them to work at their own pace (Simons, 2025b, p. 10). Within a teaching sequence on FCPs, one of the four EFL teaching periods could be dedicated to self-access learning activities. Students would be granted access to FCPs of different proficiency levels and could listen to the P as many times as needed. FCPs could be approached in a progression from versions more pedagogically adapted to those less adapted. Furthermore, scripts of FCPs could be presented first so students can be introduced to the structure and lexical challenges of the TG. The difficulty could then be increased by presenting students with listening exercises that are more pedagogically adapted for lower proficiency levels and more authentic for higher proficiency levels.

Therefore, while advantages such as the exposure to authentic input are relevant to the target audience of this master's thesis, benefits such as extending didactic activities beyond the classroom and fostering autonomy and flexibility should be reorganised and adapted to the expectations of

²⁴ Personal translation of: “Plus que jamais, l'enchaînement et la progression des apprentissages, tout comme l'autonomisation de l'élève au fil du cursus scolaire sont au cœur des nouveaux référentiels. Les compétences visées, les ressources à installer et les champs thématiques sur lesquels elles s'appuient s'articulent de manière résolument spiralaire grâce à l'amplification et la variation progressives de différents paramètres : longueur des supports et des productions, choix des thèmes, richesse lexicale et syntaxique, complexité de la tâche, degré d'autonomie de l'élève. ”

²⁵ Personal translation of “un autre mode d'organisation de la classe et des activités”(Simons, 2025b, p. 9)

²⁶ Personal translation of “fiches de lecture/audition fournissent des informations sur le champ lexical ciblé par la CA/CL ainsi que sur le niveau de difficulté du document.” (Simons, 2025b, p. 9)

this stage of education. It is therefore noteworthy that Bozavlı (2024), in his research on students aged 14 to 15, also concludes that Ps can increase learners' autonomy in the teaching process.

The use of new technologies in EFL classrooms could increase students' motivation toward the taught material. Bozavlı (2024), Herda et al. (2023), and Hendrawan et al. (2025) research the effects of listening to Ps have on students' motivation, and all conclude that this activity has a positive impact on students' motivation. Before presenting the results of these three studies, it is relevant to outline the factors influencing students' motivation in school. According to Viau (2000, p. 5), "many researchers locate the sources of motivation in students' self-perceptions and their lived experiences. Therefore, motivation is a phenomenon that is intrinsic to students, but that largely depends on their teaching environment"²⁷. Viau (2000) argues that these perceptions are projected onto the value attributed to the learning task, students' perceived control over it, and their perceived competence in successfully completing it. In other words, students' perceptions of a task, their degree of choice regarding it, and their self-perceptions can positively or negatively affect their motivation to complete it. More precisely, to demonstrate motivation when confronted with a task, students must be able to attribute meaning to it, whether through their subjective interest in a theme or through the alignment of the learning activity with their personal goals (Viau, 2000). The task must inherently be perceived by students as challenging and authentic, so that students can imagine transferring this knowledge into real-world contexts — "such as a poster, a video, a performance"²⁸ (Viau, 2000, p. 7). Moreover, allowing students to make choices and providing them with clear instructions and goals increases their motivation (Viau, 2000).

As teachers can foster students' motivation through the course content, its alignment with students' age and interests, its challenging but accessible level of difficulty, and the creation of a supportive learning environment (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 88; Viau, 2000), the use of FCPs might be of some interest in EFL classrooms. Indeed, the wide variety of Ps enables teachers to choose a particularly popular movie of this generation, thereby fostering the interest of the majority, or to choose a topic that raises students' motivation. The same diversity of Ps found online could ensure that teachers find an appropriate P for their students' level. It is worth noting that, as FCPs are mainly aimed at native speakers, finding one at an A2 level may be challenging. However, Ps adapted to B1 and B2 levels can be found or modified for students thanks to new technological options. On Spotify, for instance, it is now possible to access Ps' transcripts or to

²⁷ Personal translation of: "bon nombre de chercheurs contemporains situent les sources de la motivation dans les perceptions qu'un élève a de lui-même et des expériences qu'il vit. La motivation est donc un phénomène intrinsèque à l'élève, mais qui dépend en grande partie du milieu dans lequel il apprend" (Viau, 2000, p. 5).

²⁸ Personal translation of: "comme une affiche, une vidéo, un spectacle"(Viau, 2000, p. 7).

slow down the pace of speech. These tools may prove valuable for adapting the content to students' needs, and ensuring that it is both challenging and accessible. Moreover, some Ps are already adapted for teaching purposes, such as the "BBC Learning English Podcasts" or the "British Council Podcasts". The British Council (2019) even offers a B2-level listening exercise called "Film review", accompanied by worksheets for training comprehension and vocabulary.

In alignment with the assumption that Ps foster students' motivation, Bozavlı's analysis reveals that the majority of the high school pupils surveyed believed that Ps could increase their mastery of English (74%), and that they "enjoy listening to podcasts" (81.4%) (Bozavlı, 2024, p. 320), are entertained when doing so (66.7%) and are helped (74%) by listening to Ps in English. These findings reveal that Ps, when appropriately chosen, can foster students' motivation through their content, alignment with students' age and interests, challenging yet accessible level of difficulty, and ability to create a helpful atmosphere (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 88). Most participants also displayed a positive attitude toward Ps used as pedagogical tools in EFL settings. Indeed, "88.8% of the participants believe podcasts will improve their English listening proficiency" (Bozavlı, 2024, p. 321). In the same study, the interviewees report that their motivation for listening to Ps depends on their length and theme (Bozavlı, 2024). This once again confirms that students are motivated when the content corresponds to their age and interests. Since films are part of popular culture, FCPs could foster students' interest when chosen with their preferences in mind. However, these interests should not be the sole decisive factor when selecting a FCP intended as a listening exercise. Indeed, they must remain an opportunity to open doors to the culture of the target language, as well as to the multiple skills developed in EFL classrooms.

Moreover, Ps can decrease students' anxiety about speaking (Bozavlı, 2024). This is noteworthy because Krashen's "Monitor Model", beyond formulating the previously defined comprehensible input hypothesis, also posits the "affective filter" hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, being exposed to a large amount of comprehensible input, situated one level above the student's level, does not guarantee the effective acquisition of a foreign language. In fact, anxiety or boredom could cause an inefficient reception of the input, despite its appropriate level (Lightbown & Spada, 2017, p. 106). Therefore, engaging themes, enjoyment while listening, and a decrease in students' anxiety are positive indicators that Ps can support effective reception of comprehensible input by alleviating the affective filter.

University students surveyed in Hendrawan et al.'s research also note increased engagement when listening to P, as they enjoy the activity and experience no stress while doing so. This absence of stress impacts their motivation, as they perceive reduced anxiety compared with attending

classes, coupled with a greater sense of autonomy, as they are not forced to listen and could choose the episodes they want to listen to (Hendrawan et al., 2025). They also report increased flexibility in their learning, as Ps allow them to listen to content while commuting or relaxing (see Appendix 4, p. 94, and Appendix 5, p. 94). It is important to note that these conclusions concern students deliberately listening to P in their free time. Therefore, such results may not be replicated in EFL classrooms, unless secondary students choose to listen to Ps outside of class. Indeed, asking students to listen to Ps as homework could remove students' perceived control over the task and, consequently, undermine their motivation. One solution to this obstacle could be to ask them to select a P of their choice and to write regular reviews on it. For this solution to be satisfactory, the level must be accessible yet challenging. Another solution to overcome this difficulty could, once again, be to organise self-access learning sessions.

Far from merely highlighting the benefits of P listening, it is worth noting that this practice can also pose challenges. Native accents and fast paces of delivery could prove demanding for listeners. Furthermore, P listening does not provide any interaction or feedback, and therefore prevents students from “ask[ing] questions or clarify[ing] meaning” (Hendrawan et al., 2025, p. 461). Lastly, interviewees acknowledge the limitations of P listening, as the practiced skills are restricted to listening and speaking, thereby leaving grammar and writing aside. The students report that, “while podcasts serve as effective supplementary tools, their maximum benefit is achieved when combined with structured classroom guidance or follow-up activities” (Hendrawan et al., 2025, p. 461). Therefore, Ps are generally regarded as a promising foundation for instruction, which should be complemented with structured in-class learning activities. These difficulties might be alleviated by complementing listening tasks with exercises designed to clarify meaning and train new linguistic structures during EFL classes.

4.4 Conclusion

This third chapter has aimed to provide readers with a brief history of podcasting, to define it, to clarify the pedagogical advantages and disadvantages of listening to Ps in EFL classrooms, and, more specifically, of using FC podcasts in EFL settings. Podcasting has therefore been presented in relation to its affiliated media — the radio — which it initially threatened, before gradually presenting itself as an opportunity to widen the media offerings of some radio stations. However, Ps still distinguish themselves from radio through their accessibility, thus releasing listeners from the “tyranny of schedules” of radio stations, as well as through their ease of control and production.

The definitional issues surrounding Ps and their rapid evolution have also been discussed. This technology evolves so quickly that its definition remains debated and mutable today. However, Rime et al. (2022) aim to define Ps based on the six persistent tensions that have characterised Ps since their inception. This definition describes P as audio content produced by anyone and consumed at any time, thereby highlighting the medium's accessibility, ease of control, and ease of production.

The multiple formats of Ps — interviews, conversations, monologues, among others — have also been listed and grouped according to Berry's (2020) typology, which classifies them into three categories: conversational, monological, and creations.

Based on these definitional elements, as well as on the absence of a clear definition of podcasting, we choose to qualify P as a “medium” or “IT”. Even though we acknowledge the debate over the nature of podcasting, researchers converge on the hypothesis that Ps can be considered a medium, whether through their materiality or their way of making content accessible to a wider audience.

These brief historical and definitional elements have been followed by a section listing the didactic ways that podcasting could be used and the reasons to do so. It has been shown that Ps can enable teachers to develop innovative teaching materials or approaches and to train students' listening and speaking skills, as well as vocabulary and pronunciation. Indeed, it has been proven that the use of Ps in classrooms aligns with Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis, which encourages teachers to expose their students to input one level above their own. However, it has been demonstrated that merely listening to audio content is insufficient and should be complemented by exercises that focus students' attention on the new linguistic structures. These exercises aim to support the memorisation and assimilation of this new knowledge.

This theory supports the hypothesis of the present master's thesis that listening to FCPs in EFL classrooms could increase students' exposure to authentic input. Therefore, provided the materials are comprehensible and complemented by exercises, listening to Ps could positively impact students' linguistic, listening, and speaking skills. However, the audio content should probably be adapted — slowed down or accompanied by a script — to keep the input comprehensible for students. Moreover, FCPs should be introduced adequately to equip students with the necessary knowledge and vocabulary before the listening exercise.

Regarding the positive impact of listening to Ps on students' motivation, it has been shown that motivation depends on students' perceptions of themselves, the tasks, and their control over the tasks. It is therefore important for students to understand the meaning of the tasks and to recognise their potential for transposition into real-world contexts. It is also crucial for students to clearly see what is expected of them and to be given choices in the activity. This aims to increase students' perceived control over the task and to create a predictable, stimulating learning environment.

In this regard, it has been argued that listening to FCPs could be an opportunity to find topics appropriate for students' age, level, and interests. It has been claimed that FCPs used as teaching materials could reflect students' preferences, while also providing an opportunity to build bridges between English-speaking culture and the EFL course.

Furthermore, listening to P has been shown to be effective in reducing students' anxiety about their speaking abilities. This reduced anxiety allows the affective filter, another of Krashen's hypotheses, to be alleviated. This thus allows students to efficiently receive the comprehensible input. However, it is important to keep in mind that the Ps' difficulty could also negatively affect this affective filter, preventing the ideal reception of the comprehensible input.

Accents, fast delivery paces, and the absence of feedback could be challenging when listening to Ps. Another disadvantage of the medium is its limited focus on listening and speaking skills. These challenges, more than ever, confirm the need for FCPs listening to be complemented by structured lessons that guide students in understanding the content and mobilising new linguistic structures, as well as in training other macro-competences related to the listening activity.

The next chapter focuses, in the first section, on the explanation of the actualisation of FCPs in real-world contexts, and is followed, in the second section, by an analysis of French-speaking Belgian official reference frameworks and curricula to determine the place given to the use of FCPs in the school system of the WBF.

5 Chapter 4: The actualisation of film criticism podcasts in real-life contexts and their appearance in the reference frameworks and curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

5.1 The actualisation of film criticism podcasts in real-life contexts

In his book entitled *Film Criticism and Digital Cultures: Journalism, Social Media and the Democratisation of Opinion*, McWhirter delineates the nature of contemporary FCPs. He concludes that, even though FCPs can take a wide variety of forms, the most successful FCPs often share radio-like structures, thereby highlighting the still-visible link between FCPs and broadcast FC (McWhirter, 2016, p. 178).

At the same time, while some Ps take highly conversational and less-structured forms, thus resembling spontaneous discussions, FCPs predominantly imitate radio reviews by injecting journalistic formats into their structures, such as reviews, interviews, and contests, among others (McWhirter, 2016, p. 178). While some FCPs are created to diversify the media offering of an already existing written media (McWhirter, 2016, p. 180), such as the *Empire Film Podcast*, which aligns with the editorial line of the pre-existing and eponymous magazine, others benefit from the freedom offered by online media and specialize in one theme (McWhirter, 2016, p. 180). Examples include *Book vs. Movie*, which discusses screen adaptations of books, and *Our Film Fathers*, which analyses the theme of fatherhood in movies. The FC schools of thought in McWhirter's typology are as diverse as the wide variety of forms a P can take (2016, p.179).

The main difference between radio and Ps is accessibility. Provided that there is an Internet connection, it is possible to listen to Ps anywhere (McWhirter, 2016, p. 179). Moreover, Ps characterise themselves not only by their accessibility of consumption, but also by their ease of production. With very few resources, it is possible to produce a P (McWhirter, 2016, p. 179). This ease of production could be advantageous in EFL classrooms. Teachers could not only use Ps for receptive tasks, but also expect their students to produce one. This would foster motivation by anchoring teaching activities in social practices.

In terms of production, Ps do not necessarily rely on written text, as Sam Clements, the founder of *The Picture House Podcast*, shares. Indeed, he started podcasting to free himself from written constraints and to accelerate his writing process, as it helps him find his words more easily and disregard grammar and syntax (McWhirter, 2016, p. 179). Therefore, unlike the initial assumption about the medium at the beginning of this master's thesis, namely that Ps rely on written text, Ps are not necessarily completely written before being recorded. Therefore, if students were asked to produce a P as the final task of a pedagogical activity, it could be based on bullet points, rather than

on fully written scripts. Although Ps are used by some podcasters to disregard grammar and syntax, it should be noted that producing a P in class would not entail a lowering of expectations for students' spoken-language standards.

Moreover, radio and Ps share a salient characteristic: their polyphonic aspect. Both media often offer a “collaborative discussion on the artwork in question” (McWhirter, 2016). Broadcast and podcast-based FC rarely follow monological formats (McWhirter, 2016, p. 180).

