Storying History: A Narrative Study on the use of Podcasts and Podcasting in Secondary Social Studies Classrooms

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STORYING HISTORY: A NARRATIVE STUDY ON THE USE OF PODCASTS AND PODCASTING IN SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Education

by

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August 2024
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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the many people who have supported me through the process of completing this dissertation.

First and foremost, I wish to thank my advisor, Dr. Kerri Tobin, for their invaluable guidance, support, and feedback. Your encouragement and belief in me throughout this whole journey have been instrumental in shaping this research.

I am also deeply grateful to the members of my committee, Dr. Jaqueline Bach, Dr. Leslie Tuttle, and Dr. Min Su, for their thoughtful comments, constructive criticism, and ongoing support throughout this process.

A special thank you to my colleagues at the University Laboratory School, for your camaraderie, advice, and encouragement that have been a constant source of motivation and inspiration.

To my friends and family, thank you for your patience, understanding, and unwavering belief in me. Your support has been my anchor throughout this journey. A heartfelt thank you to my parents, Bert and Betty, my sister Leigh, and my brother-in-law Kyle for their unconditional love and encouragement.

Lastly, to Corin, your love, patience, and unwavering support have been my greatest source of strength. Thank you for standing by me through every step of this journey.

This dissertation is dedicated to everyone who believed in me and supported me along the way.

Thank you.
Abstract

This dissertation explores the use of Podcasts and Podcasting in secondary social studies classrooms through via narrative inquiry. This study aims to understand how educators use these technologies in their classrooms to facilitate student learning by focusing two specific domains of the TPACK model by Kohler and Mishra (2009): Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) and Technological Content Knowledge (TCK). This research was motivated by my personal need to engage my own students who, as 21st-century learners, are deeply involved in technology and a desire for a new method for teaching historical content.

The research questions address how teachers describe their experiences using podcasts, the role of TPK and TCK in their decision-making, and the advantages and disadvantages that they articulated when using Podcasts or Podcasting as educational tools. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews with secondary social studies teachers who have used Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms. The findings highlight the flexibility and engagement podcasts offer, and challenges such as the need for professional development and addressing the Digital Divide.

The study situates the use of Podcasts or Podcasting within the broader context of education technology and pedagogy, arguing for their potential to enhance student learning by providing multiple perspectives and potential to foster critical thinking. It also emphasizes the importance of pedagogical intent and proper lesson design to effectively integrate Podcasts or Podcasting into the classroom.

Implications for practice include the need for ongoing teacher support and professional development, as well as considerations of students’ technological access and familiarity. This research contributes to the limited research on the use of Podcasts and Podcasting in secondary social studies education and suggests areas for future research, including the impact of this
technology on student achievement and continuing to understand the ‘how’ of their use in the classroom.

This study underscores the value of narrative inquiry in capturing teachers’ lived experiences and provides insights into how they chose to integrate this technology into their classrooms. By documenting these teachers' experiences, this research adds to the understanding of how Podcasts or Podcasting can be used to create engaging lessons in social studies classrooms.
Introduction

“None of the other teachers were trying it or doing it, so I thought, why not?” – Mrs. R

My interest in Podcasts and Podcasting began with a conversation with some online gaming friends outside of school. We were discussing the role of media in the 2020 election and how many believed that the news media was not presenting both sides of the story. The conversation sparked a memory of me sitting in my car listening to a Podcast called ‘Killing Fairness’ by the producers of History This Week, a Podcast written and produced by The History Channel (HISTORY, 2020). This episode highlighted a decision made by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) on August 4, 1987, to rescind the Fairness Doctrine in which “the FCC [had] attempted to ensure that TV and radio broadcasters present both sides of the political issues [being] discussed on their airwaves” (Killing Fairness: HISTORY This Week, 2020). This episode highlighted what the Doctrine “actually did, why it died, and where exactly that leaves us today” (Killing Fairness: HISTORY This Week, 2020), highlighting the fact news broadcasters did not discuss many of the more sensitive news stories due to the requirement that news outlets present both sides. I began explaining to my friends what I had learned in this Podcast and why the news media was so one-sided with their reporting. The conversation sparked a supplementary discussion about Podcasts, what people listened to, and how they learned about topics that interested them.

Later that evening, I recall sitting on my couch contemplating the discussion about learning via Podcasts. Did my students use Podcasts to learn new material? What do they learn from them? Did they listen to Podcasts? If so, which ones? Why those? What topics were they listening to? Could this be used in my classroom? What began as a series of questions rolling around in my head crystallized into a lesson plan for my US History courses. How could I use a
Podcast to teach a topic in my classroom? Some introductory research into the topic led me to some basic ideas of how I could experiment with Podcasts in my classroom. I decided to use a supplementary style Podcast. "Supplementary Podcasting involves the provision of additional material to help students deepen their understandings of particular topics” (Pegrum et al., 2015, p. 145). Using supplementary Podcasts allows for more time for lectures and questions to help my students further construct their understanding of the topic. Following the suggestions of Popova (2014), I created questioning tasks that would help situate and guide my students’ learning using epistemic questioning. Popova (2014) articulates this strategy as “a full cycle epistemic task is a task that involves a pre-lecture Podcast, the lecture itself, a post-lecture review activity (e.g., written answers to the epistemic questions ending the Podcast episode) and finally short feedback on the review activity” (p. 333).

The Podcast chosen was from HISTORY this Week and was titled ‘Destroyer of Worlds.’ This Podcast presented the discussion behind the creation and use of the Atomic Bomb and the views of Robert Oppenheimer (Destroyer of Worlds: HISTORY this Week, 2020). After completing the activity, I reviewed the students’ answers to see if the knowledge they gained from listening to the Podcast influenced their responses to the larger question of ‘Was the US justified in its use of the Atomic Bombs? Why or why not?’ Throughout their answers, various facts from the Podcast permeated them. Comparing their initial answers to the overarching question of the justification of the use of the bombs, many began to see the other side of the argument, the one against the use. Seeing how the information in the Podcast appeared to influence their answers it led me to believe that using Podcasts in a social studies classroom could be help impacting student learning by assisting them in constructing their opinions and knowledge of a historical event. As I reflected on this lesson and how this technological tool
influenced my student’s construction of their knowledge and understanding of history, I began to wonder what other teachers’ experiences were using Podcasts in their classrooms and whether they used commercially produced Podcasts or had their students engage in Podcasting. This question led me to research how secondary social studies teachers use Podcasts and Podcasting in their classrooms. I was disappointed to find very little research on teachers’ experiences using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms.

There are many ways in which the terms ‘Podcast’ and ‘Podcasting’ are used. Literature on Podcasts and Podcasting in education sometimes uses the terms interchangeably, which can confuse readers. For this research, I will define a ‘Podcast’ as those media items that produced commercially, such as the HISTORY Podcasts discussed earlier, or those that are instructor-generated to review or introduce new materials and concepts to students. These are consumed by students to “support learning” (Mathany & Dodd, 2018, p. 66). The term ‘Podcasting’ will be defined as creating a Podcast in a classroom setting, the product of students’ Podcast creation. The creation of Podcasts, or Podcasting, “allows students to articulate a position or information on the knowledge they have constructed” (Mathany & Dodd, 2018, p. 66). The two types of Podcasts in the literature are instructor-created and student-created Podcasts.

Statement of the Problem

As a Secondary Social Studies teacher, I constantly try to engage my students with the curriculum. The age-old adage “History is boring!” frequently rings out in schools and my own classroom. However, I contend there is a way to meet the students on their level by engaging them in their learning using educational technologies such as Podcasts and Podcasting. These are tools usable by teachers to not only “deliver content” (McNamara et al., 2020, p. 2515) but also provide a new means by which to “design and delivery of instruction” (Kennedy, et al., 2016, p. 304), but they can also help students to learn 21st-century skills (Goldman, 2018, as
cited in Norsworthy and Herndon, 2020) and teach them new technologies (McMahon & Walker, 2019). A theoretical framework, the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Model by Kohler and Mishra (2009), now exists that can provide a way to critically look at technology integration in classrooms and how it pertains to teaching and learning.

Educators in the 21st century face many hurdles when pursuing the goal of educating their current students. These students are avid users of technology and for many educators, even one such as me, who uses technology nearly every day in instruction, it is a struggle to keep up with not only the expansion of technological tools but also to keep up with the ways students learn both inside and outside the classroom. A study by Gómez (2019) highlights the way that 21st-century learners view technology, not just as a tool but as a “cultural identity” (p. 37). Ms. Goodman, the subject of Gómez’s (2019) study, articulates this 21st-century learner identity further by explaining:

“Middle school kids live on their devices. It is bigger than just texting a classmate or playing a game. This is how middle school kids communicate today; this is how they learn today. If they have a question, they might come to me, but they will definitely ask Google or watch a YouTube video about it. Laptops, cell phones, Playstations, all of it, are an extension of who they are, it is a part of their culture, their identity” (Gómez, 2019, p. 37).

This description clearly articulates the relationship between current and future K-12 students and technology; it is an integral part of their lives. Although Ms. Goodman speaks only about her middle school students, she effectively paints a picture of the 21st-century learner at any level of K-12 education. Technology is a ubiquitous part of their lives. Even the term ‘Google’ is now being identified as a verb by Merriam-Webster dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2023). Technology grows and improves exponentially, and “with technology continuing to become faster, smaller, and cheaper, its place in every classroom is a foregone conclusion” (Hilton, 2015, p. 72).
Meeting these students on their terms is now vital to effective teaching and learning. However, this new frontier does not come without its challenges.

