

## Web 2.0 Audio Tools for Online Language Learning: Teaching Method Issues

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### Abstract

Undoubtedly a human voice plays the most significant role in the process of foreign language acquisition. In a traditional classroom setting a language instructor provide simultaneously, verbal, visual and non-verbal input (facial expression, gesture, etc) as an integral part of teaching process. However, despite of educational technology advancement online courses are still offering primarily text based learning environment. It seems that verbal input and especially synchronous communications are beyond the learning experience of the large portion of online language students.

This article addresses the importance of audio and synchronous communication between instructor and students for the successful online language learning. The authors focus on the Web 2.0 audio technologies emphasizing the variety of available tools that can support online coursework. More specifically, the discussion deals with the instructional value of audio conferencing systems, podcast, and enhanced podcast in teaching language online. An comprehensive overview of the current research with follow up in-depth discussion concerning benefits that students may have form Web 2.0 audio tools is highlighted. Furthermore, the authors argues that integration of free Web 2.0 audio tools such as Skype, Voice Thread or Jing can have significant impact on improving student's interaction and conversation skills. The authors also describe some of the current best practices for managing and implementing audio conferencing systems, podcast, and enhanced podcast in online language course.

While there is an increasing trend in using Web 2.0 applications in the recent years the following two questions still remain: how effectively the instructors integrates Web 2.0 audio tools in course curriculum and what teaching methods regarding audio use would be the most appropriate for enhancing foreign language acquisition. Therefore, the pivotal point of this paper is teaching method issues in online courses supported by Web 2.0 audio tools. Finally, the authors provides to the online language teachers useful guidelines and strategies for incorporating audio tools in a virtual environment.