5.2 The place attributed to the text genre of film criticism and the text type of podcast in the official reference frameworks and in the curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

To identify the presence of the TG of FC in the official curricula of the WBF, the word “*critique*” was searched across the documents that constitute the French-speaking curricula. Notably, when the TG of FC is mentioned, the broader family of the TG, “criticism”, is generally mentioned first and followed by a parenthetical listing of examples of TGs belonging to this family, including FC. The only references to FC and Ps retained in this analysis are those explicitly referring, on the one hand, to FC used as didactic tools (as listening exercises or productive final tasks, for instance), and, on the other hand, to the place given to the utilisation of Ps in didactic activities.

To broaden our analysis, we searched for the words “technology” and “film” in the same documents.

To enhance the readability of this analysis, the reference frameworks and curricula have been given names to explicitly state their relation to a network and field of education. This decision was made because the documents have similar names. Specifying the network — Catholic or WBE — and the field of education — general or professional and technical secondary — has been seen as a way to enhance the readability of our analysis. These names and their corresponding abbreviations are listed below:

Original names of the documents	Name given in the present master's thesis
<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques</i> (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles ²⁹ , 2017a)	The reference framework (for modern languages) in general secondary education. (hereafter referred to as RF-GS)
<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques.</i> (FWB, 2017b)	The reference framework for modern languages in professional and technical secondary education. (hereafter referred to as RF-PTS)
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités générales et technologiques — 2^e et 3^e degrés.</i> (Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement ³⁰ , 2020a).	The WBE program (for foreign language teaching) in general secondary education (hereafter referred to as WBE-GS)
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités professionnelles et techniques — 2^e et 3^e degrés.</i> (WBE, 2020b)	The WBE program for foreign language teaching in professional and technical secondary education (hereafter referred to as WBE-PTS)
<i>Programme Langues modernes — Formation générale et commune — 2^e et 3^e degrés professionnel et technique de qualification</i> (FESeC, 2017b)	The Catholic program for foreign language teaching in general secondary education (C-GS)
<i>Programme Langues modernes I, II, III — 2^e et 3^e degrés — Humanités générales et technologiques.</i> (FESeC, 2017a)	The Catholic program for foreign language teaching in professional and technical secondary education (C-PTS)

Furthermore, to guide the reader, we maintained a coherent order in our analysis. Therefore, the reference framework, the WBE, and the Catholic curricula for general secondary education have been analysed in this order. This is succeeded by the analysis of documents relating to professional and technical education, in the subsequent order: reference framework, WBE, and then Catholic curricula.

²⁹ From now on, this will be shortened to FWB.

³⁰ From now on, this will be shortened to WBE.

5.2.1 Occurrences of the text genre of “film criticism” in the official reference frameworks and in the curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

Table 1: Occurrences of the “film criticism” text genre in the official reference frameworks and in the curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques (FWB, 2017a)</i>	1
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités générales et technologiques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020a).</i>	1
<i>Programme Langues modernes I, II, III — 2^e et 3^e degrés — Humanités générales et technologiques. (FESeC, 2017a)</i>	1
<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques. (FWB, 2017b)</i>	0
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités professionnelles et techniques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020b)</i>	0
<i>Programme Langues modernes — Formation générale et commune — 2^e et 3^e degrés professionnel et technique de qualification (FESeC, 2017b)</i>	0

In the RF-GS (FWB, 2017a) of the WBF, the FC TG appears three times across 233 pages. The TG is mentioned in the example of final tasks in reading, writing, and non-interactive speaking at B1+ or B2- levels. Students are therefore expected to be able to produce a FC at B1 level. The TG of FC is found in examples of reading material at B2- level. It appears only once in relation to oral skills. Although the focus of the present master’s thesis is predominantly on hearing and speaking skills, it is important to highlight that writing and reading skills create opportunities. Indeed, students could be given reading exercises to introduce them to a pedagogical version of the TG of FC, as the real-life actualisation of this TG may be too challenging to motivate students. Moreover, writing exercises in the TG could be a powerful first step for students to produce the TG, before stepping back from their written work to present it as a speaking exercise accompanied by a few keywords.

However, FC’s TG is never linked to listening skills. This omission raises questions. If the TG of FC is expected to be produced, whether in writing or speech, it would be appropriate to show

students how to do so beforehand. This could be done through a video, P, or any other type of listening exercise support.

Moreover, the classification of the TG under non-interactive speaking skills diverges from the realisation of spoken FC in real-life contexts, which are mainly dialogical (McWhirter, 2016, p. 180), whether on the radio or in P.

Furthermore, if PCFs were to be used in EFL settings, the RF-GS would recommend their use for intermediate learners (FWB, 2017a). However, we argue that the TG can be simplified for beginners or elementary-level learners. As discussed in Chapter 2, the TG structures itself around three main discursive acts: an “informative” act, which “focuse[s] on the object of discourse”, “an analytical and critical”, which “base[s] [itself] on the content of discourse and an evaluative [...] concerned with valorisation”³¹ (Wolny-Zmorzynski et al., 2006 in Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3). This segmented structure allows FC to be taught in a spiral progression. One could imagine teaching the summary at the beginner level and completing it at the intermediate level, focusing on the analytical, critical, and evaluative parts. This assumption is supported by the distinction made in the RF-GS between “summarising a movie” and “reviewing a movie”. This distinction reveals an opportunity to teach the TG of FC in a spiral progression.

Moreover, FC are classified under the communicative function of “conveying an opinion”. According to the authors of the RF-GS, this communicative purpose encompasses a narrative, descriptive, explanatory, and argumentative function (see Appendix 6, p. 95). While these macro-functions align with the hybrid nature of FC as actualised in real-world contexts, the persuasive function of FC — the primary macro-communicative function, according to many researchers, as mentioned in Chapter 2 — is overlooked (see Appendix 6, p. 95). This classification of the FC’s communicative macro-functions completely neglects the primary communicative function of FC as performed in society.

The concept of FC occurs six times in the WBE-GS (WBE, 2020a). Two of these instances present the TG of FC as a reading and writing exercise, and two others refer more broadly to the TG family of criticism in relation to the training of writing and reading skills. The curriculum also presents FC as a TG expected to be produced in “non-interactive speaking” at an intermediate level (WBE, 2020a, p. 218). However, the curriculum omits to mention the listening exercises of

³¹ Personal translation of “critique de cinéma [...] d’où trois segments principaux de sa construction : partie informative focalisée sur l’objet de discours, partie analytique et critique, portant sur le contenu du discours et partie évaluative fondée sur la valorisation” (Wolny-Zmorzynski et al., 2006 in Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3).

the TG of FC. We apply a similar criticism to this omission as we previously did to the RF-GS regarding the requirement to produce a TG without first providing examples of its realisation. Furthermore, this curriculum takes the same position as the RF-GS regarding the FC communicative macro-function, thereby excluding the persuasive function from those encompassed by FC.

In the C-GS (FESeC, 2017a), the TG of FC is only mentioned once in relation to speaking skills and twice in relation to reading and writing skills. Similar observations are made regarding the use of the TG of FC in relation to non-interactive speaking at the B1- and B1+ levels. Once again, the primary macro-function of persuasion is overlooked, and there is no mention of the TG of FC in listening skills.

The TG of FC is not mentioned in the RF-PTS (FWB, 2017b), the WBE-PTS (WBE, 2020b), or the C-PTS (FESeC, 2017b). The only references made in the Catholic curriculum (FESeC, 2017b) and in the RF-PTS are references to the development of critical thinking. However, there is no mention of either TGs intended to achieve this objective or the TG family of criticism.

Conversely, the WBE-PTS gives examples of the TG family of criticism. Following this official program, the family of criticism could be used as audiovisual material to support other skills, such as reading criticism (WBE, 2020b, p. 133), or writing and reading skills concerning criticism in general. This mention of the TG family is vague and, again, linked to writing and reading skills.

5.2.2 Occurrences of the term “film” used as support for listening skills in the official reference frameworks and in the curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

The table below lists only occurrences of the word “movie” when used as audiovisual support in EFL classrooms. Thus, this section does not specifically address the TG of FC, as it has already been covered in Section 5.2.1.

Table 2: Occurrences of the term “film” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques (FWB, 2017a)</i>	2
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités générales et technologiques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020a).</i>	6
<i>Programme Langues modernes I, II, III — 2^e et 3^e degrés — Humanités générales et technologiques. (FESeC, 2017a)</i>	2
<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques. (FWB, 2017b)</i>	2
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités professionnelles et techniques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020b)</i>	6
<i>Programme Langues modernes — Formation générale et commune — 2^e et 3^e degrés professionnel et technique de qualification (FESeC, 2017b)</i>	2

After analysing the occurrence of the TG of FC in the official curricula of the WBF, the term “film” was researched in the same documents. This stems from the belief that watching the reviewed movie could motivate students to complete the task of producing a FCP. Consequently, a particular interest has been developed in the use of films as audiovisual materials in foreign language classrooms.

The word “film” appears seven times in the RF-GS (FWB, 2017a). All those mentions are related to TGs (FC or summaries of movies), except for two mentions that provide examples of audiovisual materials — such as films — around which listening exercises could be organised in foreign language classrooms. According to the RF-GS (FWB, 2017a), film clips can be used at A2 and B1 levels as an audiovisual support for listening exercises.

Surprisingly, the word “movie” is not mentioned in the CEFRL thematic field of “cultural activities”. However, movies and FC could be included in this category.

In the WBE-GS (WBE, 2020a, p. 130), the word “film” appears 14 times. It appears in examples of final tasks that students could be asked to fulfil. It is presented as an option for diversifying the course materials by using “films or films’ and TV shows’ excerpts”³² (WBE, 2020a, p. 130). Furthermore, the authors of this program state that these materials could be used to

³² Personal translation of “(films ou extraits de film, séries...)” (WBE, 2020a, p. 130)

develop other skills (WBE, 2020a, p. 130). Watching a movie could thus be followed by a final task in interactive speaking that expects students to produce a FCP.

The WBE-GS refers to the RF-GS when providing examples of audiovisual materials to be presented to A2 (WBE, 2020a, p. 175) and B1-level students (WBE, 2020a, p. 203).

In the C-GS, the word “films” is mentioned nine times. Films are seen as an opportunity to provide access to foreign cultures and to diversify didactic resources (FESeC, 2017a, p. 11). Although films occur nine times, they are presented only twice as materials for listening exercises at the A2 and B1 levels (FESeC, 2017a, pp. 30, 43). In the other occurrences, the term “film” co-occurs with TG, providing examples of final tasks expected in non-interactive speaking and writing at B1 level (FESeC, 2017a, pp. 45, 53) or of materials for B2 reading skills (FESeC, 2017a, p. 55).

Although the Catholic network does not explicitly state that culture-related tasks should be assessed, as the WBE network does (WBE, 2020a, p. 131), culture still plays a role in this curriculum. Indeed, the Catholic curriculum states that “[i]t is thus essential to introduce a cultural dimension to the work based on skills, as well as to add intercultural skills” (FESeC, 2017a, p.10)³³. Teaching FC thus provides an opportunity to develop students’ receptive and productive skills, as well as their cultural and intercultural skills.

The RF-PTS only mentions the term “film” twice. These two occurrences present films and TV-shows’ clips as examples of material around which listening exercises could be organised. These materials are expected to be used at A2 and B1 levels (FWB, 2017b). The analysis of the skills expected to be developed through watching movies reveals that only receptive skills are expected to be trained in professional education. TGs related to watching movies are never mentioned in relation to productive skills.

The analysis of the occurrences of the word “film” in the WBE-PTS reveals more fruitful results. Indeed, many conclusions drawn on the appearance of the term “film” in the WBE-GS also apply to the WBE-PTS. More precisely, films are also considered relevant audiovisual resources for listening exercises at A2 (WBE, 2020b, p. 178) and B1 (WBE, 2020b, p. 206) levels. Like the RF-PTS, the WBE-PTS does not provide examples of production related to movie viewing. Consequently, teachers are not provided with examples of productive or receptive tasks to conclude teaching activities, such as watching movies.

³³ Personal translation of : Il est donc essentiel d’introduire dans le travail par compétences une dimension culturelle et d’y ajouter la compétence interculturelle.” (FESeC, 2017a, p.10)

The C-PTS mentions movies four times. Two of these references describe films as a type of material for listening comprehension at A2 and a B1 levels (FESeC, 2017b, pp. 40 & 52).

5.2.3 Occurrences of the term “podcast” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

Table 3: Occurrences of the term “podcast” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l’issue des humanités générales et technologiques (FWB, 2017a)</i>	0
<i>Programme d’études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités générales et technologiques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020a).</i>	1
<i>Programme Langues modernes I, II, III — 2^e et 3^e degrés — Humanités générales et technologiques. (FESeC, 2017a)</i>	0
<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l’issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques. (FWB, 2017b)</i>	0
<i>Programme d’études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités professionnelles et techniques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020b)</i>	1
<i>Programme Langues modernes — Formation générale et commune — 2^e et 3^e degrés professionnel et technique de qualification (FESeC, 2017b)</i>	0

Ps are not mentioned in any of the reference frameworks of the WBF. The same applies to the C-GS and the C-PTS.

Ps are mentioned once in the WBE-GS (WBE, 2020a). They are referred to as a possible tool to organise flipped classrooms, where “students complete simple cognitive tasks independently”³⁴ (WBE, 2020a, p. 136). In this regard, the WBE-GS adopts a similar standpoint to that of Hendrawan et al. (2025) and posits that Ps could be used outside of school to allow teachers to organise additional in-class activities. This method aims to increase the amount of time spent on linguistic and didactic activities.

³⁴ Personal translation of “les élèves réalisent les tâches cognitives simples en autonomie” (WBE, 2020a, p. 136)

Although the WBE-GS does not mention Ps specifically as a resource for listening exercises, it encourages the use of audiovisual resources to practice the 5 skills of EFL learning (reading, listening, (non-) interactive speaking, and writing (WBE, 2020a, p. 130).

In the WBE-PTS, the term “podcast” appears only once (WBE, 2020b, p. 139). This instance occurs in the same paragraph as the one previously mentioned in the WBE-GS, which discusses the use of Ps in flipped classrooms. Consequently, we reiterate the point made in previous paragraphs.

5.2.4 Occurrences of the term “technology” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

The weak representation of the term “podcast” in the official reference frameworks of the FWB sparks our curiosity. Therefore, the occurrences of the term “technology” in Belgian official reference frameworks and curricula, and their contexts of appearance have been investigated.