Educators face the hurdles of being not just facilitators of knowledge acquisition but also the restraints of restrictive state standards, and the pressure to cover as much material as possible to meet learning goals set forth by state tests. As Vasquez (2015) states, “Today, more than ever, the mentality of making great time has become more widespread as teachers feel the pressure of covering a mandated or standardized core curriculum” (p. 147). For example, the Louisiana Core Curriculum for US History requires students to learn all of US History from 1865 to the present. Many schools that work on a block schedule give them 16 weeks to convey all that information. The pressure for speed and test performance has caused teachers to shift their mentality. As such, educators are trying to find more ways to connect with their students and meet the expectations of districts and schools while teaching their students skills they will need to succeed in life after they leave K-12 education. Technology may serve to bridge the requirements of the state, connecting with students and teaching them 21st-century skills, such as collaboration and problem-solving using technology, which will serve them after they leave the classroom.

As technology continues to expand, adapt, and become more and more integral into the daily lives of students and educators, there becomes a pressing need to harness the powers of technology within the field of education. According to Makina (2020), “The 21st century is globally seen as the century of technology-supported learning options, with developments that offer many opportunities for a new range of technology-based learner support options” (p. 67). Saukko (2018) reinforces this by stating, “Individuals no longer simply interpret media text created elsewhere. Rather, they also create meanings and practices themselves through digital devices and platforms designed by (mainly) commercial companies” (p. 261). Another study
highlights the specifics of technology in the social studies classroom by highlighting the various technological tools, such as phones, smartboards, and, in some cases, laptop carts, which are now pervasive in classrooms (Hilton, 2015). With this wide range of options in mind, educators need to look to harness the power of these new technologies, but not on their own. Students are the “Digital Natives,” “native speakers of technology, fluent in the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet” (Prensky, 2005/2006, p. 9). The current 21st-century learner grew up with nearly ubiquitous access; some exceptions apply due to socio-economic access barriers, such as the Digital Divide, to technological tools that gave them access to knowledge at their fingertips. As such, the students can provide insight into how these technologies influence their learning.

However, most current teachers are ‘Digital Immigrants,’ and “have adopted many aspects of technology, but just like those who learn another language later in life, we retain an ‘accent’ because we still have one foot in the past” (Prensky, 2005/2006, p. 9). I have a unique perspective on technology integration in the social studies classroom as part of a generation of students who began their K-12 education without technology. My first memory of a computer in a classroom was when I was in 3rd grade and saw the growth of technologies throughout secondary education, having had to learn to harness them. Eventually, when I became an educator, I learned how to harness the power of technology because I had lived the experience of doing so. Prensky (2005/2006) goes on to further articulate the point of having to harness the power of technology when he states, “As 21st-century educators, we can no longer decide for our students; we must decide with them, as strange as that may feel to many of us” (p. 11). Students can provide educators with insight into how they, as consumers of knowledge, use different technologies to obtain that knowledge. According to Sutton-Brady et al., “a myriad of digital,
electronic, and mobile technological tools available to lecturers, enabling them to enhance the learning experience” (p. 219). These new technologies provide educators powerful tools to engage learners in constructing knowledge, especially with how students today access technologies.

The use of technology, such as Podcasts, appeals to 21st-century students and uses a medium with which they are familiar. Prensky (2005/2006) articulates this well, stating, “Our students are no longer ‘little versions of use,’ as they may have been in the past” (Prensky, 2005/2006, p. 9); they are accessing knowledge in new ways, and educators must embrace this new way of learning. Podcasts can offer a way to “capture [students] attention and can sustain this attention sufficiently to enable transference [of] concepts into their long-term memory” (Hargis et al., 2008, p. 37). According to Makina (2020), “The 21st century is globally seen as the century of technology-supported learning options, with developments that offer many opportunities for a new range of technology-based learner support options” (p. 67). With this wide range of options, educators need to harness these new technologies’ power. One of the most potent tools that educators must meet these new types of students is “not the computer…but the cell phone” (Prensky, 2005/2006, p. 12). The cell phone is one of the many tools that today’s students have mastered and that we, as educators, need to harness the power of (Prensky, 2005/2006). Podcasts are no longer just restricted to iPods; the vast majority of mobile devices have access, and these technologies represent “a visible manifesto of a new kind of student, one who demands an active role in the learning process and control over when they access materials” (Vess, 2006, p. 490). However, this potential tool does not seem to have widely permeated Secondary Social Studies classrooms.
Purpose of the Study

There is a lack of research on using Podcasts as an educational tool in Secondary Social Studies classrooms. With all the advantages educational technology such as Podcasts could present to educators, why is there not more research on the topic? As of this research, a discovery search on the LSU libraries using the terms ‘Podcast,’ ‘social studies,’ and ‘secondary education’ returns only eight results with only one, an electronic resource by Swan and Hofer (2009) in *Social Education* uses the key term Podcast. When the term ‘social studies’ is replaced with ‘history,’ it presents a few more results, but still only sixteen. This lack of research presents an opportunity to understand how secondary educators choose and utilize educational technologies and their perceptions of Podcasts as a pedagogical tool. Debele and Plevyak (2012) highlight the lack of research in K-12 social studies, finding only “45 empirical studies conducted in the United States and abroad in K-12 and post-secondary social studies classrooms” (p. 288). Another study by Celaya et al. (2020), in which they conducted a systematic review of literature on Podcasting in education from January 2014 to February 2019, also highlights the lack of research, with their results revealing that of 58 articles found only four articles dealt with secondary education, thus “detect[ing] a deficit of studies oriented toward the infant, primary, and secondary educational stages” (p. 195).

Much of the existing research focuses heavily on higher education (Vess, 2006; Sutton-Brady, 2009; O’Bannon et al., 2011; Popova et al., 2014; Pegrum et al., 2015; Gachago et al., 2016; Green et al., 2019; McNamara et al., 2020; Gonulal, 2020; Makina, 2020; Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020; Mitchell et al., 2021; Ifedayo et al., 2021) with very little on Secondary Education (Tinker et al., 2007; Schrum & Schrum, 2009; Vasquez, 2015; Wurst, 2020), and nearly no existent research in Secondary Social Studies (Lipscomb, 2007; Swan & Hoffer, 2011; Hason et al., 2011). Lipscomb (2007) focuses on audio in Social Studies education and supports
the use of Podcasts as they “offer some of the most promising content for today’s social studies classroom” (p. 121). The problem is a lack of research on using Podcasts and Podcasting as a teaching and learning tool in the secondary social studies classroom. McMahon and Walker (2019) acknowledge that when dealing with emerging technologies, especially ones that have occurred after the ‘hype cycle’ has ended, the peer-reviewed research lags behind the adoption of the technology but is still critical to its future implementation (p. 88). With this in mind, I follow the suggestion of Celaya et al. (2020) to “study what is published in the so-called ‘gray literature’ that could shed light on the uses of Podcasting in these mentioned educational stages [i.e., secondary education]” (p. 195). By focusing on the specific area of secondary social studies education, this research will seek to fill a gap in the literature that needs addressing (Celaya et al., 2020; Debele & Plevyak, 2012; Kopcha et al., 2020).

Significance of the Study

With today’s 21st-century learners, who have access to knowledge at their fingertips and acknowledge that fact, how can educators meet students on their turf? Kopcha et al. (2020) state, “Our field still lacks a comprehensive understanding of the process of a teacher’s decision making: that is, how a teacher makes decisions about using technology” (p. 731). As such, there is a gap in the research, also highlighted by Celaya et al. (2020), on how educators in the secondary social studies classroom choose and use either or both Podcasts and Podcasting to teach social studies content and skills. This gap in the literature provides an area by which to research teacher decision-making regarding their experiences of implementing educational technology such as Podcasts and Podcasting, as well as how their experience fits within the broader theoretical frameworks of technology integration in education. There are multiple ways to view the problem at hand. One is the changing learning environment represented by the exponential growth of technology and its impact on teaching and learning. Another is how
teachers embrace the new technologies and integrate them into their teaching to facilitate learning. Finally, how are these new technologies viewed as a pedagogical tool that can shift away from traditional methods of teaching history to a newer, technologically enhanced way that could appeal to the 21st-century learner?

**Research Questions**

Uniting my personal experience in using Podcasts as a supplementary tool in my classroom and discussions with both colleagues and friends about Podcasts and Podcasting in education, the “research puzzle” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 41) began to crystalize how educators in secondary social studies use or have used either or both Podcasts and Podcasting and their experiences with it. This puzzle led to the following research questions:

- How do social studies describe their experience using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?
- How do Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) and Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) play a role in teacher’s decisions to use Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?
- What advantages and/or disadvantages do teachers articulate when using Podcasts and/or Podcasting as an educational technology in their secondary social studies classrooms?

These questions will again seek to fill in the gap in the research highlighted by Celaya et al. (2020) by addressing the either or both the use of Podcasts and Podcasting as an educational tool in secondary social studies education, as well as the question posed by Kophcha et al. (2020) by addressing the ‘how’ of teacher decision making for educational technology. Using narrative inquiry as the research method, this study will seek to tell the narrative of secondary social studies educators’ experiences using Podcasts and/or Podcasting as an instructional tool to help students construct social studies knowledge.
Definition of Terms

Educational Technology: Podcasts and Podcasting in Education

Educational technology is being used more and more in classrooms around the nation. Educational technology refers “the broad range of communication, information, and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching, and assessment” (Raji & Zualkernan, 2016, p. 307) and “the application of technology to teaching and learning” (Nelson et al., 2016, p. 293). According to Green et al. (2019), “there are many ways for teachers to integrate technology within a classroom” (p. 146). Education is changing, "Siemens argues that in the last two decades, technology has restructured how we live, communicate, and learn" (O’Bannon et al., 2011, p. 1887). We live in a world where information is a click away, and students already know the new and old technology and a new way of thinking about how to use the technology (Vasquez, 2015).

