

In this paper, I discuss my experience producing audio and video resources for introductory and intermediate language instruction that were then distributed as Podcasts. To some extent, my experience represents a tension inherent in the term “Podcast” itself, which describes both a mechanism of dissemination and also a typical form of content frequently distributed through that mechanism. My focus in this paper will be on my efforts to utilize the easy dissemination of audio-video pedagogical resources enabled by Podcast technology, as well as some possible avenues for fostering evolving, student- and instructor-produced content.

Despite the reputation of Classics as being bound to the text for the learning of Latin and Greek—a reputation under increasing and healthy challenge from proponents of active aural-oral exercise—the disconnect between the spoken language and the written word has never been as wide in Classics as is often thought. Many instructors routinely model correct pronunciation and sentence structure for students in the classroom by reading passages out-loud; many also have their students read the original language with feeling and nuance—either in addition to or in lieu of in-class oral translation. “Podcastable” audio resources have real potential for reinforcing and expanding our students’ exposure to languages as functional systems of signs with their own learnable rhythms and patterns, rather than as a perversely encrypted version of English.

With this in mind, I will demonstrate two versions of audio materials that I have developed for my language courses: 1) a “natural” version, read with feeling and with a focus on the rhetorical pauses and flow of the material, or the rhythm and metrics in the case of poetry; and 2) what I call a “study-speed” version. This “study-speed” version, in addition to being recited at a slower pace to allow students to recognize and register the words and forms that are being spoken, highlights word-groups and phrases on the pedagogical model advocated by, among others, B. Dexter Hoyos in *Latin: How to Read it Fluently*. These recordings, some which were prepared by advanced students, provide students with hints of the structure and meaning of phrases and passages without having to resort to the mediated instruction of an English commentary or translation, and can do so while students are preparing assignments, rather than waiting until they arrive in class to hear the modeled reading. The use of RSS/Podcast technology permits students to have full control of these audio resources and, when portable audio devices are available, to incorporate these resources into their normal study routine, independent of an (often-distracting) computer. I will also demonstrate some potential uses of audio paired with video in teaching languages (“VCasting”), in particular Catullus at the intermediate level (preview available at: <http://www.haverford.edu/classics/audio/Catullus/Catullus1Pres/Catullus1pres.html>).

Such resources, produced for—and when possible by—our students, also reach a wider community of learners interested in classical languages and cultures. This makes such language resources a highly efficient form of outreach that serves to raise awareness of our institutions, our discipline, and the instruction of Latin and Greek.