Table 4: Occurrences of the term “technology” in the official reference frameworks and in the official curricula of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques (FWB, 2017a)</i>	5
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités générales et technologiques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020a).</i>	19
<i>Programme Langues modernes I, II, III — 2^e et 3^e degrés — Humanités générales et technologiques. (FESeC, 2017a)</i>	7
<i>Référentiel de langues modernes. Compétences terminales et savoirs communs à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques. (FWB, 2017b)</i>	3
<i>Programme d'études de langues modernes. Enseignement secondaire ordinaire — Humanités professionnelles et techniques — 2^e et 3^e degrés. (WBE, 2020b)</i>	10
<i>Programme Langues modernes — Formation générale et commune — 2^e et 3^e degrés professionnel et technique de qualification (FESeC, 2017b)</i>	4

Notably, the word “technology” appears five times in the RF-GS, nineteen times in the WBE-GS, and seven times in the C-GS. In the documents focusing on professional and technical secondary education, the word appears three times in the RF-PTS, ten times in the WBE-PTS, and four times in the C-PTS.

In the RF-GS, the word “technology” appears twice in relation to the thematic field borrowed from the CEFRL of “Information and communication technologies, media”. This reference framework states that these thematic fields should encompass the “most common media”³⁵, as well as “some names of digital tools”³⁶ (FWB, 2017a). Therefore, analysing the RF-GS leads us to conclude that teaching the TG of FC realised as the PTT is legitimate in all EFL courses. However, this TT and TG should not be explored in as much depth at all levels and across all options.

The WBE-GS mentions the term “technology” nineteen times. These occurrences serve as a basis for justifying the growing importance of speaking skills. In this curriculum, spoken language is presented as the most useful skill, and technologies are viewed as a means to diversify the ways to train speaking skills and to increase the authenticity of production tasks (WBE, 2020a, pp. 24, 28). New technologies are presented as examples of productions (WBE, 2020a, p. 28). They are also presented as inspirations for original final tasks, proposed to students, in writing skills (WBE, 2020a, p. 29). New technologies are seen as a means of differentiation and are cited as ways for students to complete a listening exercise at their own pace (WBE, 2020a, p. 115). They are also presented as opportunities to diversify the audiovisual materials used in foreign language classes (WBE, 2020a, p. 130). The curriculum advises teachers to integrate new technologies into their teaching (WBE, 2020a, p. 133). The word “technology” is also widely used in the many examples of final tasks given in the WBE-GS.

The other occurrences of the word “technology” appear, again, in the listing of the thematic fields of the CEFRL. Therefore, it will not be commented on again. It is possible to conclude that these new technologies, including Ps, have their place in EFL classrooms (WBE, 2020a, pp. 236, 248, 257).

The seven occurrences of the term “technology” in the C-GS mainly align with the use of the thematic fields prescribed in the RF-GS. However, this curriculum diverges from the RF-GS in its stance on technology in two ways. On the one hand, technologies are considered a possible audiovisual material in EFL. In a section titled “*Which materials to use?*” (FESeC, 2017a, p. 11)³⁷, the WBE curriculum notes that new technologies facilitate access to authentic sources of input, such as pictures, documents, and songs, among others. These sources build bridges between teaching activities and the culture of the language learned. Therefore, new technologies are considered a means of varying the materials and formats used to convey authentic language in teaching activities.

³⁵ Personal translation of “types de médias les plus courants” (FWB, 2017)

³⁶ Personal translation of “quelques noms d’outils numérique” (FWB, 2017)

³⁷ Personal translation of “Quels supports utiliser?” (FESeC, 2017a, p. 11)

Ps could thus be considered one of these materials. On the other hand, the importance of technologies is mentioned when delineating the aim of the document. Technologies are enumerated under the three main pillars of this curriculum, which are, namely, “to provide teachers with landmarks”, “to clarify a methodology and a pedagogical approach”, and to “enable an anchorage in new technologies” (FESeC, 2017a, p. 14)³⁸.

In the RF-PTS, the word “technology” appears three times and is mentioned in relation to the CEFRL’s thematic fields and subfields. Interestingly, depending on the degree and the educational course of the EFL students, the RF-PTS promotes the organisation of activities related to media technologies at the second and third degrees of technical and professional education (FWB, 2017b). Producing a P could thus count as one of these media-related activities.

In the WBE-PTS (WBE, 2020b), the word technology appears ten times. It first appears in a paragraph that highlights the presumed growing importance of spoken skills due to, on the one hand, increased global mobility, and, on the other hand, the appearance of “new technologies” that expand our exposure to foreign languages (WBE, 2020b, p. 23)³⁹. These technologies are presented as tools that can alleviate discrimination in language learning by providing students with easier access to foreign languages (WBE, 2020b, p. 23). The curriculum presents these technologies as a way “to diversify and propose activities that are often very motivating for their [teachers’] classrooms” (WBE, 2020b, p. 23)⁴⁰. This aligns with the motivational benefits of Ps listed in Section 4.3.

The WBE-PTS (WBE, 2020b) does not merely view new technologies as a means of training speaking skills. It also mentions new technologies in a section called “Choices of productions” (WBE, 2020b, p. 27). This section encourages teachers to incorporate new technologies into their teaching sequences as final tasks. The aim is “to vary activities and increase their credibility” (WBE, 2020b, p. 27)⁴¹. The WBE network thereby aligns with Viau’s (2000) and Lightbown & Spada’s (2017) theories on motivation. The authors argue that the perceived authenticity of the tasks, coupled with their possible reutilisation in real-life contexts, promotes students’ motivation. Therefore, it is possible to argue that Ps, alongside the examples listed in the WBE curriculum —

³⁸ Personal translations of “donner aux enseignants les repères”, “préciser une méthodologie [...] et une approche pédagogique” and “permettre un ancrage dans les nouvelles technologies” (FESeC, 2017a, p. 14)

³⁹ Personal translation of “nouvelles technologies” (WBE, 2020, p. 23).

⁴⁰ Personal translation of “diversifier et de proposer des activités souvent très motivantes pour sa classe” (WBE, 2020, p. 23)

⁴¹ Personal translation of: “de varier les activités et d’en augmenter la vraisemblance” (WBE, 2020, p. 27)

such as video clips, tutorials, and video calls, among others — can be included in EFL classrooms to promote students' motivation by teaching knowledge that resembles social practices.

Moreover, the WBE-GS recognises the multiple advantages of technologies in language learning. Technologies are considered a means of training writing skills, since final tasks can incorporate features of these technologies — such as text messages, blogs, or emails, among others⁴² (WBE, 2020b, p. 28). Technologies can also facilitate in-class differentiation, especially in hearing exercises. They could allow students to listen to content at their own pace⁴³ (WBE, 2020b, p. 118), as well as motivate students and invite more fun in listening tasks (WBE, 2020b, p. 132).

The other occurrences of the term “technology” are used in the same way as in the RF-GS, as both prescribe teaching the thematic fields of the CEFRL (WBE, 2020b, p. 219).

The C-PTS only mentions the word “technology” four times. These occurrences highlight that promoting new technologies is one of the three pillars of their curriculum (FESeC, 2017b, p. 11). The other references relate to the use of the thematic fields of the CEFRL. As the same use is prescribed in the WBE-PTS, it will not be repeated.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on delineating the actualisation of FCPs in real-world contexts. Although FCPs can take various forms, the content usually follows a less structured, more conversational, and polyphonic format, thereby adopting radio-like characteristics. While resembling radio, FCPs distinguish themselves by their ease of consumption and production. These assets may offer advantages in language learning, as FCPs can be easily presented to students and produced by them. Moreover, FCPs do not necessarily rely on a fully written script, which may justify using the TG of FC realised as P TT to develop interactive speaking.

This brief presentation of FCPs in real-life contexts was followed by an analysis of the French-speaking official reference frameworks and curricula to determine the place given to the TG of FC and the TT of P in these documents.

The TG of FC and its family of TG are represented in all the general education curricula of the WBF. The analysis of these documents revealed that, although represented, the TG is generally

⁴² As argued in Chapter 1, while many TG are enlisted in the present referential, those are never defined (Renson, 2023, p. 132).

⁴³ As mentioned in Chapter 3, this differentiation can be organised during free-access sessions, enabling students to choose the content they listen to and to replay it as much as needed.

used in co-occurrence with reading, writing, and non-interactive speaking skills at the B1+ and B2-proficiency levels. We argued that FC could be learned at an earlier stage of proficiency, provided the TG is divided into three sections: informative, argumentative, and evaluative.

While excerpts of movies and TV shows are given as examples of listening materials to work on in class in all the analysed curricula, FCPs are never given as examples for listening materials to be exploited in class. However, as both teaching networks expect students in general education to produce a film review as a non-interactive speaking task, it is possible to argue that introducing FCPs to students prior to production would better equip them to complete this task. Far from simply allowing students to grasp what is expected of them, this presentation offers an opportunity to explicitly state the goals of the sequence and the expectations for the final task.

The analysis of the curricula of the professional and technical secondary education revealed less successful results. The TG of FC is never clearly mentioned in either document. Furthermore, excerpts of movies and TV shows are mentioned in all documents as examples of listening materials to use in class at A2 and B1 levels. Therefore, although these curricula allow for movies to be shown in class, they do not provide teachers with suggestions for TG for productive tasks.

Therefore, while the place of films in classrooms appears to be established, the WBF curricula provide only a few examples of TG for working on them. Nevertheless, both general education curricula seem to consider movies an opportunity to diversify course materials and increase exposure to the target language. We adopt the stance of these curricula, arguing that movies, when properly engaged with, can provide opportunities to develop linguistic, sociocultural, and discursive skills.

While the use of Ps is never mentioned in the curricula in a way that aligns with the aim of this master's thesis, it is possible to note that this weak representation is offset by a strong presence of the word "technology" throughout the curricula of both general and professional education. This underrepresentation may be explained by the greater difficulty posed by the audio content of P used as pedagogical tools, due to their lack of visual support. While these technologies must be addressed within the thematic fields and subfields of the CEFRL, they offer an opportunity to increase students' exposure to the target language.

Other advantages of technologies are listed in the curricula. New technologies are shown as a source of inspiration for diversifying final tasks, an opportunity to enhance differentiation in

listening skills, and a tool that facilitates access to authentic language. Therefore, the use of new technologies is encouraged throughout the FWB curricula.

This chapter on the presence of the TG of FC and the TT of Ps in the official reference frameworks and curricula in WBF will be followed by a corpus-based analysis aimed at gaining a clearer understanding of the TG in real-world contexts to better teach and adapt it to EFL classrooms.

6 Chapter 5: A corpus-based analysis of the social practices

6.1 Methodology for the constitution of the corpus

The corpus was created by selecting three popular film podcasts that include a film review section. The listing of the most-listened-to Ps in the UK provided by the website *podwatch* was used (2025). This platform creates charts of Ps classified by country and thematic field, such as comedy, sports, economy, etc. (podwatch, 2025). This selection enables engagement with the most consumed FCPs across the UK. Moreover, this website maintains an up-to-date record of the most-listened-to Ps on Spotify and iTunes (podwatch, 2025). Therefore, the listed Ps are not a ranking produced by a third party but constitute an accurate snapshot of the British population's listening preferences and habits. The chart on which our corpus is based is titled "The Best Film Review Podcasts" (podwatch, 2025) and relies on statistics on FCP-listening on Spotify and Apple Podcasts. This snapshot is based on the chart dated November 21, 2025 (see Appendix 7, p. 95). This chart adjusts daily to the number of listeners each P receives. This classification might therefore vary over time.

The corpus was created using the Ps' transcripts available on Spotify. These were post-edited to ensure consistency between the audio and the written content. Only the spoken words were transcribed. Despite their interest, laughter, overlapping speech, and pauses were not taken into account, as this would exceed the scope of the present master's thesis. These could be further analysed in future research. Furthermore, the oral nature of the discourse, with its potential for grammatical errors and lexical inaccuracies, has been retained. Therefore, repeated words have been transcribed. Nevertheless, the examples given in our analysis have been corrected to improve the readability of the present master's thesis.

The cinematic adaptation of *Frankenstein* by Guillermo del Toro (2025) has been analysed. This choice was initially motivated by logistical considerations. Indeed, although the movie's length (150

minutes) may be a relevant argument against screening it in class, its structure around two distinct narrative arcs — Victor’s tale and the Creature’s tale — allows teachers to stop the viewing after the first narrative arc, so at 90 minutes. While this is not optimal for exploring the story’s complexity, it could serve to allocate more time to didactic activities. Furthermore, this movie has been reviewed by all three Ps in our corpus. This strong presence reflects the generally positive reception of the movie. This stance is supported by the fact that the film review website Rotten Tomatoes⁴⁴ recommends the film positively, with a score of 86% (Rotten Tomatoes, 2025). These statistics are based on a synthesis of 342 professional reviews (Rotten Tomatoes, 2025).

However, we acknowledge that public opinion is not a reliable indicator for selecting a movie to watch in class. In addition to the previously mentioned argument, we add that the movie *Frankenstein* is a pertinent choice due to its relationship with Mary Shelley’s novel. This could provide an opportunity to build bridges between a reading activity on a graded-reader version of the novel and the TG of FC realised as the P TT. Far from being merely an opportunity to equip students with essential lexical items to summarise the movie, reading the novel can also enable the teacher to focus the course’s sequence solely on the presentation of FCPs. This division into two distinct and chronologically separated pedagogical activities can prevent students from becoming cognitively overloaded by an overly rich didactic sequence, addressing, on the one hand, a particular story, cultural background, and linguistic challenges, and, on the other hand, a TG and a TT.

This cinematic adaptation of an English novel is also seen as an opportunity to build bridges between a modern adaptation and the original novel, thereby connecting past and present realities. Indeed, far from being merely “deeply rooted in the British Romantic movement as well as its Enlightenment ideals and Industrial Revolution” (Varet, 2025, p. 55, quoting Poorghorban and Taghizadeh, 2024), the original story also addresses “the dangerous effects of technology upon humanity, which anticipates the coming of the Industrial Revolution” (Varet, 2025, pp. 55-56, quoting Botting, 1991). The emergence of generative AIs has brought this concern about the ethics of science to the forefront. This movie thus offers many opportunities to compare two historical periods that, at first glance, may seem diametrically opposed. That being said, we recognise that the EFL classroom is not a history class. However, a brief presentation of such similarities seems relevant for developing students’ critical thinking and for immersing them in the culture of the target language. Moreover, the story of *Frankenstein*, although not read by most students, is familiar to the majority of them (Varet, 2025, p. 47, quoting Lasa-Álvarez, 2021). This presupposed

⁴⁴ This website developed a tool called the “Tomatometer” which aims to synthesize “the percentage of professional critic reviews that are positive for a given film or television show” (Rotten Tomatoes, n.d.).

knowledge “makes the work accessible to secondary education EFL students” (Varet, 2025, p. 47, quoting Lasa-Álvarez, 2021).

However, relying solely on students’ preferences may be risky because tastes are highly variable and unstable, varying not only between individuals but also across generations. Therefore, presuming that pupils would enjoy the story should be complemented by the stance that the narrative, due to its division into two points of view on the same story, could foster students’ empathy and help them understand the complexity of interpersonal relationships (Varet, 2025, p. 53).