In 1996, author Jonassen created the most common way to articulate how students interacted with technology. As cited in Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2013), Jonassen defined this interaction between students and technology in three ways, “Learning about technology (technology as a subject), learning from technology (technology as a delivery tool), and learning with technology (technology as a cognitive partner)” (p. 176). Jonassen further recommends that “teachers go beyond the typical uses of computers to engage students in what we [Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich] term [as] technology-enabled learning” (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2013, p. 176). Since Jonassen (1996) published his seminal work, technology has grown exponentially and evolved well past what most educators during the Nineties would have thought. As such, it provides a starting point for looking at the specific impact of technology-enabled learning through either or both Podcasts and Podcasting.
More and more students and educators are engaging in a “digital listening culture…of which Podcasting is a part” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 700). These “Podcasting technologies and tools are themselves a distinctive (edutainment) phenomenon…an example of the very ‘social’ and rich-media, ‘time-shifting,’ cultural and leisure practices that the notion of Web 2.0 represents” (Kidd, 2011, p. 54). Podcasts also exemplify “educommunication…the synergy between education and communication” (Celaya et al., 2020, p. 180) due to their ability to facilitate learning, while also using communication technologies of audio playback via mobile devices. According to a study by Edison Research and Triton Digital (2019), 74% of US citizens over 12 who consumed Podcasts reported doing so to learn new things (The Infinite Dial, p. Slide 31). As Shamburg (2021) states, “the popularity of Podcasting as a medium is growing, and its role as an educational tool is paramount” (p. 701) and, as Hargis et al. (2008) points out, it “combines the power of a blog – its raw, informal, engaging side with the trend of listening to music and voiceover on an MP3 player” (p. 33). Said and Silbey (2018) articulate the uniqueness of Podcasts by highlighting their ability to “combine radio format with the portable and personalized digital device, their content resembling magazines. And yet, their form is intimate, with hosts in your ear, talking only to you at that moment” (p. 104). Thus, Podcasts could be a powerful tool by which educators can convey content and engage students in their learning both within and outside the classroom.

**e-Learning 2.0, Web 2.0, and Mobile Learning**

One of the most dynamic technological tools educators have at their disposal in the 21st century is multimedia. This multimedia emphasizes the increasing use of the Internet as an access point to obtain information and construct learning. As such, you see research into “educommunication studies” (Celaya et al., 2020, p. 180) that looks at the unique link between education (teaching and learning) and multimedia communications such as Podcasts. These
studies focus on “phenomena that emanate from the synergies between communication and education” (Celaya et al., 2020, p. 180). I contend that the ‘educommunicative’ nature of Podcasts fits within the frame of “technology-enhanced learning” articulated by Jonassen and elaborated upon by Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2013). O’Bannon et al. (2011) articulate the advantages of multimedia by stating, “Multimedia is far easier to create and consume, expanding ways to communicate with learners” (p. 1885). Multimedia can be one of several tools ranging from radio and film to social media and online or e-learning. Celaya et al. (2020) highlight the use of these Internet-related technologies in the education system by stating, "…in the formal education system, the mentioned elements [the transformation of information into knowledge that gives meaning to the data so that it can be useful and solve problems] are crystalized through approaches derived from e-learning (electronic facilitated learning), m-learning (learning through mobile devices, such as phones or tablets), and u-learning (ubiquitous learning), among others" (pp. 180-181).

**u-learning, e-Learning 2.0, and Web 2.0**

With ever-increasing access to knowledge via the Internet, learning can occur at any given time or place. This idea of “ubiquitous learning” is articulated by Burbules (2012;2014) and Zapata-Ros (2012), as cited in Celaya et al. (2020), as taking “advantage of the omnipresence of those media sources with educational potential provided by the knowledge society, which overcomes many of the limitations of traditional education systems” (p. 181). In this case, the Internet serves as the media source for learning, and Podcasts have become one of the ‘ubiquitous technologies’ of the 21st century (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012). According to Ng’ambi and Lombe (2012), “Ubiquitous technologies are technologies that are commonly available and accessible to most in a particular community” (p. 181). Various Internet-connected devices, such as laptops, phones, or gaming systems, facilitate access to the Internet. As such,
learning has moved from within the confines of the classroom to newer electronic learning (e-learning) that can occur via different technologies facilitated by Internet access.

With the creation of the Internet and the widespread use of Internet-connected devices, learning is now open to general access, and the growth of newer technologies has changed how learning occurs. Educators can now facilitate teaching and learning electronically via Internet-connected mobile devices. Khan (2005) defines e-learning in the context of how the learning happens by stating:

“e-learning can be viewed as an innovative approach for delivering well-designed, learner-centered, interactive, and facilitated learning environments to anyone, anyplace, anytime by utilizing the attributes and resources of various digital technologies along with other forms of learning material suited for the open and distributed learning environment” (Khan, 2005, p. 9).

According to Kidd (2011), “e-Learning 2.0 is used to refer to new ways of thinking about e-learning inspired by the emergence of Web 2.0 technologies, tools, software, and platforms” (p. 53). These Web 2.0 devices are Internet-connected devices such as phones and tablets that allow people to learn from anywhere. Web 2.0, as defined by Kidd (2011), a term popularized by Tim O’Reilly in 2007, is:

“a recognition that the virtual world of high-speed communications technology has moved on- and it as moved on due to the very changes in the technology itself; how it maps together, how it works outside of ‘real time’ and how users adopt tools with fluidity and ‘intuitive’ flair the more exposed users become” (Kidd, 2011, p. 53).

Boulos and Wheeler (2007) further defines Web 2.0 as the “‘Social Web’…. as its content can be more easily generated and published by users, and the collective intelligence of users encourages more democratic use” (p. 2), as well as encouraging “a more human approach to interactivity on the Web, better supports group interaction and fosters a greater sense of community in a potentially ‘cold’ social environment” (p. 3). These Web 2.0 users construct their knowledge through "networking with others" and social media, shifting the way learning occurs (Kidd, 2011, p. 53). These “Web 2.0 tools have the capacity to connect learners to a wide
network of critical others who can offer feedback and support” (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2013, p. 175). Podcasts, digital media that evolved from the Web 2.0 era (Celaya et al., 2020), are consumed via the Internet, representing a small part of the broader access to e-learning 2.0. As Web 2.0 usage continues to grow and create new avenues for learning, educators increasingly embrace it as an “effective instruction component in higher education” (Norworthy & Herndon, 2020, p. 62). Educators also utilize E-Learning 2.0 and Web 2.0 in Mobile Learning.

**Mobile Learning**

According to Sutton-Brady et al. (2009), mobile learning is defined as that “which utilizes such technologies [Web 2.0 tools], offers educators a means to design learning activities and resources that allow students to individualize their learning’ (pp. 219-220). Baran (2014) further defines the characteristics of mobile learning as including the “characteristics of mobility in physical, conceptual, and social spaces” (pp. 17-18). Web 2.0 tools facilitate mobile learning, and these “highly mobile technologies are creating learning opportunities for desktops that would not be possible without them” (Tinker et al., 2007, p. 21). Keegan (2005), as cited in Celaya et al. (2020), “highlights the latent learning opportunities on mobile platforms – tablets, telephones, and their complementary services linked to the Internet, a field that has been called m-learning” (p. 181).

Learners engage in m-learning through various Internet connected devices and media, with Podcasts being one method for facilitating learning. Ng’ambi & Lombe (2012) state that “The University of Minnesota argues that ‘Podcasting involves a shift from e-learning to m-learning’ as it provides another way of widening student learning experience beyond campus setting through the use of mobile devices such as laptops, mobile phones, MP3 players, and iPods” (p. 182). Podcasts represent a tool that is not only *educommunicative*, defined by Celaya et al., (2020) as “…media with educational potential based on ICT (information and
communication technologies) [that] escape purely educational or communicative categorizations and acquire a dual nature” (p. 181), but also “a digital media of the [e-learning and web] 2.0 era” (p. 181). Besser, Blackwell, and Saenz (2022) further support this idea of Podcasts as a mobile learning tool by stating, “Podcasting lends itself to the idea of learning anywhere and at any time” (p. 749) and ”Podcasts are inherently mobile and simple in content structure” (Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020, p. 62). This ability to take learning on the go creates more opportunities for students to engage in learning and construct their knowledge from sources outside the more traditional classroom setting.

**Podcast**

The term Podcast, used interchangeably with the verb Podcasting, has been defined in several ways. A ‘Podcast’ Is “a combination of Apple’s iPod brand and the word ‘broadcast’ (Robinson & Ritzko, 2009, p. 38) and is characterized by its quality as “an on-demand Internet broadcast or show, offered in either audio or video format” (Vasquez, 2015, p. 148). A Podcast is then published and distributed via the Internet, and this act of creating and publishing the Podcast is where the term ‘Podcasting’ is often used (Kidd, 2011; O’Bannon et al., 2011; Shamburg, 2009; Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020; Hargis et al., 2008; Makina, 2020a; Makina, 2020b). According to Hargis et al. (2008), the first Podcast was created by Adam Curry using Apple Script and “had to be consumed using an iPod” (p. 34). People can consume podcasts on almost any mobile device or computer, not just Apple iPods. Podcasts can typically run anywhere from a few minutes to upwards of an hour and are widely available for download to a mobile device (Lipscomb, 2007) via websites such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, and many other online locations. This tool can allow students to receive information outside of the classroom and in their own time. Still, like any media, it requires connecting with the broader social context and having the literacy to differentiate between information types. These "audio or video files [that
are] posted to the web, can easily be catalogued, and automatically downloaded to a computer or portable device” (Tinker et al., 2007, p.16) are commonly listened to in the car, at the gym, or anywhere that one has a phone. These files are “distributed through the Internet and downloaded through syndication…” (O’Bannon et al., 2011, p. 1885) and can be “offered in either [an] audio or video format” (Vasquez, 2015, p. 147).

Research on using the Podcast format in education began with university research, such as the Duke Digital Initiative from 2005 to 2006, which focused on Podcasts’ potential in academia (Celaya et al., 2020). Another study at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in 2018 looked at the “link between exercising and cognitive function through Podcasting…. researchers found gains in learning and retention, cognitive performance, and mood” (Besser et al., 2022, p. 750).

The literature highlights various types of Podcasts. One term used to describe a Podcast that uses static images or video is a ‘Vodcast.’ A ‘Vodcast’ is defined as a “Podcast with video content instead of audio” (Gonulal, 2020, p. 312) and is “similar to the videoblog format” (Celaya et al., 2020, p. 181). A more specific type of Podcast used in higher educational settings is Content Acquisition Podcasts (CAPs). McNamara et al. (2020), in their article Content Acquisition Podcasts’ Impact on Preservice Teachers’ Understanding of Language and Disability, discuss CAPs as “Podcasts that distribute audio paired with still images, and embed evidence-based instruction design principles to deliver content” (p. 2515). Green et al.(2019), further separate CAPs from more general Podcasts by stating, “unlike traditional Podcasts, which are usually published online as a series and made available for downloading, CAPs are often stand-alone files, created by educators for instructional purposes” (p. 147). What sets CAPs apart from traditional Podcasts is their use of Mayer’s Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning,
which guides the “design and delivery of instruction” (Kennedy et al., 2016, p. 304). Mayer first developed his theory in 1997, and in it, the learner becomes “a knowledge constructor who actively selects and connects pieces of visual and verbal knowledge” (O’Bannon et al., 2011, p. 1886).
Review of Literature

For most of the literature, Podcasts are used to convey information on instructions and feedback for assignments. The literature also highlights that students' perceptions of Podcasts have been positive. Also, it is pertinent to note that much of the literature discusses students' perceptions of Podcasts and their perceived benefits but not much about their impact on student achievement. Students believe there is a learning benefit and appreciate the flexibility offered to support their learning (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). Other studies completed by Berlanger (2007), Kukulska-Hulme, Traxler, and Peitit (2007), and Traxler (2008), who all discussed the use of Podcasting in Higher Education, support what Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) found. In addition, a “growing body of literature that has attempted to illustrate the value of Podcasting as an educational tool rather than simply a leisure time phenomenon” (Kidd, 2011, p. 54).

Today, technology is a ubiquitous part of our society. According to Vasquez (2005), “many children [now come] to school with knowledge of, and experience with, the new ‘technical stuff’ and new ways of thinking” (p. 148). Students quickly adapt to new technologies, and “evidence shows that the majority of university students own at least one or an assortment of mobile devices like mobile phones, MP3 players, and iPods” (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 181). Technology is being used broadly in educational settings, and Podcasts are beginning to be used more and more in higher education. According to “The University of Minnesota argues that ‘Podcasting involves a shift from e-learning to m-learning’ as it provides another way of widening student learning experience beyond campus setting through the use of mobile devices such as laptops, mobile phones, MP3 players, and iPods” (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 182). As such, educators must become “…more conscious of technology in the classroom because [their students] are more familiar with it outside the classroom…” (Altvater, 2009, p. 80). Altvater (2009) continues to emphasize the availability of technology by discussing its use as a tool to
“stretch[ing] those boundaries of learning” (p. 80). As such, learning via Podcasts can reach multiple spheres of a student’s life.

Advantages and Challenges of the Use of Podcasts in Education

Advantages

The advantages of using educational technology in general and Podcasts and Podcasting in education are well documented throughout the literature. The use of Podcasts, and technology in general, in the classroom has many benefits, including a plethora of resources, immersion in the material, flexibility, and forging connections to the material being taught. Specifically, it allows introducing other views not covered in the textbooks within a Social Studies classroom. These "resources on the Internet can help teachers and students learn about [many stories] that challenge typical textbook narratives" (Schrum & Schrum, 2009, p. 24). This ability to hear many different stories and views is essential in learning as it provides alternate viewpoints to the mainstream and can help foster more critical thinking skills. Another benefit is that Podcasting is an immersive medium that allows the listeners to make a "one-on-one" connection with the narrator (Wurst, 2020). This connection allows the listeners to become invested in their learning and make more robust and deeper connections. These connections can foster a deep approach to learning that educational researchers conclude can lead to improved achievement and material retention (Pegrum et al., 2015). Another benefit is that it fosters independence and time management by the student. Kidd (2011) states, "General benefits include time management and an alignment with the nature of the student population. Podcasting empowers students to manage their own time" (p. 221). The vast potential benefits of using Podcasting in education make it a promising tool for the Social Studies classroom.

This educational medium has the power to present information in an engaging audio format. Wurst (2020) points out that “the human brain is wired to receive information in the form
of stories” (p. 22). This link to receiving information via sound is further supported by a study on the effects of Podcasts on language acquisition when Gonulal (2020) states, “Humans tend to listen more than they read, speak, or write, which arguably puts listening at the heart of the language learning process” (p. 311). So, when used as a learning tool and “when integrated into the learning experiences, Podcasts specifically have been shown to resonate with students across subject areas” (Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020, p. 62). Podcasts can afford many advantages to both educators and learners.

**Flexibility and Learner Control.** Salmon and Nie (2008) suggest that the use of Podcasts in education is a “…true ‘high value, low cost’ approach” (p. 8). Podcasts and the devices used to consume them create flexibility for educators to deliver content and for learners to consume it (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; Steventon, 2013, as cited in Norsworthy, 2020). This flexibility is identified as an advantage by students in terms of engagement in their learning (Vess, 2006; Baran, 2014; Steventon, 2013, as cited in Norsworthy, 2020), increased time management skills (Vess, 2006; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009), and a strategic advantage in the learning process (Makina A., 2020b). For learners, Podcasts can offer a level of intimacy and control in their learning as only they hear the audio (Shamburg, 2021; Wurst, 2020). This flexibility and control also extend to where and how students can engage with content outside the classroom (Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020). Mitchell et al. (2021) highlight this by identifying that “audio Podcasts have a key advantage of being able to present information about a topic accessible at any time or location” (p. 8). This ease of access is one of the significant benefits of using Podcasts (Mitchell et al., 2021; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; Tinker et al., 2007; Shamburg, 2021).
**Learner Motivation and Engagement.** A new type of student has emerged from the exponential growth of technology, the “Digital Native” (Prensky, 2005/2006). Tinker et al. (2007) identify another term used to identify this new generation of learners and that is the “NetGeneration” (p. 19). This idea of students excelling in the use of and exposure to technology appears in their “knowledge of, and experience with” (Tinker et al., 2007, p. 19) technologies and their perception of “technology as an essential part of their lives” (Vasquez, 2015, p. 148). Meeting students with familiar technology increases student reception to learning the content (O’Bannon et al., 2011). Schrum and Schrum (2009) further support this increase in reception to learning, suggesting that the 21st-century learner is “curious and enthusiastic about the past and about using technology” (p. 24).

However, Oblinger and Hawkins give a warning about the assumption that students will automatically be able to use technologies by stating, “the net generations information competencies should not be confused with their confidence, as confidence using technology does not necessarily mean that information is being processed effectively or efficiently” (Oblinger and Hawkins, 2006, as cited in Sutton-Brady et al. 2009, p. 228). Prensky (2005/2006) also gives a warning that “more and more of our students lack the true prerequisites for learning – engagement and motivation- at least in terms of what we offer them in our schools” (p. 11). To address this issue of engagement Norsworthy and Herndon (2020) cite a study by Shamburg (2009) and discuss how “students can authentically connect and engage with current media trends; thus, Podcasts can allow students to more deeply connect with a curriculum” (p. 62). This engagement is further supported by O’Bannon et al. (2011) when they discuss how “students are more receptive to learning material provided in Podcast form” (p. 1887).
Cognition and Learning. When educators use Podcasts as supplemental instructional tools, they can “offer learners a supplement to existing instruction and a way to receive high-quality instruction beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom” (Kennedy et al., 2016, p. 304), “enable lecturers’ and students to make connections” (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 220), and “expand the lecturers’ presence in the students’ learning experience” outside of the classroom (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 228). Ifedayo et al. (2021) highlight how Podcasts also enable lecturers to “tailor instructions that fit students’ needs” (p. 1). This ability for educators to reach beyond the classroom boundaries and provide instruction is one of the many benefits identified by the literature.