Before diving into the analysis of our corpus, a brief presentation of the Ps that constitute it seems relevant. The three most popular Ps in the UK on 21 November 2025 are, occupying the first place, *Kermode and Mayo’s Take* (Kermode & Mayo, 2025), followed in second place by *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* (Ross & Ross, 2025). *The Empire Film Podcast* (2025) comes third. Each podcast discusses filmmaking and the cinematic universe. The excerpts taken from these all discuss the movie *Frankenstein*, but are embedded in a broader structure that we consider relevant to elucidate.

The episode “Has Frankenstein got Mark (re)animated?” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025) in *Kermode & Mayo’s Take* lasts 9 minutes and revolves around the reviews of four films: *Black Phone 2*, *Frankenstein* (2025), *Roofman* and *After the Hunt*, and an interview with Russell Tovey. These main sections are preceded by an introduction that welcomes the listener to the show and takes the form of a discussion in which the two hosts share anecdotes and jokes. In this section, the hosts also advertise the paid version of the P and its sponsors, and announce the P’s structure, in a section called “What’s Coming Up”. During the episode, the reviews and interviews do not directly follow one another. They are interspersed with a section called “Top 10 Films”, in which the hosts briefly list and review the box office top ten films, and another section called “Jokes, Film Events, and Why We Cry at the Movies”. This is a conversational section centred on anecdotes, discussions and jokes which could – but are not necessarily – relate to the cinema industry. The episode ends with a wrap-up that is conversational at first, followed by a presentation of the producers involved in creating the P and an invitation for listeners to follow the P. Interestingly, this podcast includes a clip from the movie under discussion.

In *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* (Ross & Ross, 2025), the episode titled “EP100: Wicked: For good, Frankenstein, The Running Man” lasts approximately 10 minutes and starts with an introduction, which first presents the P, then revolves around casual conversations and

anecdotes shared by the two hosts. This section is followed by an account of their attendance at the premiere of the movie *Wicked: For Good*. After this segment, the three films — *Wicked: For Good*, *Frankenstein*, and *The Running Man* — are reviewed. Unlike the other two podcasts, this one features brief musical interludes between each section. The episode ends on a conclusive note, with the hosts ranking the movies they preferred that week, then thanking the listeners and inviting them to follow and rate the P.

The episode of *The Empire Film Podcast* (Hewitt et al. 2025) titled “All the Information is On the Task” lasts 8 minutes and is introduced by an opening theme, which is immediately followed by the host announcing the episode’s theme. This P includes a debate on “the Best Film Starring a Taskmaster Contestant”, interviews with guests promoting their films (such as directors or actors working in recently released movies), and an “Industry Update” discussing, among other topics, the top box-office films. The first half of the episode is followed by a review section revolving around the reviews of *Frankenstein*, *The Running Man*, *Now You See Me: Now You Don’t*, *Nuremberg*, and *Christmas Karma*. The P concludes with a final note teasing the following week’s episode and taking leave.

6.2 *Methodology for the corpus’ analysis*

Before analysing the corpus, the main discursive acts constituting the FCPs were delineated. Therefore, the words constituting the different discursive acts were counted in order to determine the proportion occupied by each segment in the FCPs. Following Wolny-Zmorzynski (2006) and Topa-Bryniarska’s (2017, p. 3) argument that film criticism revolves around three main discursive acts — informative, critic-analytical, and persuasive segments — this typology was used to analyse the corpus. Therefore, the presence of informative, argumentative, analytical, and persuasive segments in the corpus was investigated, and this tripartition was extended to include segments related to discursive acts that aim to structure the speech, engage the audience, interact with other speakers, and build the speaker’s *ethos*. All these segments, along with the criteria used to classify them, will be clarified below.

The category termed “**structuring moments**” lists speech acts that introduce or conclude an episode, as well as those that provide information about an episode’s structure. While some structuring moments seem quite straightforward, such as “we’re going to talk about *Frankenstein*” (Hewitt et al., 2025), others can be considered structuring the speech act solely on the basis of the tone of voice employed by the speakers. Therefore, it was decided to count concluding segments delivered with a conclusive tone as belonging to the category of speech acts termed “structuring

moments”. However, when an utterance, despite being expressed in a conclusive manner, contained information belonging to another category, priority was given to the content of the message rather than the tone. For instance, when Simon Mayo states “One frame back in ‘Take 2’ is tip-top Frankenstein movies of all time. So that will pick up from [*sic.*] Mark’s essential unmissable review of the Guillermo del Toro movie” to conclude the episode of *Kermode and Mayo’s Take* (2025), the first sentence “One frame back in ‘Take 2’ is tip top Frankenstein movies of all time” has been considered an audience engagement strategy, despite the conclusive tone employed. “Take 2” is the paid version of the podcast *Kermode and Mayo’s Take*. Therefore, despite being uttered with a conclusive tone of voice, this segment invites listeners to subscribe to the paid version of the P. This invitation could be considered as an audience engagement strategy, because it directly asks listeners to take action.

Furthermore, introductory moments can sometimes contain factual information about the movie being discussed, such as « [c]oming up, let’s talk about Guillermo del Toro’s return to the world of fantasy with *Frankenstein* » (Ross & Ross, 2025). Information about the film’s genre, embedded in a speech act introducing the review, is given in this excerpt. This piece of information has been counted in the “structuring moments” category because of its integration into a discursive act that structures the speech.

Moreover, as McWhirter (2016) argues that FCPs are mainly dialogic, we added a section analysing discursive moments primarily focusing on interactive speaking. This section, termed **“interaction and dialogic exchanges”**, includes discursive segments aimed at agreeing or disagreeing with what was previously said. It also includes jokes, requests for another speaker to share their opinions, moderation of the discursive act, or statements about occurrences in the studio that cannot be perceived by listeners. This decision is motivated by the aim of determining whether FCPs should be categorized under interactive speaking skills as McWhirter’s analysis suggests, or under non-interactive speaking, as prescribed by the Belgian curricula (see Chapter 4, Section 5.2). As demonstrated in the previous paragraph, some choices had to be made to determine what constituted an interactional speech act. Some interactions serve purposes other than participation in the discussion. These interactions have been classified under the category deemed most appropriate. For instance, when a participant interrupts another to allude to cultural elements, this interaction, despite its interactive nature, has been counted as an *ethos*-constructing moment. Indeed, the main pragmatic aim of such interventions is to construct a cultivated and humorous persona for the interrupting speaker, rather than to contribute to the stance of the interrupted speaker. Furthermore, only direct reactions to what had previously been said were

counted. For instance, in the sentence, “I mean, it’s interesting you’re talking about the structure because I found this to be quite long” (Hewitt et al., 2025), only the segment “I mean, it’s interesting you’re talking about the structure” has been considered an interaction. The rest of the sentence was considered an argument rooted in opinions and was therefore categorized as an “emotionally driven argumentative segment”. Moreover, onomatopoeia has been included in the “Interaction/Dialogic exchanges” category.

Informative segments were considered portions of the discourse that deliver only factual, irrefutable information about internal (e.g., summary of the plot, cast, characters, narrative structure, script), or external features (e.g., production conditions, the director’s involvement with the film, etc.) of the movies. All factual and irrefutable knowledge that could not be acquired through viewing of the film — such as references to the director’s filmography, interviews about film, or other reviews — was thus counted as external information. Irrefutable information that the speaker could observe in the film was counted as internal informative features. Therefore, when a P host states that “[t]his version doesn’t skimp on operatics. I mean, there are plenty of big set pieces, boats in ice, vast towers, you know, lightning” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025), this statement was considered informative. It is important to bear in mind that speakers’ opinions might sometimes emerge within informative segments. For instance, in “[a]nd this is a pretty faithful adaptation of [*sic.*] Mary Shelley’s original story” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025), the word “pretty” reveals the speaker’s opinion. However, as this opinion is embedded in a sentence that predominantly serves an informative function, the entire structure has been categorized under “informative segment”. In other instances, an opinion is directly followed by information. In this scenario, both segments were counted separately. This is the case in the sentence: “This is a [*sic.*] really interesting film because he’s [*sic.*] approached it with the framing device that basically an Arctic exploration vessel finds these two in the frozen deep-frozen North” (Hewitt et al., 2025). This sentence was divided to classify “this is a [*sic.*] really interesting film” in the emotionally driven argumentative segment and the remainder in the “informative segment”. This particular instance reveals the difficulty of classifying linking words such as “because”. Generally, we counted such linking words as part of the segments they introduced. Therefore, in this specific example, “because” was counted as belonging to the informative segment. This example illustrates the limitations of our classification. It is therefore important to note that this division aims to sketch in broad strokes the discursive moments of FCPs. This is under no circumstances a precise or irrefutable portrayal of the main macro-communicative features of podcast-based FC.

The analysed FCPs are rich in argumentative segments. They rely mainly on two argumentative modes: one based on *logos*⁴⁵, the other on *pathos*⁴⁶. These two different types of arguments were counted under two distinct categories: one termed “emotionally driven argumentative segment” and the other “analytically driven argumentative segment”. As pointed out by Topa-Bryniarska (2023), FC’s argumentation aims to impress the reader and is therefore infused with judgments to captivate the reader’s attention. These subjective arguments were divided into the two aforementioned categories to better assess the importance placed on unjustified opinions as opposed to more analytical and in-depth arguments. It is important to note that both categories are inherently rooted in subjectivity. Initially, the need to create separate categories for opinions and argumentation was felt. However, due to the impressive argumentative nature of the FC, opinions often support argumentation. A clear distinction between the two discursive acts is therefore not feasible. It is noteworthy to highlight that subjectivity is present in all discursive acts of the podcast-based FC. Therefore, when a marker of subjectivity was found in other discursive acts, it was counted as belonging to the broader structure in which it was embedded. For example, the clause “the new film from Guillermo Del Toro, who’s the Mexican genius behind *Kronos*, *Pan’s Labyrinth*, *Hellboy*, *Shape of Water*” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025) includes the noun “genius” that indicates the speaker’s subjectivity. However, because this adjective is embedded in an informative segment, it was counted as part of the informative segment.

Arguments based solely on a speaker’s personal feelings about the reviewed artwork were counted in the category termed **“emotionally driven argumentative segment”**. For instance, the sentence: “No, I didn’t love this film partly because I just couldn’t always get a handle on it” was counted as belonging to the “emotionally driven argumentative segment” category. Furthermore, some in-depth analyses are interspersed with statements expressing liking or disliking of the elements analysed. In these cases, both discursive segments have been separated and ranked in the category corresponding to their main discursive function. For instance, the sentence: “And when he flags the 9th configuration in this, I mean, my heart leapt a little bit because it’s like, oh, he just said the 9th configuration” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025) is uttered in the middle of an analytical segment. However, it has been counted as belonging to the “emotionally driven argumentative segment” because of its clear expression of the speakers’ enthusiasm for the cultural reference made by the director.

⁴⁵ *Logos*-centered discourse relies on the exposition of logical arguments grounded in reasons (Provenzano, 2025, p. 6).

⁴⁶ *Pathos*-centered discourse relies on its emotional value and its ability to elicit emotions in the audience (Provenzano, 2025, p. 6).

Under **the analytically driven argumentative segment** were counted discursive acts discussing symbolism, interpretations of certain scenes, and acting strategies, the director's style, psychological traits underlying a character's behaviour, and the topics of the movie, as well as comparisons to other movies in the director's filmography or to other works of art. Therefore, segments such as "It's flagging up that what's happening in Guillermo's retelling of this story is that there is a redemptive arc in it" (Kermode & Mayo, 2025) were counted as analytically driven arguments. Indeed, the speaker shares their personal, yet evidence-based, reading of cinematographic elements, thereby transcending mere subjectivity. Furthermore, comparisons between the movie discussed and Shelley's novel, as well as other cultural references, were regarded as belonging to an analytically driven argumentative category, despite cultural references that could be seen as contributing to the construction of the speaker's *ethos*. Indeed, because of their intertwinement within a broader structure supporting a comparative analytical approach, these segments were considered part of that broader structure. For instance, in the sentence "I don't think they made Elordi look quite as good or quite as haunted or indeed quite as monstrous as Bernie Whites [*sic.*] managed", the reference to Bernie Whites was counted under the analytically driven argumentative category, because the argument relies on this cultural reference. Furthermore, the analysis of dramaturgical choices has also been counted as analytically driven argumentation. Therefore, stating that "Mia Goth's costumes alone, the fact that they have [*sic.*] these really saturated beetle-like rich jewels tone [*sic.*] which also feed into her character" (Ross & Ross, 2025) was seen as a personal analysis and classified as such. Although the initial description of the costume could have been considered informative, its integration into a larger analytical structure led it to be considered as serving the broader structure's function. It indeed serves as an anchor point for the analysis.

Furthermore, the numerous cultural references in the three FCPs encourage the addition of a category called ***ethos-building segments***. This category aims to identify the discursive moments dedicated to constructing the "*ethos* of knowledge" (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015) and, therefore, to build the speaker's persona as a cinematic specialist to legitimize their speech (Topa-Bryniarska, 2015). Therefore, cultural references were mainly counted in this section. It is important to highlight that numerous cultural references are intertwined in argumentative segments, accompanied by statements presenting some actors or directors as known by everybody or educating listeners on supposedly common mistakes (for instance, by informing them that *Frankenstein* is not the name of the creature, in contrast to what is commonly thought). When argumentation depended on and was intertwined with cultural references, these occurrences were counted as belonging to the argumentative segments or to another dominant category. Therefore, the category "*ethos* building

segments” counted mainly digressions from the main discursive acts. This choice is motivated by the fact that these digressions primarily aim to position the speaker as a cinematographic expert, rather than to support an argument. Moreover, only the references not directly linked to the movie under discussion were counted as cultural references. Indeed, some cultural references — such as the genesis behind the production, comments on the script, debates, or controversies surrounding the movie were counted as informative segments. The same applies to cultural references used to analyse the movie. Those occurrences were counted under the “analytical segments” category. Statements aimed at creating relationships (such as friendships) or commonalities between the host of the FCP and prominent directors or actors were considered to build the speaker’s *ethos*. However, we recognise the limitations of this category. The construction of the speaker’s persona could be seen as pervading the discourse. Nevertheless, we aimed to single out the discursive segments primarily focused on the construction of the speaker’s *ethos*. For instance, the following passages were counted as serving the construction of the speaker’s *ethos*:

- “[I]his is a shout-out to a movie, which I love, which Paul Thomas Anderson loves, which Guillermo del Toro loves [...]” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025)
- “And I know this because, as you know, I’m [*sic*] sort of a friend of Guillermo’s.” (Ross & Ross, 2025)

Lastly, a section titled “**audience engagement strategies**” was added to encompass direct addresses to listeners, rhetorical questions, and invitations for listeners to like or comment on the FCP.

Words from movies clip and names referring to the speakers have been excluded from our analysis. Repeated words, such as in “I think this is a a very good movie”, were counted. A “digression” category was added to record any discourse instance that does not belong to the aforementioned categories nor serve the film review, such as comments on actors’ physical appearance.