In terms of learning, Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) articulate that “Podcasting has the potential to add real value to students’ learning experiences” (p. 228). A study conducted by Mitchell et al. (2021) supports this ability to add value to learning, identifying that the delirium awareness Podcast in nursing education “facilitated students to develop a deeper understanding about the topic [delirium]” (p. 9). For educators, Podcasting “can promise a unique approach to improving foundational pedagogical approaches to information processing and conceptual learning” (Hargis et al., 2008, p. 36). Educators can use Podcasts to free up class time for discussions, higher-order learning activities, hands-on practice, and other activities that would promote further investigation into learning (Vess, 2006; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; O’Bannon et al., 2011). According to Popova et al. (2014), for educators, “Podcasts as a digital technology to distribute instruction narratives have gained acceptance in education in general (p. 331).

Collaboration and Construction of Knowledge. Creating a Podcast affords the best access to collaborative benefits. According to Goldman, “When Podcast production is included in the curriculum researchers have found that students develop both hard technical skills, like
editing, and soft interpersonal skills like collaboration, task management, and critical problem solving” (Goldman, 2018, as cited in Norsworthy and Herndon, 2020, p. 62). Podcasting can also facilitate the “production and sharing of knowledge” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 75) and an opportunity to “up-skill and integrate a new approach into their traditional study process” (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 228).

**Widening the Learning Environment.** There is some discussion that students easily accept integrating Podcasts with curriculum content because they are already competent users of MP3 players and iPods (Armstrong et al., 2009). As such, it “therefore provides educators the opportunity to converge social and entertainment uses of mobile devices to scaffold student learning and foster deep engagement with content” (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 181). Podcasts can also “extend the classroom interaction to other locations via communication networks” (Baran, 2014, p. 18) by “reach[ing] across racial, gender, and geographic divides” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 68). Podcasts can also merge social, entertainment, and learning spaces “to widen students’ learning space into informal settings as academic content can be used beyond campus settings…” (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 187). According to Baran (2014), “the greatest added value of mobile learning vis-à-vis PC learning lies in the aspects that extend classroom interaction to other locations via communication networks” (p. 18). Extending the student learning spheres into the world outside the classroom would allow students to achieve the goal of “learning how to learn and encouraging the development of autonomous learners” (Mayes & de Freitas, 2004, p. 13).

As the popularity of Podcasts and Podcasting grows, their role in when and where students learn becomes essential to understand. The topics Podcasts cover “vary far and wide” (Gonulal, 2020, p. 312) and cover a “wide range of subjects and interests at a variety of depths”
As such, educational technology like Podcasts can completely change learning organizations due to their mobility (Baran, 2014); it blurs the lines between the online and offline worlds where learning occurs (Kidd, 2011). Altvater (2009) emphasizes the availability of technology and its ability to widen the learning environment by discussing its use as a tool to “stretch those boundaries of learning” (p. 80). When looking at Web 2.0 tools and how they can influence student collaboration and their construction of knowledge, one must also consider the merging of social, entertainment, and learning spaces. By merging all these spheres, “Podcasts can also be used to widen students’ learning space into informal settings as academic content can be used beyond campus settings…” (Ng'ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 187). Extending the student learning spheres into that of the world outside the classroom would allow students to achieve the goal of “learning how to learn and encouraging the development of autonomous learners” (Mayes & de Freitas, 2004, p. 13).

This access to a “dynamic hub of knowledge” (Gonulal, 2020, p. 312) outside the confines of the classroom signals a shift in the learning environment that includes the broader contexts of online interactions but also introduces the “influence of Podcasters as informal educators” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 699). As such, educators must teach 21st century skills that enable their students to thrive in this new digital learning environment and be cognizant of how they utilize podcasts within the classroom.

**Challenges**

Although researchers are still exploring the use of educational technology and Podcasts and Podcasting in an educational setting, they have identified some challenges to their use within an educational setting. Based on the literature, educators who choose to use either Podcasts or Podcasting, must overcome some challenges to implement them in a secondary social studies classroom successfully. In some cases, there is an unfamiliarity with Podcasting in the literature,
mainly from the earlier literature in the early 2000s when Podcasts were new and restricted to only Apple iPods. Today, people have much greater access to podcasts, and the challenge of unfamiliarity has lessened- instead, the unfamiliarity of studying using Podcasts becomes the challenge. According to Sutton-Brady (2009), "Podcasting requires time for students to up-skill and integrate a new approach into their traditional study process" (p.228). Teacher planning and scaffolding are necessary to help students learn to become familiar with using Podcasts as a study tool.

However, one seminal author on the use of educational technology, Peggy Ertmer (1999), articulates the challenges educators face trying to implement educational technology in their classrooms. Ertmer (1999) states, “Although teachers today recognize the importance of integrating technology into their curricula, efforts are often limited by both external (first-order) and internal (second-order) barriers” (p. 47). She further defines the different types of barriers by providing examples. For first-order barriers, Ertmer (1999) describes them “as being extrinsic to teachers and include lack of access to computers and software, insufficient time to plan instruction, and inadequate technical and administrative support” (p. 48). The first-order barriers presented by the literature on Podcasts and Podcasting in education highlight the lack of training and support for educators and access issues. Second-order barriers “are intrinsic to teachers and include beliefs about teaching, beliefs about computers, established classroom practices, and unwillingness to change” (Ertmer, 1999, p. 48). These second-order barriers presented in the literature are the lack of empirical research and pedagogical theory for implementation, as well as online safety and ethical issues. These represent barriers to changing teachers’ perceptions about using either Podcasts or Podcasting in the secondary social studies classroom.
Lack of Empirical Research and Pedagogical Theory for Implementation. Several studies indicate the need for more empirical research into using Podcasts in a pedagogically sound way (Hargis et al., 2008; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; O’Bannon et al., 2011; Baran, 2014; Nelson et al., 2016; Ifedayo, 2021; Makina, 2020a; Makina, 2020b). This lack of empirical research and pedagogical theory challenges educators who hope to adopt these technologies, making it much more difficult to “investigate the advantages and make informed decisions” (Baran, 2014, p. 17). Nelson et al. (2016) highlights the promise of educational technology to improve practice despite the lack of research (p. 295).

Educators also need training and support, especially when implementing a new instructional strategy such as Podcasts or Podcasting. They also need support in choosing or creating a high-quality Podcast with “evidence-based strategies for technology integration that will contribute to high achievement for all students” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 69). Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2013) highlight that “systems need to ensure that teachers feel supported by external factors” and that a “supportive administration can positively impact teachers who are trying to adopt pedagogical innovations” (p. 179). However, a considerable challenge to implementing educational technology is the lack of evidence how effective new technologies are (McMahon & Walker, 2019). One of the biggest questions raised in the research is “whether these ubiquitous devices are really achieving educational goals so much as providing an entertainment outlet for students” (Vess, 2006, p. 479). O’Bannon et al. (2011) and Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) reinforce the idea that there needs to be more research into the academic benefits of Podcasts due to the “paucity of documentation of the academic benefits” (O’Bannon et al., 2011, p. 1887). However, Gibson & Noncente (1999) highlight that to understand the benefits better, we must hear “about the experience of those who have used it” (p. 73).
Lack of Training and Support for Educators. Also, there are hurdles that educators need to overcome, such as a lack of training and support (Baran, 2014; Kidd, 2011; Makina, 2020b). Makina (2020b) highlights the need for training by pointing out that “the use of Podcasts is complex and demands robust guidance for the lecturers to achieve productive student learning” (p. 70). This challenge of lack of training is further highlighted by the fact that educational technology “innovation has been hindered by the lack of teacher training” (Robinson R. S., 1991, p. 11). Another prominent challenge educators face in utilizing Podcasts and Podcasting is determining the most valuable to use (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). This lack of research into “high-quality teaching and learning is a critical issue that should be investigated to ensure that it contributes significantly to productive student learning” (Makina A., 2020a, p. 31).

As such, there were instances in the research that indicated that, when not used properly, students saw Podcasts as extra work (Shamburg, 2021) and, in some cases, just stopped listening altogether (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009).

The support of leadership is also vital to the successful implementation of technology and Podcasts in an educational setting, as “social and institutional contexts are often unsupportive of teachers’ efforts to integrate technology use into their work” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 61). Leadership has to create a culture of change that encourages experimentation and innovation among educators (Kidd, 2011). However, the support for innovation sometimes falls short due to the time restrictions and requirements of state-mandated standardized testing. The need for support is further articulated by Blackwell et al. (2014) when they state, “Support and school culture may influence these attitudes” (p. 85).

Access Issues, Online Safety and Ethics. Podcasts and Podcasting do present many advantages. However, one of the significant disadvantages is the need for access to the Internet
to use the technology. Downloading or streaming an audio file requires Internet access, and some do not have that access (Lipscomb, 2007). The challenge is the Digital Divide, an issue all technology forms face, not just Podcasting. Haythonethwaite (2007), as quoted in Kidd (2011), defines the digital divide as "the division between those with and without access to computers and the Internet, and their resultant inclusion and exclusion from full participation in the 'Information Age'" (p.54). Technology moves at an exponential pace, and "being slow to take up the use of e-tools, devices, and phenomena – being a 'slow adopter' – is itself impoverished use. In a world moving rapidly forward, those running to catch up are in danger of being left behind" (Kidd, 2011, p. 54). Researchers have written entire studies on the digital divide’s impact, but this divide poses an issue in lower socio-economic schools and those without access to technology. This Digital Divide presents issues with the storage, access, sharing, and distribution of Podcasts, and the physical tools to consume the media (O’Bannon et al., 2011). There is also the issue with the assumption that all ‘Digital Natives’ know how to use these technologies and are not familiar with Podcasts (O’Bannon et al., 2011).

Ethical issues were one of the challenges raised by educators in using Podcasts and Podcasting in their teaching (Baran, 2014). Studies by Abusson et al. (2009) and Cushing (2011) raise specific ethical issues as they relate to topics such as “cyber-bullying, privacy, archiving, and record keeping, sharing classroom experiences and artifacts, potential parental and student informed consent, and e-safety” (Abusson et al., 2009; Cushing, 2011 as cited in Baran, 2014, p.25).

**Importance of Pedagogy**

Educators have often used various technologies to enhance their students’ learning experience, and using audio as an enhancement is not a new phenomenon in education (Lipscomb, 2007). Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) support this when they state, “using audio in
learning and teaching has occurred for decades with some authors highlighting advantages of audio over text” (p. 220). Podcasts and Podcasting are just the newest evolution of audio resources for classroom use. Podcasts are not anything new in today's society. These "audio or video files [that are] posted to the web, can easily be catalogued, and automatically downloaded to a computer or portable device" (Tinker et al., 2007, p.17) are commonly listened to in the car, at the gym, or anywhere that one has a phone. These files are “distributed through the Internet and downloaded through syndication…” (O'Bannon et al., 2011, p. 1885) and can be “offered in either [an] audio or video format” (Vasquez, 2015, p. 147). The ubiquitous nature of Podcasts raises the question of their use in an educational setting. When reviewing the literature, one theme is the importance of pedagogy. However, educators must have an educational goal or outcome in mind when using these Podcasts to ensure “effective, successful teaching and learning take place” (Makina A., 2020a, p. 32). One cannot understate the importance of sound pedagogical practice when implementing new educational technology and using either Podcasts or Podcasting is no different.

According to Gachago et al. (2016), "Pedagogy or teaching with the use of Podcasts, refers to the recording, editing, and subsequent distribution of audio files to students…in order to support student learning with technology” (p. 860). When discussing educational technology, there is an idea that adding technology can remove the instructor from the learning equation. Quite the opposite is true; instructors are an integral part of the equation as they are the ones who plan the lessons and implement, guide, and facilitate learning. Kidd (2011), in his article, articulated the belief that learners would "gobble up self-paced lessons on their own," and they were wrong (Kidd, 2011, p. 52). Much of the literature also warns about putting technology before pedagogy and the dangers of doing so (Kidd, 2011; Baran, 2014). Villano (2008), as
quoted in Kidd (2011), “offers teachers four simple pieces of advice to ‘build a better Podcast’: be prepared; focus on sound; edit wisely; be consistent; follow the leaders” (Kidd, 2011, p. 55). Any lesson will fall apart without an instructor and good planning; both prove vital to using Podcasts in education.

Meeting Learning Goals

When considering how to utilize Podcasts and Podcasting in an educational context, one must consider reaching these new 21st-century learners. Educators can “no longer use either our 20th-century knowledge or our training as a guide to what is best for [students] educationally” (Prensky, 2005/2006, p. 9); as such, educators must how to utilize this technology best to meet learning goals (Makina A., 2020b). Pegrum et al. (2015) discuss that “although teachers cannot control all factors to guarantee students will take a deep approach, they can create conditions that maximize the likelihood of this occurring” (p. 144). As such, Nelson et al. (2016) emphasize that educators should identify the tool used and preview the product to help students navigate any challenges (pp. 297-298). According to NCSS, “Podcasting is a powerful tool for educators to get students involved in activities that are meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active” (NCSS, 1998, as cited in Tinker et al., 2007, p. 19). However, for a Podcast to be effectively affect learning, it must be used so that if a student does not listen, their learning or performance would be negatively affected (Makina A., 2020a). As such, “the use of Podcasts in teaching and learning should, therefore, assist students to learn more and to retain better what has been taught or what is being taught” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 75).

An instructor looking to use Podcasts cannot just throw one out there and expect the students to learn. Instructors must provide the students with context and structure for the lesson. According to Sutton-Brady et al., “providing a purpose and learning context for Podcasting is a key theme in previous studies (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 229). Jackson and Anagnostopoulou
(2001), as cited in Kidd (2011), support the need for a specific context and suggest a need for a set of conditions (Kidd, 2011). These conditions will facilitate the learning of the new concepts. Hargis et al. (2008) discuss the ideas of relevancy to the learning context in such that "greater conceptual learning is fostered when teachers use interactivity-based teaching strategies to train students to link everyday experience in the real physical world to formal school concepts" (Hargis et al., 2008, p. 37). Wurst (2020) builds on this idea of the relevancy of learning by stating, "Good teachers present the material so that students can understand its application in their lives. Great teachers go a step further and find ways to create empathy and promote individual action” (Wurst, 2020, p. 22). By linking the learning to the student’s everyday lives and providing them with context, the Podcasts can help to facilitate learning.

**Pedagogical Intent**

When choosing a technology, especially Podcasts or Podcasting, Beetham and Sharpe articulate an “important warning…pedagogy before technology” (Beetham and Sharpe, 2007, as cited in Kidd 2011, p. 55). Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) support this when they discuss how “providing a purpose and learning context for Podcasting [was] a key theme in previous studies” (p. 229). Gachago et al. (2016) defined pedagogy as "…teaching with the use of Podcasts, refers to the recording, editing, and subsequent distribution of audio files to students…in order to support student learning with technology” (p. 860). Previous research shows that educators use Podcasts to distribute or duplicate their lectures (Vess, 2006; O’Bannon et al., 2011), “….supplement instruction, and/or introduce new material” (O’Bannon et al., 2011, p. 1886).

Makina (2020a) further supports the importance of pedagogy by stating, “….the choice and use of technology should be closely aligned to the pedagogical intent of the learning and teaching transaction” (p. 32). Simply playing a Podcast or having the students create one without a learning goal in mind just becomes busy work for the students and does not guarantee learning
will occur. O’Bannon et al. (2011) articulate that “the pedagogical challenges associated with Podcasts should be taken into consideration when planning instruction” (p. 1886).

**Lesson design**

Educators must design the material so that the support technology, in the form of Podcasts or Podcasting, effectively enhances student learning. In an interview with David Warlick, a North Carolina-based educator and technologist, Villano (2008) quotes Warlick as saying, “You can’t just plop kids down in front of a microphone and say, ‘Okay, now it’s time to talk about this’ or ‘Read this’” (p. Paragraph 4) instead, as Kidd (2011) reinforces “a regular well-structured programme of Podcasts provides much more value of learning” (p. 55). So when designing a lesson, “the choice and use of a technology must closely align with the intent of the learning and teaching transaction” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 68). To support the use of technology in classrooms, instructors must know how to use the technology to support the intended learning and create activities that will assist in student learning goals (Franklin, 2007). Wurst (2020) further supports the idea of creating activities that will assist in student learning goals by emphasizing the fact that “good teachers present material so that students can understand its application in their lives” (p. 22). Good presentation is further supported by Kidd (2011) when he states, “Thus Podcasting, as with any technologically enabled and mediated learning opportunity (and with any learning at all), needs to place the learners and the learning outcome at the center of planning” (p. 55). Edirisingha, Salmon, and Nie propose a new model that sets out a guide using Podcasts in an academic setting (2008). This model seeks to help educators position the use of Podcasts in pedagogy via constructivist design. Positioning it within a constructivist design is supported by the assertion that “Podcast content should be designed to recruit student attention and provoke thought and be embedded in the curriculum so as to enable students to
discern the academic value of using them” (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 186). Educators must first know the learning goal before they can choose a technology by which to achieve that goal.

In Popova's article *Effects of Primer Podcasts on Stimulating Learning from Lectures: How do Students Engage*, she suggests that instructors follow Ohlsson's (1995) approach to epistemic questioning (Popova et al., 2014). According to Popova (2014), "a full cycle epistemic task is a task that involves a pre-lecture Podcast, the lecture itself, a post-lecture review activity (e.g., written answers to the epistemic questions ending the Podcast episode) and finally short feedback on the review activity" (Popova et al., 2014, p. 333). These epistemic questions and the possible use of adjunct questions, placed directly before or after the topic covered, will facilitate student learning (Popova et al., 2014).

Another study by Kidd (2011), suggests that Podcast structure should be done in a certain way to facilitate learning. According to Kidd (2011), “It helps to inform listeners of the nature of the audio if three or four keywords are identified at the start of each Podcast which are subsequently then picked up and used/developed through the recording in order to ‘locate’ the content for the listener” (Kidd, 2011, p. 55). This suggestion feeds into the earlier theme of placing the learning in context. However, in this case, Kidd suggests providing the listener a means to locate themselves within the audio (Kidd, 2011). However, the use of Podcasts does come with a warning. According to Bell, Cockburn, and Wingkuisit (2007), as cited in Sutton-Brady et al. (2009), there was a report that "in one experiment, computer science students stopped listening to Podcast episodes that they considered too long (8 minutes)" (p. 221). Kidd (2011) provides a solution to this by suggesting that Podcasts be kept between three and eight minutes in length, "making it easier to retain the attention of learners/listeners” (Kidd, 2011, p. 55).
Several studies within the literature on Podcast use in education highlight the importance of Constructivist Theory (Mitchell et al., 2021; Kidd, 2011; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). Jean Piaget and other eminent scholars, such as Dewey and Vygotsky, introduced constructivism into educational psychology and learning theory. Within it, students interact with knowledge and identify items that cause them to question what is being learned, thus constructing their knowledge based on their interaction with their environment (Brainerd, 2009). Kanuka and Anderson identify common themes from the literature on constructivism: 1) “new knowledge is built upon the foundation of previous learning,” 2) “learning is an active rather than passive process,” 3) “language is an important component of the learning process,” and 4) “the learning environment should be learner-centric” (Kanuka & Anderson, 1999, p. unknown). Kopcha et al. (2020) support the incorporation of constructivism in educational technology by stating that there has been a push to “achieve constructivist, student-centered technology use” (p. 729).