The macro analysis of the main discursive acts constituting the TG of the FC realised as the P TT is followed by a close reading of the corpus, aiming to determine the invariable grammatical features and the language functions used to convey opinions. This focus excludes many interesting features that could be examined in further research on FCPs, such as their invariable lexical features, their register, or prosodic features, among others.

6.3 Results

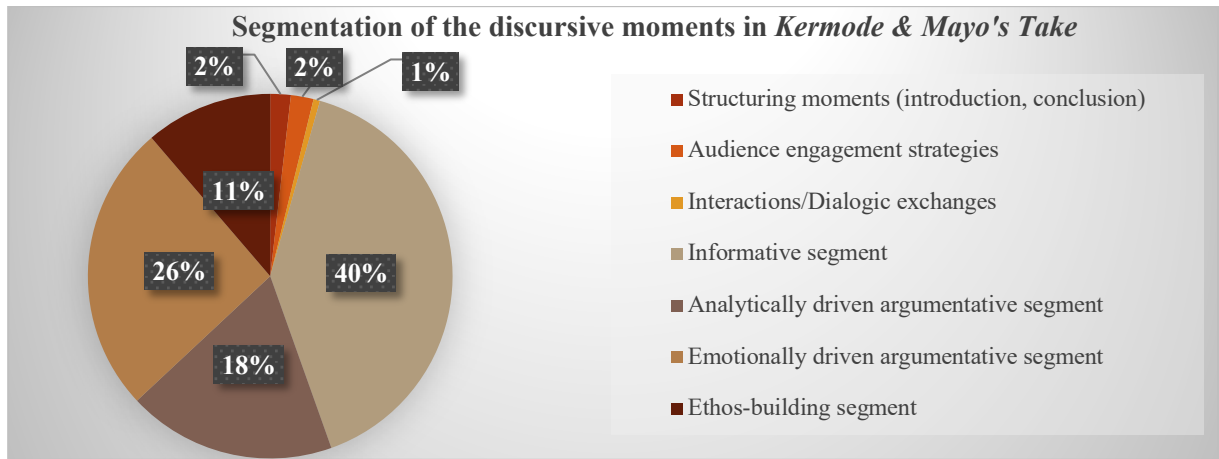


Figure 2: Segmentation of the discursive moments in *Kermode & Mayo's Take*.

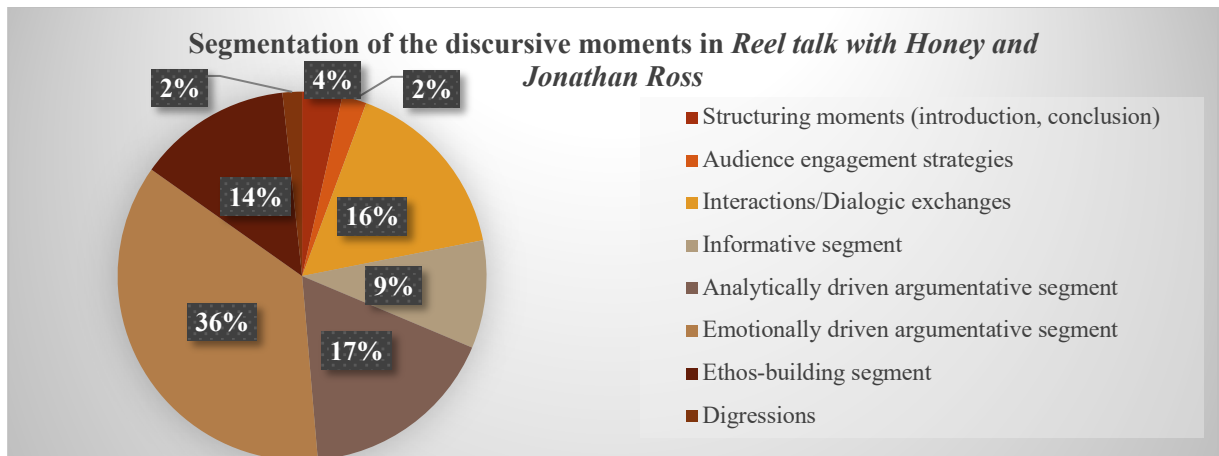


Figure 3: Segmentation of the discursive moments in *Reel talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*.

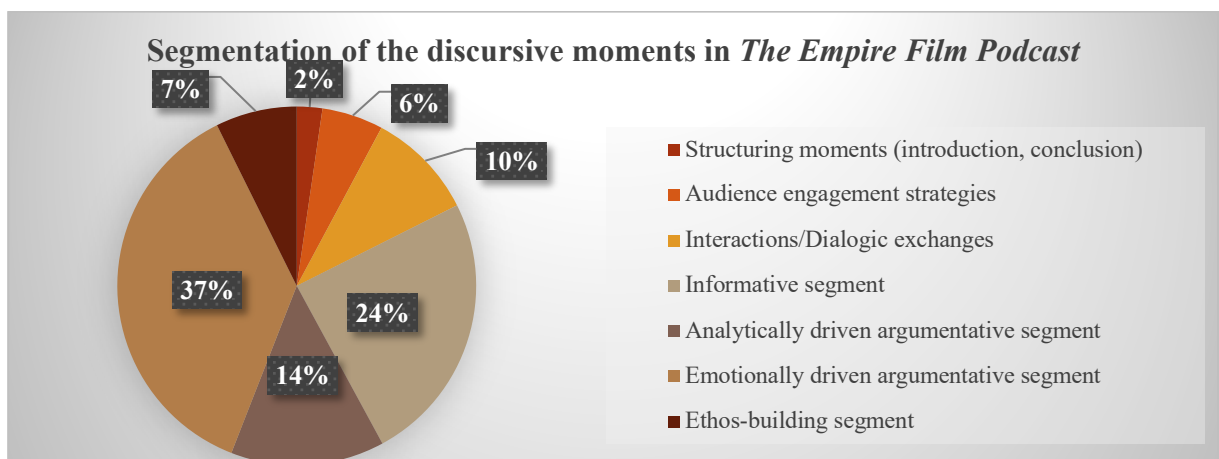


Figure 4: Segmentation of the discursive moments in *The Empire Film Podcast*.

This corpus-based analysis aims to confirm or refute the hypotheses presented in Chapter 2, which state that written FC and FCPs share similar macro-functions, and to delineate the invariant elements present in these segments. In Section 3.4 of Chapter 2, it has been observed that written FC are primarily governed by a persuasive macro-function (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3; Geron, 2018, p. 312) because of their primary role in helping readers choose or understand the artwork being criticised. Nevertheless, this function is realised through the combination of informative and argumentative elements (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017). When considering the argumentative aspect of FC, it is important to note that, while supported by reasons, these do not necessarily rely on logical facts (Topa-Bryniarska, 2023). Indeed, the impressive argumentation in FC relies more on subjectivity than on irrefutable, logical facts (Topa-Bryniarska, 2023).

6.3.1 *The persuasive macro-function of podcast-based film criticism*

Despite the authors' consensus (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 3; Geron, 2018, p. 312) presented in Section 3.4 of Chapter 2 regarding the primary persuasive macro-function of written FC, no passage explicitly aimed at persuading listeners has been observed. Nevertheless, this absence is insufficient to dismiss the importance of this function. Indeed, as argued by Topa-Bryniarska, persuasion emerges from the combination of both “valorising” and informative functions (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017). In this work, the term “argumentative” is preferred over “valorising”. This term is considered more appropriate for describing the nature of both negative and positive FC.

This conjunction of informative and argumentative functions is observable in each FCP. It can even be argued that, if we add the informative segments to the analytically and emotionally driven argumentative segments, these discursive moments occupy the foreground of the analysed FCPs. These discursive acts, taken together, account for 84% of *Kermode and Mayo's Take*, 62% of *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*, and 79% of *The Empire Film Podcast*.

6.3.2 *The argumentative macro-function of podcast-based film criticism*

As previously explained, two different types of argumentations have been recognized: emotionally driven and analytically driven. However, before discussing the particularities of each of these categories, we will examine the argumentative macro-functions in the FCPs.

Combined, these two types of argumentations represent 44% of the discursive acts in *Kermode and Mayo's Take*, 53% in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*, and 51% in *The Empire Film Podcast*, thereby occupying approximately half of the discourse in the three FCPs analysed. This presence demonstrates the commonalities between the analysed FC and the TG family of advertisements. Indeed, “[m]ost discourses, notably political, advertising and managerial, are considered as

belonging to the category of argumentative statements, whose purpose lies in the search for the compliance of the recipient”⁴⁷ (Seignour, 2011, p. 31). As discussed in Section 3.3 of Chapter 2, the classification of FC depends on the school of thought to which they belong. Since classifying these FCPs into schools of thought is tricky (see Chapter 2) and not the main focus of this master’s thesis, it will not be attempted here. However, it is possible to conclude that, like written FC, the analysed FCPs contain a high degree of argumentative and therefore persuasive value. This statement aligns with Topa-Bryniarska’s statement that FRs share similarities with the discursive genre of publicity, which aims to “seduce in order to establish the audience as the target and recipient of the discourse”⁴⁸ (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 2).

Similar to written FC (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017), FCPs’ argumentation relies mainly — if not exclusively — on subjectivity. We decided to distinguish between emotionally driven and analytically driven argumentation to analyse its depth. In the field of didactics, our primary aim is to encourage students to move beyond their personal opinions and develop their critical thinking skills. However, the TG’s realisation does not follow this approach. Indeed, the three Ps argumentative acts are predominantly rooted in the expression of emotions, without relying on external reasons to justify them. The expression of opinions without relying on analysis represents 26% of the discursive acts in *Kermode and Mayo’s Take*, 36% in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* and 37% in *The Empire Film Podcast*, compared to 26% of arguments relying on subjective analysis of the film in *Kermode and Mayo’s Take*, 17% in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*, and 14% in *The Empire Film Podcast*. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of the arguments in the three analysed FCPs are based solely on the speakers’ subjective opinions. This conclusion leads us to consider adapting the TG to the field of EFL didactics and to place greater emphasis on analytical argumentation to help students justify their subjective opinions.

The opinions expressed in the emotionally driven arguments invariably provide general comments on the film — for instance “This is a [*sic*]really interesting film” in *The Empire Film Podcast* (Hewitt et al., 2025); the cast and their performances – for instance “Great performances” in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* (Ross & Ross, 2025); the storytelling – for instance “But I think it is strangely faithful to the tone of the source” in *Kermode & Mayo’s Take* (Kermode & Mayo, 2025); and the quality of the production – for instance “it is [...] as accomplished as anything you’d

⁴⁷ Personal translation of “[l]a plupart des discours, notamment politiques, publicitaires et managériaux, sont alors considérés comme appartenant à la classe des énoncés argumentatifs, dont la finalité réside dans la recherche d’adhésion du destinataire” (Seignour, 2011, p. 31).

⁴⁸ Personal translation of “séduire pour instituer le public en cible et destinataire du discours» (Topa-Bryniarska, 2017, p. 2).

expect from Guillermo del Toro” in *Kermode & Mayo’s Take* (Kermode & Mayo, 2025). Aspects that could also be discussed, but are not consistently addressed, include the set design, costumes, pacing, duration, and the film’s overall atmosphere.

Invariably, the three Ps deliver analytically driven arguments about the topics, symbolism, and psychological traits of the protagonists. The three Ps also offer analytical comparisons between the film and relevant cultural references. Dramaturgical choices, the filmmaker’s style, and actors’ strategies have also been commented on, but these elements do not consistently appear across the three Ps.

6.3.3 *The informative macro-function of podcast-based film criticism*

In line with the arguments of Topa-Bryniarska (2017), Baud (2003), and Geron (2018) on written FC, the analysed FCPs contain informative segments. With 40% of speech acts in *Kermode and Mayo’s Take* and 24% in *The Empire Film Podcast* dedicated to delivering internal or external information about the film, these two FCPs indicate that the informative macro-function is a secondary function of the TG. However, the 9% portion of informative discursive acts in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* may contrast with this observation. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that the synopsis has deliberately been neglected in this FCP because, presumably, “[y]ou [the listener] know the story of Frankenstein. We don’t need to tell you” (Ross & Ross, 2025). The presupposed common knowledge of the story may indeed have led the hosts of the FCP to omit the informative components, thereby altering the typical structure of the FCP. This, however, is merely a hypothesis that could be confirmed by analysing another FCP from *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*.

The informative segment of the discursive act invariably provides internal (acquired through viewing the film) and external (not acquired through viewing the film, but rather through documentation) information about the film under discussion. The external feature consistently mentioned across three FCPs is the film’s genre. Among the external features discussed, but not consistently across all three FCPs, are the nature of the project, the filmmaker’s filmography, anecdotes about the project’s development, references to other reviews, and information on where the film can be found.

Regarding internal information, the three FCPs mention the film’s title and director. No other commonalities among the three Ps were found regarding internal features. However, we hypothesise that this is due to the neglect of the informative component in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*. We therefore decided to present the commonalities between *Kermode and Mayo’s Take*

and *The Empire Film Podcast*. These two FCPs both present storytelling strategies, the synopsis, the actors, and the protagonists, each associated with their salient traits, roles played in the narrative, or relationships with other characters. The structure adopted by both FCPs is interesting due to its organisation. Protagonists are presented along with the actor playing the character, their salient traits, their roles played in the narrative, or their relationships with other characters. For example, “Charles Dance as Victor’s bullying father” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025). This conclusion aligns with Baud’s statement that written FC always feature the genre, director, names of actors, and a synopsis of the film (Baud, 2003) (see Section 3.5 of Chapter 2).

This structure is not adopted in *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*. The association between the actors and their roles is therefore established only if a particular feature of an actor or character is discussed. This may once again be attributed to the decision to omit the synopsis, since listeners presumably already know the story. Moreover, spoilers were observed in the informative component of *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*, indicating a different positioning of the speakers toward the informative segment. The host may consider that their podcast should be listened to only after viewing the film. Neither of the other two FCPs includes spoilers. Instead, they provide only teaser summaries.

6.3.4 Interaction and dialogical moments in podcast-based film criticism

The place attributed to interactions and dialogical moments varies considerably across the FCPs. While *The Empire Film Podcast* and *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* attribute a significant proportion of words to interactions —10% and 16%, respectively — *Kermode and Mayo’s Take* dedicates only 1% of its FCP to interactions. These findings demonstrate that FCPs can be used in EFL classrooms to train both interactive and non-interactive speaking.

These results can serve as the basis for further observations. Indeed, the FCPs that place greater emphasis on interactions appear to be the ones that most neglect the informative components. Therefore, the teaching of FCP as interactive or non-interactive speaking could be primarily justified by the peripheral skills teachers wish to see their pupils develop. If the emphasis is on conducting research on a particular film, FCP should be taught in a non-interactive mode. Conversely, if the aim is to teach agreement or disagreement with previously expressed opinions, FCP should be taught in an interactive mode.

In *The Empire Film Podcast* and *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross*, most interactions aim to agree or disagree, make humorous comments, invite speakers to share their views, or react to what is being discussed.

6.3.5 *Structuring moments in podcast-based film criticism*

The three FCPs display few structuring moments. Invariably, they announce the movie under review and conclude the FCP. The announcement of the movie could simply state its title, sometimes followed by the director's name. These introductory moments are accompanied by words that clearly indicate the review's topic. For instance, listeners of *The Empire Film Podcast* are welcomed to the review by a few words clearly announcing the topic: "we're going to talk about *Frankenstein* because it [*sic.*] came out last week on Netflix" (Hewitt et al., 2025). This announcement could be condensed into just a few words, as in *Kermode and Mayo's Take FC of Frankenstein*, which welcomes listeners only by saying: "Well, it looks [*sic.*] like *Frankenstein* time" (Kermode and Mayo, 2025).

By contrast, no term clearly indicates the conclusion of either FCP. These can mostly be inferred from the speaker's intonation. Indeed, conclusive moments tend to consist of a brief sentence summarising the general opinions on the film delivered in a conclusive tone, indicating the end of the review. However, conclusive structuring moments could also consist of transitional phrases, such as the final "Let's move on" (Hewitt et al., 2025) uttered by a host in *The Empire Film Podcast*.

Other discursive moments found in the analysed FCPs may be used to conclude the previous section, indicate the current P segment, or announce its structure.

6.3.6 *Audience engagement strategies and ethos building moments in podcast-based film criticism*

While these two categories were recorded in our corpus, we primarily noted them to provide a realistic representation of the TG. Indeed, both Baud (2003) and Topa-Bryniarska (2015) mentioned the presence of cultural references that aim to establish the speaker's *ethos* and legitimacy, thereby positioning them as specialists in the field under discussion (See Section 3.5 of Chapter 2). These moments also aim to create a sense of complicity between the listeners and the hosts. While concluding that the three FCPs contain discursive acts that build the speakers' *ethos* and aim to engage the audience, we will not further comment on them in the present master's thesis. This choice is primarily dictated by the limited length of the present work. We nevertheless recognise the added value of integrating these discursive moments into the pedagogical adaptation of the TG of the FC. Furthermore, as these discursive acts do not directly fall within our initial theoretical framework, we have therefore decided to leave them aside.

6.3.7 *Grammar and language functions for expressing opinions in podcast-based film criticism*

Only the grammatical features in the emotionally driven and analytically driven arguments, as well as in the informative segments, were analysed. This choice is motivated by the fact that these three segments constitute the majority of our corpus and are richer in grammatical usage than other segments. In terms of grammar, the invariable grammatical features observed throughout the corpus in these discursive acts are:

- **The present simple** – The present simple is generally used to give opinions or to express feelings in emotionally driven arguments. These occurrences are not always used with an explicit subject, as in “Love him on screen” (Ross & Ross, 2025). When delivering information about a movie, speakers predominantly use the present tense in their synopsis. These observations align with Zheltukhina et al.’s conclusion (see Section 3.5 of Chapter 2) on written FC, which found a predominant use of present tenses to render information and to summarise (2020). However, these observations can be contrasted. As observed in *Kermode and Mayo’s Take*, some speakers prefer using past tenses to summarise the movie.
- **Relative clauses** — Relative clauses are often used to “give us more information about someone or something” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). In the context of podcast-based FC, information may concern salient traits of a character, the filmmaker, or actors, among others. Interestingly, these relative clauses can also be introduced by “what”. Examples of this are: “Christophe Waltz, who gives him the means, the money and the frankly terrifying tower on a cliff top that he needs to finally bring his project to life and create the creature” (Hewitt et al., 2025), “And Guillermo had read Frank Darabont’s script, which is online” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025), “[F]or purists like me who love the original Frankenstein it’s a little bit of a cheat” (Ross & Ross, 2025).

In both emotionally driven and informative segments, the main grammatical features used are:

- **The possessive** (*'s* and *of*) – The possessive is often used to establish the relationship between an actor and the character played by them, as in “Jacob Elordi’s creature” (Hewitt et al., 2025), or between an artist and their work, as in “Mary Shelley’s much adapted gothic novel” (Kermode & Mayo, 2025).
- **The past simple** – In informative segments, the past simple is used to refer to other criticism or interviews and to mark anteriority in relation to the main action of the plot — expressed predominantly in the present tense — when summarising the movie. The past simple can also be used to express the speaker’s opinion. Example for this is: “I thought

there were aspects of Victor's which were incredible, but it just, you know, you kind of see cradle to conclusion with him.” (Ross & Ross, 2025) When used in this way, the speaker discusses the feelings they had while watching the movie. However, opinions are predominantly expressed using the present simple.

- **The demonstratives** (*that, this, these, those*) – Generally speaking, demonstratives refer to what has previously been said.

The main grammatical feature represented solely in the informative segment of the discourse is:

- **The passive voice** — The passive voice, more often used in its reduced form, is used to establish the association between the actor and their roles, such as “played by”, “written by”, and “inspired by” (Hewitt et al., 2025). It could therefore be argued that it is not strictly the passive voice that is used, but rather a past participle followed by an agent, which gives the construction a passive orientation.

In emotionally driven arguments, the most frequently represented grammatical features are:

- **The modal verbs** – Modal verbs are sometimes used to make suggestions on features of the movie, which could have influenced the speaker's opinion on the movie, such as “it probably could have lost 30 minutes” (Hewitt et al., 2025). Here, the host of *The Empire Film Podcast* suggests that he would have enjoyed the film more if it had been 30 minutes shorter. These observations align with Zheltukhina et al. (2020) and Topa-Bryniarska's (2015) conclusions, who note the use of modal verbs in written FC (see Section 3.5 of Chapter 2).
- **The empathetic adverbs** – Empathetic adverbs, such as “very” or “really”, are used to amplify the speaker's opinion.
- **The present continuous** – The present continuous is used when referring to a scene before commenting on it, e.g. “one long sequence where he's just getting the lab ready and he's running” (Ross & Ross, 2025), or to discuss the director's intentions, as in “I just think no one's doing what he's doing” (Ross & Ross, 2025).

No other recurring grammatical features besides relative clauses have been observed in analytically driven arguments. Despite identifying these grammatical features, the high diversity of the grammar used in FCPs has been observed. This diversity depends on both the speaker and the message's content. It is important to note that only the grammatical items observed in all three P

were included in this analysis if they were present on multiple occasions. However, these occurrences were not precisely quantified. Therefore, this selection could be further refined through a quantitative analysis of the occurrences of grammatical items in the corpus.

These findings show some similarities between FCPs and written FC. However, more differences between the two TTs of the TG are observed. As seen in Chapter 2, written FC uses injunctions and reported speech, which have never been observed in the FCPs constituting our corpus. The absence of reported speech may be explained by the oral nature of the discourse. As the utterance is already direct, there is no need to report the discourse. The absence of injunctions may be explained by a desire to foster a sense of closeness and connection between the speakers and their audience. Moreover, a few comparative forms have been observed in the corpus, but their presence was not notable enough to be discussed in this section.

The language functions for expressing one's opinion encountered in the corpus have been listed below:

- I think/thought that + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025; Kermode & Mayo, 2025; Ross & Ross, 2025),
- I feel/felt + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025; Ross & Ross, 2025),
- I (don't/didn't) love/like/appreciate + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025; Ross & Ross, 2025),
- This/It is + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025; Ross & Ross, 2025),
- I find + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025),
- I'm not sure there is + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025),
- It is interesting you're talking about [subject], because + opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025),
- I couldn't quite/really + negative opinion (Hewitt et al., 2025),
- It probably could have + suggestions to enhance the movie (Hewitt et al., 2025),
- I do wish he hadn't changed + negative opinion (Ross & Ross, 2025),
- Although I suppose the difference here being that + opinion (Ross & Ross, 2025),
- My only qualm is + opinion (Ross & Ross, 2025),

This list makes it possible to conclude that the only language expression used to convey opinions common to all three podcasts is the stance verb "to think", followed by the speaker's opinions. This fixed expression can be modified by adverbs ("just", "genuinely", "obviously", "really", etc.) or by the empathetic "do", which aims to emphasise the speaker's views. Other stance verbs, such as "feel", "love", "like", and "believe", are also frequently used to introduce opinions. These verbs expressing opinions contradict Baud's (2003) stance that written FC tend to erase the

origin of the discourse, presenting the writer's opinion as irrefutable. Here, the speaker's opinion is fully assumed and introduced by verbs that highlight their subjectivity and personal pronouns, such as "I", directly attributing the discourse to the speaker. This observation stands in contrast to Geron's findings regarding the predominant use of the personal pronoun "we" in written FC, which blurs the clear discourse's origin and thereby weakens the speaker's commitment to their review (Geron, 2018, p. 312).

Opinions are often expressed through the fixed expression "it is" or "this is". These expressions can be used in conjunction with discourse markers that clearly signal the speaker's subjectivity, such as "because he is, quite frankly, a dick to his creation" (Ross & Ross, 2025). The "quite frankly" here announces the subjectivity of the following statement.

A few more elaborate language functions for conveying opinions are used in the analysed FCPs, such as "My only qualm is [...]" (Ross & Ross, 2025) or "Although I suppose the difference here being that [...]" (Ross & Ross, 2025). However, such instances remain rare. It is important to note that these occur only once, at most twice, throughout a 14-page corpus. Most of the functions conveying opinions are distinguished by their simplicity, as in expressions such as "I'm not sure + [opinion]". Interestingly, modal verbs are also used to introduce opinions. They are used in two specific contexts: firstly, to express an ability or inability to understand a character; secondly, to make suggestions to enhance the movie. For instance, in "it probably could have lost 30 minutes" (Hewitt et al., 2025), or "I couldn't quite get a read on [it]" (Hewitt et al., 2025).

Therefore, the most frequently used language function for expressing opinions in the analysed FCPs appears to be "I think". Similar observations were made by Renson (2023, p. 73) when analysing the language functions for expressing opinions in regulated public debates. Indeed, the author noted "the lexical poverty of the analysed social framework with regard to the linguistic variety, as opposed to the linguistic diversity often demanded by teachers in foreign languages classrooms"⁴⁹ (Renson, 2023, p. 75).

⁴⁹ Personal translation of "la pauvreté lexicale des pratiques sociales de référence analysées par rapport à la variété linguistique souvent exigée des enseignant.es de LE en classe." (Renson, 2023, p. 75)

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on outlining our methodology for constituting and analysing a corpus of FCPs on the movie *Frankenstein*. The Ps have been selected because of their popularity in the UK, and the movie has been selected for its presumed appeal to teenagers, as well as for the rich pedagogical opportunities it offers to build bridges between the target language and its culture.

This corpus analysis reveals that the analysed FCPs share structural commonalities with written FC. While no persuasive discursive acts are explicitly observed, argumentative and informative segments occupy most of the corpus' discursive acts. As in written FC, the combined informative and argumentative functions serve a broader persuasive function. Moreover, the importance of argumentative segments in the three FCPs further associates the TG of FC with the TG family of advertisements. The argumentative segments in the corpus are analysed into two distinct categories – emotionally and analytically driven arguments –, and it is observed that emotionally driven arguments are predominantly used in FCPs. This observation may lead to pedagogical adaptations designed to train pupils to justify their opinions. This point will, however, be further developed in Chapter 6.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that the informative segments are not equally represented across the three FCPs in our corpus. However, these findings may be influenced by the conscious decision made by *Reel Talk with Honey and Jonathan Ross* to omit the synopsis, as the hosts consider the story of Frankenstein to be well-known to the public.

The graphs also reveal considerable differences in the representation of interactions, which lead us to conclude that the TG of FC realised as the P TT could train both interactive and non-interactive speaking skills. Furthermore, our analysis reveals that only a few discursive acts aim to structure the FCPs. This could be adapted pedagogically by exposing students to more structured FCPs to train them to structure their speech more efficiently. This point will, however, be discussed in Chapter 6.

The analysis of grammatical features demonstrates that the language used is rich and varies from one speaker to another. Despite these variations, commonalities have emerged across the FCPs of the corpus. Present tenses and relative clauses are the most recurring grammatical features and appear in all the outlined discursive acts. These are followed by the possessive, the past simple, and the demonstratives, which occur more notably in emotionally driven arguments and in informative segments. Passive voice is also used in informative segments, while emotionally driven arguments contain modal verbs, emphatic adverbs, and the present continuous. Furthermore, the

language functions conveying opinions used in the analysed FCPs are simple and lack variety. Indeed, the most used language function is “I think”. In EFL classrooms, these language functions could be further complexified to provide students with a richer range of language functions for conveying opinions. This point is discussed in the following chapter.

The next chapter focuses on providing potential approaches to adapt FCPs into EFL courses, by offering ways to complexify or simplify aspects of the TG to meet scholar requirements.

7 Chapter 6: Adaptation of film criticism podcasts for EFL courses

The social practice of TGs should be adapted to pedagogical contexts (Renson, 2023, p. 90-91). Simons (2025c, p. 181) argues that TGs could be presented to the class in three distinct ways. TGs could be presented as it is realised in actual social practices, simplified or complexified. These processes of simplification and complexification, termed “descending” and “ascending” pedagogical adaptations, depart from the authentic TG to adapt it to the context of foreign language learning. However, while it is important to present adapted content to students, it is equally important to raise their awareness of the authenticity of the TG presented. Without this, students risk mistaking the authentic TG for the pedagogically adapted TG, and vice versa (Simons, 2025c, p. 182). This process of raising awareness could be facilitated by presenting many examples of the TG as actualised in real-life contexts. This could prevent students from thinking that a TG can only be realised in one way (Simons, 2025c, p. 181).

The graph below illustrates the process of adapting a TG using either a descending or ascending trajectory. In the dedicated sections below, termed “descending pedagogical adaptations” and “ascending pedagogical adaptations”, both adaptations of FCPs to EFL teaching will be discussed.

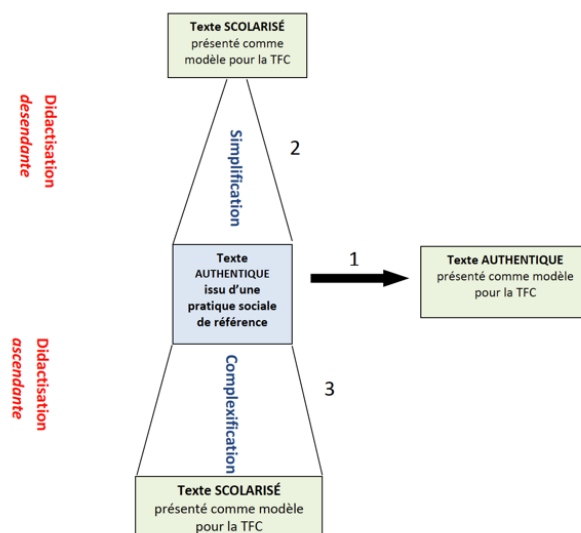


Figure 5: “Ascending” or “descending” pedagogical adaptations based on social references (Simons, 2025c, p. 183).