Traditional Textbooks versus Digital Media

Teachers need to determine whether they can successfully utilize this form of teaching and learning in a classroom. For decades, teachers have used textbooks as a “guide and reference to facilitate [the] teaching-learning process both in the classroom and outside of the classroom” (Widodo, 2007, p. 121). According to Grubb and Reah (1997), “a textbook is read to gather information or learn….the writer of a textbook [tries] to minimize the effort and make the book as attractive a read as possible” (p. 73). However, Malott (2018) argues that “every textbook has multiple audiences,” and that “the needs and interests of instructors who adopt books don’t always align with those of students who read them” (p. 552). Dowd and Martini (1996) highlight some of what could cause a student or instructor not want to adopt a textbook such as the “author’s inability to explain material at a level students can understand” (p. 349). In his study on students’ reasons for enjoying a textbook, Malott (2018) highlights that students said the “best
features of the book” that Malott authored called *Elementary Principals of Behavior*, were “the examples, the stories, the real-life people, the humor, and the entertainment” (p. 558) as such Fernald (1989) argues that “the narrative has become a prominent feature in college textbooks” (p. 121). As such, “new media formats such as Podcasts are revolutionizing the production and dissemination of knowledge” (Brehm, 2022, p. 785). Brehm highlights that the shift in education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic “heightened the reliance on digital audio content in teaching and learning” (Brehm, 2022, p. 785). “Many of the most popular Podcasts, “ argues Klein (2020), “are intended to entertain or inform through story-telling” (p. 29). “In the Digital Age, the textbook is being replaced by new forms of learning technologies” (Kalogeras, 2017, p. 173).

Podcasts and Podcasters, those who are the voices behind the episode, use a” host of formal strategies, including the segmentation of topics and segues between interviews and interviewees, and to emphasize dramatic takeaways” (Mertens et al., 2021, p. 157). The use of segments is similar to recommendations on how to format textbooks, such as trying to “present the information in a way that makes it as easy as possible for the reader to follow, understand and absorb it” (Grubb & Reah, 1997, p. 76) and using signposting to give “clear indicators to the readers of where they are going, where they are now and where they have been” (Grubb & Reah, 1997, p. 77). As such, the written and spoken words can work together to facilitate teaching and learning. Hagood (2021) supports this when he states, “Oral traditions such as incantations, proverbs, folktales, Socratic dialogues remind us, sonic inquiry and pedagogy long predate, and have coexisted with, the written word” (pp. 181-182). “A Podcast offers the ability to use not just words but also sound, music, and silence – powerful tools for formulating arguments, providing evidence, illustrating points, developing empathy, and giving listeners space to think” (Hagood, 2021, p. 185). This “intimacy of the voice” (Hilmes, 2021, p. 71) is a hallmark of Podcasting,
allows for the listener to hear “the host’s voice literally inside our heads” (Singer, 2019, p. 575) and allows for listeners to “co-create an experience with the host by providing images for the words we hear. As a result, we feel like we know the hosts” (Singer, 2019, p. 575). This intimacy and co-construction of knowledge puts a listener in the learner’s shoes, allowing for a more student-centered approach to learning. Hagood (2021) states, “A good writer can conjure or approximate many of these things in the mind. ‘Silent’ reading can be an affective experience, of course. But it is a different experience” (2021, p. 185), allowing Podcasts to harness their “enormous potential for moving scholarship beyond traditional genres and modes of delivery” (Hagood, 2021, p. 189).
Methodology

Qualitative research focuses on how people build understanding around a topic and allows the researcher to “study a selected issue in depth and detail” (Patton, 1990, p. 13). It is a “situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3).

Researchers can collect data for qualitative research in several ways, including in-depth interviews, observations, or document analysis (Patton, 1990). “Qualitative inquiry seeks to discover and to describe narratively what particular people do in their everyday lives and what their actions mean to them” (Erickson, 2018, p. 36). Although researchers can use many different methods in qualitative research, this study will focus on narrative inquiry.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry, according to Clandinin and Huber (in press), is “the study of experience understood narratively,” and it allows for the social sciences to understand individuals’ thoughts and feelings better and “their relations with themselves and their environment” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiii). It not only “highlights ethical matters,” but it also “shapes new theoretical understanding of people’s experiences” (Clandinin & Huber, in press, p. 1). Therefore, “Experience is therefore the starting point and the key term for all social science inquiry” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiii).

Throughout history, people have told their experiences as stories, and “narrative is the primary way in which we organize experience” (Hendry et al., 2019, p. 4) Narratives are where learning occurs and how information is passed from generation to generation, from teacher to student. According to Reissman (2008), “the term ‘narrative’ carries many meanings and is used in a variety of ways by different disciplines, often synonymously with ‘story’” (p. 3). Ollerneshaw and Cresswell (2002) elaborate on the definition of narrative inquiry further by stating, “A story in narrative research is a first-person oral telling or retelling of events related to
the personal or social experiences of an individual” (p. 332). For many researchers, narrative inquiry is the study of experience (Clandinin & Huber, in press; Clandinin & Connelly, 2006; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Chase, 2018; Labov & Waletsky 1967/1997; Dewey, 1938; Ricouer, 1974; Hendry et al., 2019; Squire et al., 2013). John Dewey pioneered narrative inquiry as a research methodology, recognizing that “an individual’s experience was a central lens for understanding a person” (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 331). “For Dewey, education, experience, and life are inextricably intertwined” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiii). Chase (2018) notes that one of Narrative Inquiries’ “strengths has been exploring lived experience through a focus on personal narratives” (p. 557), which reveals experiences that may have been hidden to researchers. In short, “…narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20). How it impacts us individually, how it changes over time, and how it is created and understood. “Narrative is the best way of representing and understanding experience. Experience is what we study, and we study it narratively because narrative thinking is a key form of experience and a keyway of writing and thinking about it” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 18). However, “unlike many qualitative frameworks, narrative research offers no automatic starting or finishing points” (Squire et al., 2013, p. 1). It is a way of understanding experience through collaboration.

In narrative inquiry, the thing being studied and interpreted is open to multiple questions and interpretations. With these multiple perspectives, it is essential to remember that one’s “experience of an experience is not the same” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 90) as someone else’s. As such, narrative inquiry is inherently collaborative in its nature, involving a relationship between the researcher and the participant in the process of inquiry and the re-storying of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Salmon & Riessman,
Andrews (2013) articulates this well when they state, “…qualitative data is co-constructed; it is the product of human interaction and it cannot be fully understood outside the conditions within which it was produced” (p. 210). As such, it is vital in this research study to understand how my experience as a classroom teacher and the experiences of those participating in the research can overlap and intertwine. To better understand the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of teachers’ decisions as it relates to technology use, it must be grounded in Dewey’s approach to experience, “which is conceptualized as both personal and social. To better understand their personal experience, we must examine their personal experience as well as their interactions with other people” (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 339). The use of narrative inquiry to better understand the experiences of educators who use Podcasts and Podcasting is further grounded in Dewey’s approach:

“provid[ing] a frame for thinking of experience ‘beyond the black box,’ that is, beyond the notion of experience being irreducible so that one cannot peer into it. With Dewey, one can say more, experientially, than ‘because of her experience’ when answering why a person does what she does” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50).

To clarify Clandinin and Connelly’s thoughts on Dewey’s approach, I sought to learn more from listening to the narratives of participants’ experiences implementing Podcasts or Podcasting. Simply conducting a quantitative survey on whether they saw it as a viable educational tool did not seem sufficient to understand their individual experiences fully.

Narrative inquiry provided a way to view both the positive and negative sides of teachers experiences in implementing this educational technology without “reducing complexity (positivism), representing the world (signification), or achieving consensus (rationality) but about creating concepts and analytics which offer new and different perspectives on orientations” (Hendry et al., 2019, p. 3). This research did not seek to create a consensus on the use of Podcasts or Podcasting in secondary social studies classrooms but rather to show a snapshot of
experience because “in narrative thinking, temporality is a central feature” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 29). Time will always change people’s experiences and perceptions; such is the nature of temporality. Narrative inquiry provided a way to capture a ‘snapshot’ of experience because “what we may be able to say now about a person or school or some other is given meaning in terms of the larger context, and this meaning will change as time passes” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 19).

So much of education, dating back to the early 1900s, has been geared towards quantitative data, enabled by “tests and statistical devices” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiii) that, according to Lagemann (1996), as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, (2000), this type of data “allowed researchers to measure the achievement of students and the costs of instruction and then, through comparative statistical analysis, to determine which practices were apparently most effective, least costly, and, therefore, most efficient (p.6)” (p. xxiii). This quantitative analysis approach, reducing student learning and teachers to a simple number, appeals to businesses and policymakers, those who are no longer in the classroom but still dictating what is occurring in education. As Dewey believed, education is experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Experience cannot always be quantified to achieve a cost/benefit analysis, which can determine knowledge construction’s success or failure, as most positivist research, such as Thorndike, popularized (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Instead, educators pay attention to experience, and “this attention to experience and thinking about education as experience is part of what educators do in schools” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiv). Students are much more than test scores, just as teachers are more than a number. By attempting to quantify experiences that “richness and expression [were] stripped away” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxvi). To attempt to
understand education is to research experience; experience is a narrative, “therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 19).