7.1 Descending pedagogical adaptations

When explaining this concept, Simons (2025c, p. 182) argues that long or linguistically complicated passages could be removed from the original document, whether written or audio, as long as the text remains understandable.

If FCPs are to be listened to in class, they should probably be shortened. Another option would be to present excerpts of a FCP. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the analysed FCPs in the corpora last approximately 10 minutes and are incorporated into a P that can last up to two hours. This is too long to work on the audio content efficiently in class. Listening exercises are expected to be listened to three times in class. If these lengths are kept, listening to the audio content alone would take 30 minutes. If teachers want to present a FCP in a 50-minute course, they would have to neglect the exercise on the audio content, which would decrease students’ attention to the content. If it is interesting to present a FCP in class, this should not be detrimental to other didactic activities. Furthermore, as demonstrated in Section 4.3, P length can negatively affect students’ motivation (Bozavli, 2024). Therefore, shortening the FCP would serve a two-fold objective: on the one hand, presenting the P and (some of) the related exercises in one session; on the other hand, strengthening students’ motivation.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, FCPs are not necessarily fully scripted. Some hosts use the TT of P to distance themselves from the constraints of writing (McWhirter, 2016). Expecting students to produce a FCP without prior scripting would significantly increase the task’s complexity. Therefore, if a FCP is produced by students, it could first be written down and then summarised

in bullet points to present their work to the class. This approach would enable teachers to develop students' writing and speaking skills by teaching one TG. Moreover, this would help address the disadvantage reported in Hendrawan et al.'s survey (2025), namely that Ps are seen solely as training listening and speaking skills (discussed in Section 4.3 of Chapter 3).

FCPs display numerous cultural references to other films, directors, events, anecdotes, and other figures in the world of cinema. When FCPs are taught in class, less importance can be given to these references. Although it is relevant to expect students to research the film under discussion to enrich the scope of the informative segment (discussed in Section 6.3), it is unreasonable to expect them to demonstrate the level of cultural knowledge of a film enthusiast or journalist. When students are expected to produce the FCP, researching the movie seems like an interesting enough challenge. However, when the FCP is used to develop receptive skills, it is relevant to either explain cultural references or expect students to research them to train their information-gathering skills. Moreover, to simplify the TG, humorous and overly conversational moments, as well as digressions and anecdotes, would be removed.

7.2 *Ascending pedagogical adaptations*

Simons (2025c, p. 183) suggests that authentic TG can be complexified to enrich lexical or grammatical choices. For FCPs, this could mean raising expectations regarding the form of the TG. As observed in the previous analysis, the language functions used to convey opinions could be made more complex to provide students with a wider range of formulations (as discussed in Section 6.3.7). Examples include “In my opinion”, “I’d definitely say that”, “If you ask me...” (EnglishClub, 2025), in addition to “I think”. The variety of this register could be evaluated to encourage students to use more complex expressions to convey their opinions. In terms of language functions for conveying opinions, the podcast-based FC resembles the TG of regulated public debate. Indeed, Renson observes “the lexical poverty of the analysed social framework with regard to the linguistic variety, as opposed to the linguistic diversity often demanded by teachers in foreign language classrooms”⁵⁰ (Renson, 2023, p. 75). Therefore, it could be argued that such linguistic enhancement could make the language feel artificial compared to social practices (Simons, 2025c, p. 184). However, such elevated expectations can be justified by the limited knowledge retained between what is taught and what is transferred, also called the intake (Simons, 2025c, p. 184).

⁵⁰ Personal translation of “la pauvreté lexicale des pratiques sociales de référence analysées par rapport à la variété linguistique souvent exigée des enseignant.es de LE en classe.” (Renson, 2023, p. 75)

In terms of grammar, teachers could require students to use the past tense when summarising the film in the informative section. Indeed, as discussed in Section 6.3.7, the corpus-based analysis has revealed that the present tense is generally used to summarise the movie under discussion. This would expand the range of the grammatical points covered by the TG. The analysis also showed that linguistic structures resembling the passive voice are used in FCPs to establish a link between an artist and their creation (such as “played by”, “written by”, and “inspired by” [Hewitt et al., 2025]). In a pedagogical adaptation of FCPs, these structures could be transformed into passive voice. This complexification provides an opportunity to address passive voice in the EFL course.

Although a focused analysis of the lexical features has not been conducted, the recurring use of “stuff” and “things” has been noted. Banning these words would make the TG more complex and encourage students to use more varied and precise terms to express their opinions.

The corpus-based analysis revealed a greater presence of emotion-based arguments. One way to make the TG more complex would be to increase the importance given to logical arguments. This would train students to move beyond their opinions and to justify their preferences. To achieve this, students should be given lists of elements to observe, such as lighting, actors, costume design, and atmosphere, among others, along with different comments that could be made about these items. A table could be designed to raise students’ awareness of the criticised items. This table could include a column listing the criticised items, a column for students’ opinions, a column for justifying these opinions, and a column for giving examples.

Furthermore, students could be taught the “ARE method” to help them build arguments. The “ARE method” teaches students to structure their arguments around three pillars: the statement, the reasoning, and the evidence (Renson, 2023, p. 312). Renson created the table below to facilitate the teaching of argument building.

Table 5: Table showing the explicit didactic sequence on the publicly regulated debate of Renson (2023, p. 313).



➤ To build a strong argument, use the ARE method:

ARE	What is it?	Question?	Example
Assertion	A statement.	What is my position?	<i>We should ban junk food in the school canteen.</i>
Reasoning	The reason why the assertion is valid. It explains why my assertion is true.	Why do I take this position?	<i>Eating junk food is bad for your health.</i>
Evidence	Proof of the reasoning, example and statistic that prove your argument (ex: scientific data).	What proof do I have?	<i>Junk food is high in fat and sugar. Too much fat and sugar puts you at risk for diabetes and heart disease.</i>

This table could be reshuffled and adapted to help students build their arguments when teaching the TG of FC realised following the TT of P.

Table 6: Table adapting the explicit didactic sequence on the publicly regulated debate of Renson (2023, p. 313) to FCPs.

ARE	What is it?	Questions?	Examples
Assertion	A statement of your opinion.	What is my opinion?	<i>Jacob Elordi's performance as the creature is particularly impressive.</i>
Reasoning	The reason I have this opinion. It explains what provoked my opinion.	What makes me think that?	<i>He displays behaviour that is not human-like. This requires a lot of practice and skill.</i>
Evidence	Examples justifying my opinion (typically examples of scenes, excerpts of dialogue, etc.).	Which elements of the film particularly illustrate my point of view?	<i>In the scene in which he stands up for the first time, he appears unsteady on his feet and acts in a childish manner.</i>

This method does not enable students to develop strong and valid arguments (Renson, 2023, p. 312, quoting Snider & Schurer, 2006, p. 25). However, it “enables [students] to structure [their] argument[s] and to maximise [their] development”⁵¹ (Renson, 2023, p. 312, quoting Snider &

⁵¹ Personal translation of: “Cette méthode permet de structurer l’argument et de l’exploiter au maximum” (Renson, 2023, p. 312; quoting Snider & Schurer, 2006, p. 25)

Schurer, 2006, p. 25). This structure aims to teach students to support their opinions with explanations and examples. Moreover, it could foster students' critical thinking. This argument is further developed in Section 7.4.

To enrich the informative and argumentative sections and to train information-gathering skills, they should be expected to research the film under discussion. This would supplement the external information — meaning information that cannot be accessed through viewing the film — provided on the film and would train students to research and select useful and reliable sources.

The structure of the TG could also be adapted for pedagogical contexts. As observed in the previous corpus-based analysis (see Section 6.3.5), few structuring moments have been identified. Adding more structure to the pedagogical adaptation of the TG can be beneficial. This would provide students with more linguistic functions to structure their speaking. For instance, students should be taught that an introduction generally includes the host's and podcast's names, as well as the podcast's target audience and general theme (Grey & McLean, 2025). An example of this is:

“Hello and welcome to the ___ podcast; this is the show for ___, all about ___, and on this episode, have you ever struggled with ___? Well, that's exactly what we'll help you with on this week's show, where you'll learn how to ___” (Grey & McLean, 2025).

Similarly, teachers should raise students' awareness of the concluding moments by presenting students with the main elements discussed in this section. As Grey & McLean (2025) argue, the conclusion, also called outro, should, among other things, thank the listeners, tease the following episodes, and include a call to action.

However, although we classify the expectation of a more rigid structure as an ascending pedagogical adaptation, we acknowledge that this could be considered a simplification of the TG. A more rigid structure could help students predict more clearly what to talk about and when. The TG would therefore be structured around four distinct parts: the introduction, the informative section, the argumentative section, and the conclusion. This differs from the social practices, where argumentative and informative elements sometimes blend. The introduction and conclusion would be borrowed from the P's macro-structure, thereby giving them greater importance. In this outline, the introduction and conclusion would include welcoming the audience, introducing the hosts, thanking the audience for listening, and closing the show. This proposition is based on the fact that neglecting the introduction and conclusions, as they are absent from the analysed FCPs, would decontextualise the TG. The analysed FCPs are indeed part of a more elaborate structure that includes an introduction and a conclusion. Therefore, when presenting the TG in class as a listening

exercise or productive task, it is important to specify that the hosts omit the introductory and concluding sections in the authentic content, as the analysed FCPs are embedded in a broader structure. It is also possible to adapt the content pedagogically, adding a more rigid introduction and conclusion. This pedagogical adaptation would require teachers to clarify to students whether the FCP used is authentic or pedagogically adapted to prevent students from seeing the adapted TG as authentic and vice versa. This more rigid structure, coupled with the greater importance placed on analysis-based arguments, can help students develop their discursive skills and their abilities to construct arguments that follow a logical pattern. This approach aligns with the various skills covered in the communicative approach (see Section 2.3 in Chapter 1).

When the TG is realised in an interactive mode, speakers tend to interrupt each other. Such practice would be disregarded in EFL classes. This would encourage students to learn to respect their classmates when they are expressing their opinions and to listen to others' views. Enhancing the TG in this way can promote the development of more efficient communication skills, since listening and knowing when to speak are both part of efficient communication.

7.3 Solutions for presenting pedagogically adapted film criticism podcasts in EFL classes

One option for presenting FCPs as a listening exercise would be to write a shorter, more pedagogical version of an existing, unmodified FCP. Starting from the script of an authentic FCP, teachers could keep it as is, complexify or simplify the interesting, informative and argumentative parts, and delete any superfluous passages. This would allow difficult sections to be removed and add more structure (discussed in Sections 7.1 & 7.2). Once the script has been adapted for teaching purposes, it can be given to an IA tool, such as TTSmacker⁵², to transform it into a listening exercise. This option strikes a balance between authenticity and accessibility, thereby fostering motivation by maintaining a connection to real-world context and increasing exposure to comprehensible input in EFL.

7.4 Advantages of using film criticism podcasts in EFL classes

Teaching the TG of FC actualised as the TT of P has many advantages. Its anchoring in social references not only aligns with the action-oriented approach of the CEFR (discussed in Section 2.2) but also fosters students' motivation. This connection to real social practices allows students to see the purpose of the knowledge being taught. Furthermore, this TG is rooted in the target language's culture. This enables students to learn more about the English-speaking film industry,

⁵² "TTSMaker is a free text-to-speech tool" that allows to synthesise texts into audio into various languages and to "read text and e-books aloud" (TTSMacker, 2025).

including its leading actors and directors, and thereby to develop their linguistic, socio-cultural, and discursive skills.

If adequately adapted to school contexts, FCPs can positively increase students' exposure to comprehensible input. This has a positive impact on students' grammar, vocabulary, listening, and speaking skills. Moreover, if produced, this TG increases the potential for training oral skills. In contexts where students have limited opportunities to speak, developing speaking skills is essential. Indeed, Renson (2023, p. 93) estimates that, in a 50-minute period, each student benefits from 2.5 minutes of speaking time. Moreover, FCPs can be approached progressively, starting with receptive skills and then working on productive skills. Students would first be given a script to familiarise themselves with the grammar and vocabulary of the TG. Afterwards, a listening exercise would be proposed. In terms of production, the script could first be written and then presented orally, either interactively or non-interactively, depending on which skills the teacher wants to emphasise. As discussed in Chapter 5, non-interactive speaking FCPs place greater emphasis on informative sections. This format would therefore encourage students to research the film under discussion. In contrast, interactive speaking FCPs place greater emphasis on confronting opinions and on agreeing or disagreeing with others.

The TG of FC can also encourage critical thinking among students if its arguments are based on analysis. In a study on teaching written FC, Raffy-Hideux (2020, p. 15) noted that students are reluctant to share their opinions. Cinema can alleviate students' fear of sharing their opinions because of its universality. Indeed, many people watch films and are willing to discuss them (Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15, quoting Frodon, 2008, p.14). Furthermore, “there is no good or bad manner to perceive a movie, there is no right or false opinion on movies, there is just a singular view that, whatever it is, has entire legitimacy”⁵³ (Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15). This TG enables students to recognise the value of their opinions and to argue them effectively (Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15). Arguing their opinions can “develop curiosity, emphasise argumentation, notably by avoiding gratuitous affirmations and questioning hasty or excessive judgments, confront their opinions and accept making mistakes.”⁵⁴

Learning these skills is increasingly important given the increased significance of criticism with the advent of the Web 2.0. The fact that “there is probably more art criticism being produced and

⁵³ Personal translation of “Il n’y a pas une bonne ou une mauvaise façon de percevoir un film, il n’y a ni avis juste ni avis erroné sur un film, il n’y a qu’un regard singulier qui, quel qu’il soit, a toute légitimité” (Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15).

⁵⁴ Personal translation of “développer sa curiosité, donner de l’importance à l’argumentation – notamment ne pas affirmer gratuitement et remettre en question un jugement hâtif ou excessif, etc., confronter ses opinions ou encore accepter l’erreur”(Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15).

consumed now than ever before in the history of the world” (Carroll, 2009, p. 1) justifies the teaching of FCPs in class. Far from merely presenting the structure of a TG to students, using FCPs equips them with tools to distinguish between emotionally based and analytically based arguments. Such skills are crucial for students’ processes of opinion- and identity-building. The utility of these skills extends beyond the walls of EFL classrooms. Students are indeed constantly exposed to criticisms and reviews on YouTube, Tik Tok, and Instagram, among others, which shape their opinions and tastes. Being sensitised at school to the discursive strategies involved in writing criticism could enable students to identify the argumentative structure of the contents they encounter and handle them more carefully.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the didactic simplification and complexification of the TG of FC as realised in the P TT. When discussing the simplification of the TG to adapt it for EFL teaching, the following has been considered: shortening the FCP; writing the content before presenting it; and reducing the cultural references.

The TG can be made more complex by expecting students to summarise the film in the past tense, use the passive voice, and vary the language functions used to express opinions. Furthermore, the arguments presented in the adapted FCP for EFL teaching are expected to be analytical rather than emotional. This would require teaching students to build arguments using the “ARE method” and providing them with a list of items to criticise. Furthermore, information-gathering skills can be developed by requiring students to base their arguments and informative segments on sources discussing the film in question. It has been proposed to provide a more structured approach to the TG, serving a twofold purpose. On the one hand, it makes the TG more complex by expecting more language segments to structure the speech. On the other hand, it simplifies the TG by making it more predictable. Expecting analysis-based arguments and requiring more structure both serve the wider agenda of developing students’ discursive skills. Another way to make the TG more complex is to expect students to avoid interrupting one another, thereby training them to respect each other’s opinions.

A way to adapt FCPs by using generative AI tools has been proposed. This adaptation enables teachers to strike a balance between authentic contents and pedagogical adaptations.

Lastly, the advantages of integrating FCPs in EFL settings have been discussed. Notably, its action-oriented approach aligns with the CEFR’s purpose. It fosters students’ motivation and linguistic, socio-cultural, and discursive skills, by simultaneously increasing students’ exposure to

comprehensible input, and training oral skill(s). Moreover, it has been argued that integrating podcast-based FC into classrooms is particularly relevant in the current climate, given the increased importance of criticism, especially online. This TG could educate students in qualitative criticism and encourage them to treat online information with caution.

8 General conclusion

This master's thesis aimed to prove that Ps could be seen as a structuring TT to materialise the TG of FC. Although there is definitional vagueness around the concept of podcasting, Ps can be considered a medium, insofar as they are the materiality through which content, here the TG of FC, can be accessed. This confirms that Ps can act as TT, as Simons (2025c, p. 165) argues that the medium can be a relevant factor influencing the TT.

Furthermore, at the outset of this work, it has been hypothesised that integrating podcast-based FC in EFL settings offers advantages, as it can develop students' linguistic, sociocultural, and discursive skills. It is possible to confirm that integrating FCPs in teaching activities trains students' linguistic skills. With Ps' ability to focus on listening and speaking skills, podcast-based FC could be seen as an opportunity to develop pupils' linguistic abilities. As proved in Chapter 3, Ps listening is also favourable towards the development of pupils' vocabulary and pronunciation. While it could be argued that FCPs are restricted to training listening and speaking skills, their teaching could focus on writing and reading by asking students to read and write scripts of FCPs. Therefore, when properly addressed, FCPs can train the 5 skills of the communicative approach.

FCs also offer an opportunity to immerse pupils in the foreign language's culture, thereby fostering socio-cultural skills. The ability of Ps to expose pupils to authentic input (see Chapter 3) and their accessibility are seen as assets to be used in EFL settings (see Chapter 4). Indeed, the FWB reference frameworks and curricula invite teachers to build bridges between the target culture and EFL teaching activities by using new technologies (see Chapter 4). FCPs can therefore be used to introduce pupils to English-speaking cinema, actors, and culture, as well as literature, if books such as *Frankenstein* are adapted for the screen (see Chapter 5). However, training these skills requires adapting the FCP consequently. To provide pupils with comprehensible input, and, therefore, to align with Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis, FCPs need to be adapted. Authentic FCPs can indeed pose an inaccessible challenge for pupils, thereby negatively impacting students' motivation (see Chapter 6).

Initially, it has been argued that FCPs could train students' discursive skills (see Chapter 1). However, an analysis of FCPs' social framework based on the existing literature (see Chapter 4) demonstrates that FCPs actualized in real-life contexts are not rigidly structured (McWhirter, 2016). McWhirter's observations have been confirmed by a corpus-based analysis demonstrating FCPs' structural lack. Therefore, to train students' discursive skills, a complexification of the TG has been proposed to infuse more structure into FCPs (see Chapter 6). Those adaptations mainly consist of increasing the importance of analytically driven arguments to train students to logically motivate their opinions and to structure their discursive acts more rigidly around four pillars: the introduction, the presentation of the movie, the argumentation for its liking/disliking, and the conclusion.

This work also assumed that FCPs are grammatically and lexically rich. The existing literature, mainly focused on written FC from the consumerist school of thought, revealed the richness of its grammar, mobilizing comparative, inclusive pronouns, reported speech, and the present tense, among others. A corpus-based analysis of three FCPs revealed a comparable yet not identical richness. While FCPs activate various grammar points, these differ from those observed in written FCs. This could be explained by the oral nature of the TG. Therefore, FCPs draw on the following grammatical resources: the present tense, relative clauses, possessive, past simple, demonstratives, passive voice, modal verbs, emphatic adverbs, and present continuous. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the FC found in the written press and Ps share commonalities but are differently actualised depending on their TTs.

Although the lexical richness of the TG has not been addressed in the corpus-based analysis, the analysis of existing research on the social framework of FCPs provides an overview of the simplicity of the vocabulary used to evaluate the reviewed films (see Chapter 2). Because of the commonalities between the two TTs, it could be argued that the adjectives used to comment on movies in FCPs could display a similar simplicity. However, this hypothesis could be investigated in a further study. The corpus-based analyses (see Chapter 5) shed light on the simplicity of the language functions used to convey opinions in FCPs. This gives rise to the proposition that the TG should be complexified by expecting the use of more complex and varied language functions in the pedagogical adaptation of FCPs for EFL settings (see Chapter 6).

At the outset of this master's thesis, FCPs have been considered a relevant means for teaching students to develop arguments that transcend their initial opinions, thereby fostering their critical thinking. Studies reveal the central role of criticism in society (Carroll, 2009, p. 2) and underscore the importance of teaching students the workings of criticism to help them analytically question

the encountered criticisms. However, as previously mentioned, for the integration of FCPs into the classrooms to train critical thinking, their content needs to be pedagogically adapted and complexified to increase the proportion allocated to analytically driven arguments (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, FCPs are a useful introduction to the TG family of criticism, as giving opinions on a film is perceived as easier, because none of the expressed opinions in FCPs are inherently true or false (Raffy-Hideux, 2020, p. 15).

It has been hypothesised that integrating FCPs into classrooms could foster pupils' motivation. This hypothesis must be further nuanced by noting that pupils' motivation can be effectively fostered only if FCPs' content is properly adapted. Indeed, Ps present various difficulties such as accents, fast-paced delivery, and absence of feedback (see Chapter 3). Such challenges could undermine pupils' motivation by rendering the content incomprehensible. The audio content would therefore not provide pupils with comprehensible input. However, when appropriately adapted by slowing down the delivery pace, shortening the content, or eliminating overly difficult elements (see Chapter 6), FCPs can help reduce students' anxiety about speaking and help them find meaning in the final task (see Chapter 3), thereby fostering their motivation.

Other advantages that have emerged throughout this master's thesis have not been mentioned in the initial hypothesis. This research demonstrates that FCPs can also provide an opportunity for training students' information-gathering skills. Indeed, the corpus-based analysis demonstrates that the P hosts research on the movie to talk about it in more detail. However, this depends on the importance placed on the movie's presentation. This presentation might be weakened by the format of polyphonic FCPs, which gives greater weight to interactivity than to the depth of the discourse. This shows that FCPs can train both interactive and non-interactive speaking in EFL settings. However, both skills require a different set of skills to be trained jointly with the TG of FC realised as P TT. For instance, monological FCPs seem to train in more depth information gathering skills, whereas polyphonic FCPs tend to place more emphasis on agreeing and disagreeing with others.

The earlier assumptions that the use of FCPs is rarely mentioned in the WBF reference framework and official curricula have been confirmed through a search of these documents. While the TG of FC is given as examples for final tasks in non-interactive speaking, reading, and writing in general education curricula, the TG is neither mentioned in relation to listening skills nor explained. Given the advantages mentioned above, FCPs could be given greater prominence in these official documents. Moreover, the TG is never brought into relation with technical and professional secondary education. However, the TG could be adequately adapted and integrated

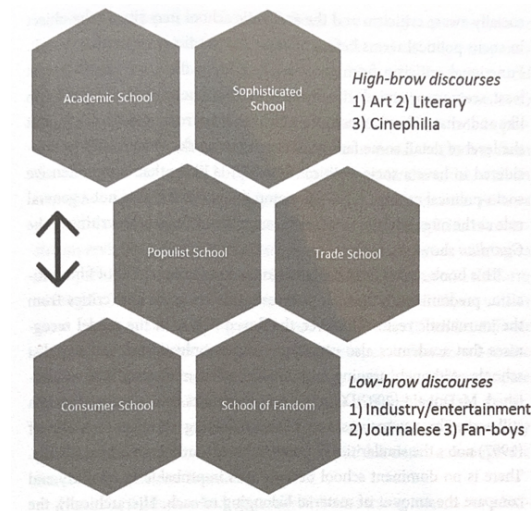
into these education courses, which would also benefit from the numerous advantages offered by FCPs.

Therefore, our initial main hypothesis that integrating FCPs into classrooms contains many advantages has been confirmed but nuanced. Indeed, these advantages emerged only if the TG is adequately adapted to the pupils' level.

9 Appendices

<i>exposer</i>	exposé oral ; conférence ; interview d'expert ; dialogue explicatif, etc.
<i>régler les comportements</i>	présentation d'une recette de cuisine ; consignes, règles de jeu ; descriptions d'itinéraires ; dialogues pour obtenir des renseignements, etc.
<i>narrer</i>	contes ; récits d'aventure ; fables, etc.
<i>relater</i>	- récit conversationnel, récit d'expérience vécue, récit de voyage, témoignage - nouvelles de la radio/télévision, reportages, chronique sportive... - récit historique, esquisse biographique, biographie, etc.
<i>argumenter</i>	la délibération informelle ; le débat ; la plaidoirie ; le réquisitoire ; l'assemblée ; le conseil de classe

Appendix 1: "Genre regrouping" of Dolz & Schneuwly (1998, p. 85-87) in Simons' typology (2018, pp. 55-56).



Appendix 2: Six schools of contemporary film criticism (McWhirter, 2016, p. 73).

Critères minimaux définissant la critique de film	
Sémantique (« familles événementielles » et rubriques)	La sortie d'un film est l'évènement déclencheur de discours. Les articles qui traitent de tels évènements se retrouvent généralement dans la rubrique « cinéma » ou, à défaut, « culture » des journaux et des magazines.
Énonciatif (degré de prise en charge des énoncés et identité de l'énonciateur)	Bien que l'identité de l'auteur de la critique soit généralement révélée au lecteur (la critique est signée par un auteur/journaliste, fût-il une entité collective), il/elle se manifeste rarement par le biais de pronoms personnels qui l'identifieraient clairement en tant qu'« énonciateur ». C'est le règne du « on » ou du « nous » impersonnel qui englobe aussi parfois le lecteur/spectateur potentiel du film.
Longueur (brièveté vs développement)	Le prototype de la critique de film s'étend sur plusieurs paragraphes qui permettent à l'auteur de présenter plus ou moins succinctement l'intrigue et ensuite d'émettre un jugement sur tel ou tel aspect du film. Il faut toutefois noter que la longueur du texte peut varier sensiblement selon qu'il est destiné au grand public ou à un public averti de cinéphiles (et publié dans des revues spécialisées comme <i>Première</i> , <i>Les Cahiers du cinéma</i>).
Pragmatique (buts, intentions communicatives)	Dans la mesure où elle développe un point de vue sur l'évènement « film », la critique ne prétend pas fournir une information neutre au lecteur : de façon plus ou moins manifeste, elle cherche à l'inciter à agir (aller voir le film) ou à ne pas agir (ne pas aller voir le film). Ceci étant, des formes de critiques situées à la périphérie du genre peuvent poursuivre d'autres buts : informer, expliquer ou instruire (si le texte tend plus vers l'analyse que vers la critique proprement dite).

Compositionnel (plans de textes et séquences)	La critique de film est généralement composée de deux temps forts : d'abord, la présentation du « pitch », et puis l'évaluation des mérites de l'œuvre mis en regard avec ses défauts. Sans surprise, l'on retrouve des séquences principalement narratives dans la phase d'exposition du scénario, tandis que la phase évaluative mêle les séquences descriptive, explicative et/ou argumentative.
Stylistique (texture micro-linguistique)	Sur le plan syntaxique, certains critiques semblent affectionner des structures complexes et ouvragées qui, bien qu'elles ne soient pas toujours indispensables à l'expression de leurs idées, leur permettent de démontrer leur virtuosité linguistique. De même, l'utilisation de termes plus rares ou issus du jargon cinématographique peut participer de cette volonté d'épater le lecteur en lui montrant l'envergure de la palette lexicale. Par ailleurs, toujours sur le plan lexical, l'usage de tours mélioratifs ou péjoratifs est un des moyens les plus courants d'émettre des jugements sur le film.

Appendix 3: Application of Adam's typology to the text genre of the film review (Geron, 2018, pp. 311-313).

Table 1. Students' Perception of Podcast

Category	Subcategory	Examples of Behavior
Flexibility	Multitasking	Listening while commuting or lying down (R1, R5)
Skill development	Listening comprehension	Improved ability to catch native expressions (R3, R6)
	Vocabulary acquisition	Exposure to new vocabulary and natural phrases (R2, R4)
	Speaking confidence	Mimicking pronunciation and expressions from podcasts (R5)

Appendix 4: *Students' perception of podcast, (Hendrawan et al., 2025, p. 460).*

Category	Subcategory	Examples of Behavior
Engagement	Enjoyment	Students described podcasts as fun and stress-free (R7, R1)
Motivation	Reduced anxiety	Felt more relaxed compared to classroom learning (R6, R3)
Autonomy	Self-initiated learning	Listening without being told; choosing topics of interest

Appendix 5: *Motivational impact of podcast use (Hendrawan et al., 2025, pp. 460-461).*

Types de productions	Pour (s')informer	Pour (faire) agir	Pour exprimer des opinions, des sentiments
narratif	X		X
descriptif	X		X
injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif		X	
explicatif	X		X
argumentatif		X	X

Appendix 6: *Explanation of the communicative functions included in the communicative objective set out by the official referential of the WBF (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017a).*

Pos.	Podcast		 Abo
1.	Kermode & Mayo's Take		100  
2.	Reel Talk with Honey & Jonathan Ross		99.7  
3.	The Empire Film Podcast		99.6  
4.	Blank Check with Griffin & David		99.3  
5. +3	Now Playing - The Movie Review Podcast		98.3  
6. +1	Unspooled		98.8  
7. -2	Pop Culture Happy Hour		98.7  
8. -2	Random Movie Generator with David Earl and David Edwards		95.7  
9.	The Confused Breakfast		97.8  
10.	Kermode and Mayo's Film Review		98.6  
11. +1	Too Scary; Didn't Watch		97.1  
12. +9	You Are Good		95.3  

Appendix 7: *Screenshot of podwatch's classification of podcasted film review on 21 November 2025.*

10 Literature Review

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