**Narrative in Educational Research**

There is a need for narrative inquiry in educational settings, especially regarding the use of educational technology in secondary social studies classrooms. It looks at the interplay between teacher, student, and curriculum. Through the use of retrospection (Andrewset al., 2013), you see how “the teacher is a part of the curriculum and therefore part of the establishment of the goals in the first place and part of the ensuing achievement” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 29). The idea that they are conveying is that no single experience is uninfluenced by other experiences. A constant interplay of individual experiences makes up the whole experience. One teacher’s experience of using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classroom will not be identical to another teacher’s experience. Although some similarities may exist, individual experiences and settings will shape each experience uniquely. Dewey provides the theoretical framework to “transform a commonplace term, experience, in our educators’ language into an inquiry term, and gives us a term that permits better understandings of educational life” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). According to Hendry et al., (2019), “[Dewey] sought to address the critiques of positivist constructs of knowledge by highlighting the storied nature of knowledge” (p. 4).

With narrative inquiry being the relation of the individual to the society and their experience within it (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2), we begin to see how these narratives can be co-constructed and the audiences influence them (Salmon & Riessman, 2013, p. 199). However, another prominent theorist, Vygotsky, “was critical of research that considers individuals in isolation” (Moen, 2006, p. 3), arguing that “human learning and development occur in socially and culturally shaped contexts. How people become what they are thus depends
on what they have experienced in the social contexts in which they have participated” (Moen, 2006, p. 2). In terms of the secondary social studies classroom, “the teacher is a part of the curriculum and therefore part of the establishment of the goals in the first place and part of the ensuing achievement” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 29).

In the world of education, narrative inquiry is a powerful tool. Dewey and Vygotsky are both influential figures in the field of education and encourage looking at not only the individual but also the role of the larger contexts on those individuals. Researchers cannot underestimate the roles of an educator, a parent, an administrator, a colleague, or a classmate when studying education. The audience can influence the narratives and the presentation of materials. As Maynes (2008;2012) states, “Social and historical contextualization is crucial for understanding lives” (Maynes et al., 2008;2012, p. 68). It highlights the importance of situating any historical narrative analysis, especially one dealing with historical memory, in the “political and ideological frameworks” (Maynes et al., 2008;2012, p. 62). The framework helps the research text’s audience understand the context in which the stories are told, interpreted, and understood (Riessman, 2008).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) articulate the use of narrative inquiry in educational settings well when they state, “Education and educational studies are a form of experience (p. 18) …Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively” (p. 19). John Dewey, a preeminent scholar in narrative inquiry, heavily influences their methods. “For Dewey, education, experience, and life are inextricably intertwined” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxii). To understand the process by which educators use specific tools such as Podcasts and Podcasting, I tried to understand the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of their individual experiences. Teaching
and learning happen in a continuum of experiences, good and bad, but all influence education and life. Narrative inquiry can serve to provide “a voice for teachers and students (Errante, 2000)” (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 329) and “thus open[s] spaces for educational researchers to deconstruct the positivist hold on what counts as knowledge, whose stories can be told, and they very nature of how narrative shapes the world” (Hendry et al., 2019, p. 4).

According to Dewey, narrative inquiry can approach “the study of education is the study of life. We learn about education from thinking about life, and we learn about life from thinking about education” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiv).

Narrative inquiry was used for this study to better understand educators’ experiences in using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms. By studying this lived experience, I sought to “describe, understand, and even explain important aspects of the world” (Squire et al., 2013, p. 2), giving external expression to internal phenomena (Squire et al., 2013). Via narrative inquiry, I sought to tell the story of experience, particularly that of educators who use Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms, to understand their thought processes via their narrative of their experience. “Telling stories helps people to think about, and understand, their personal or another individual’s thinking, actions, and reactions (Bruner, 1986, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Ricoeur, 1991)” (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 329). The participants’ stories shed light on how and why educators chose this technology to facilitate classroom teaching and learning.

Research Design

The issue of a new 21st-century learner and the ever-evolving world of technology poses an interesting problem for educators: how to reach students in a way that not only fulfills curriculum requirements but also can teach 21st-century skills such as collaboration and access to “dynamic hub of knowledge” (Gonulal, 2020, p. 312) that the Internet represents. As such, there is a gap in the existing research on the ‘how’ of choosing educational technology, mainly using
Podcasts and Podcasting as a pedagogical tool. By using this gap in the literature and the TPACK model developed by Koehler and Mishra, this study sought to answer the following questions:

- How do social studies describe their experience using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?
- How do Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) and Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) play a role in teacher’s decisions to use Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?
- What advantages and/or disadvantages do teachers articulate when using Podcasts and/or Podcasting as an educational technology in their secondary social studies classrooms?

I conducted three semi-structured interviews to address the research questions. Appendix B contains the interview protocols for each of the three semi-structured interviews. I structured these interviews to situate them within the Technological, Pedagogical, Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework created by Koehler and Mishra (2007). This framework, discussed in detail in the section below, allows the research to highlight the overlap of the three lenses in teachers’ experiences using Podcasts and Podcasting in secondary social studies classrooms, and highlighting how teachers see their knowledge and their students’ knowledge constructed, mediated by the technology of Podcasts and Podcasting.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study looks at two parts of the learning process: the decision for how to teach the content knowledge and the process by which a teacher decides that, as well as how that learning outcome is perceived to impact their students. I used a Postmodern Constructivist framework to examine how the teacher creates the ‘discrepancies’ needed for students to construct knowledge and why they chose the medium, either Podcasts or Podcasting, to create those discrepancies to facilitate learning. It also looks at the intersection of technology, pedagogy, and content Knowledge via the TPACK framework to identify the ‘why’ of Podcasts or Podcasting over
other ‘traditional’ content presentation methods. The two frameworks, postmodern constructivism and TPACK present an intertwining of technology and theory. Choosing either Podcasting, the act of creating a Podcast to have students construct their knowledge, or Podcasts, the act of having students listen to a previously recorded Podcast to create the discrepancies necessary for knowledge construction, allows for the student to construct their knowledge while also allowing students to acknowledge the multiple perspectives of history.

**Postmodern Constructivism.** Researchers can divide postmodern constructivism into two subcategories: postmodernism and constructivism. Each addresses an aspect of the educators’ experience using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms and their perceived impact on their students’ learning.

*Postmodernism* is an educational theory that does not accept labels, questioning the idea of universal truths because truth, to postmodernists, changes based on context and situations (Kumar, 2019). As such, we interpret, understand, and narrate the world through multiple perspectives and identities. This view makes the postmodernist perspective more tolerant and inclusive by acknowledging that knowledge is socially constructed and encouraging discourse to deconstruct knowledge (Kumar, 2019). Several eminent philosophers influenced postmodernism, including Roland Barthes, who argues that learning contains a multitude of meanings; Jacques Derrida, who argues that the future is constantly changing; and Michele Foucault, who contends that knowledge is power and power acts on humans (Douglass, 2012). Kumar (2019) identifies ‘Critical Social studies’ that emphasizes inquiry and discovery-based learning and sees knowledge as socially constructed (Kumar, 2019). Dewey and the constructivist theories of Piaget and Vygotsky heavily influenced Kumar’s view. Podcasts and Podcasting create a situation in which the learner can engage with existing knowledge in the form of a premade
Podcast or engage with the community creation of knowledge to have a deeper and more critical engagement with the material. Dewey sees experience as “both personal and social,” and “the personal and social are always present” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). According to Kumar (2019), “the goal should be to examine, understand, and reveal the deeper meanings, structures, and processes that underpin social, historical, political, economic knowledge, processes, and institutions” (p. 197). Within postmodernism, popular culture and media are considered the ‘First Curriculum’ to which students are exposed (Kumar, 2019). Through these mediums, students first construct their knowledge of history, and podcasts represent a part of this popular culture. Trenia Walker stresses the importance of critical literacy in helping students understand how knowledge is socially constructed (Kumar, 2019). Educators can use podcasts to highlight voices not have heard before, as well as presenting the opportunity to give “voice to underserved or niche areas” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 704) as well as “provide authentic, contemporary, culturally-rich, and easily accessible materials” (Gonulal, 2020, p. 312). As such, they can introduce the ideal opportunity to present the “multiplicity of perspectives and identities” (Kumar, 2019, p. 198) while also encouraging “reflective, experiential, and critical engagement with the subject matter” (Kumar, 2019, p. 199).

Several studies within the literature on Podcast use in education highlight the importance of Constructivist Theory (Mitchell et al., 2021; Kidd, 2011; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). Jean Piaget introduced constructivism into educational psychology and learning theory, building on the work of other eminent scholars such as Dewey and Vygotsky. Piaget believed that students interact with knowledge, identify items that cause them to question their learning, and construct their knowledge based on their interaction with their environment (Brainerd, 2009). For Vygotsky, child development was not a simple matter of an educator imparting knowledge to a
student or a student’s ability to complete things independently but rather an amalgamation of interpersonal, cultural-historical, and individual factors. For development, children begin to make the “distinction between sense (what a word connotates) and its meaning (what it denotes)” (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003, p. 214). In this way, children become aware of not only the specific meaning of a concept but also its application to the broader cultural-historical structure of society. This learning is “mediated by the use of tools, either physical or psychological, that serve as the links to the broader social and cultural context” (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003, p. 221). In the case of Podcasts, they become the tool by which students construct their understanding.

I sought to use constructivism to address how educators use or perceive education technology, particularly podcasts, to create the ‘discrepancies’ that prompt students to question and construct their knowledge (Brainerd, 2009). The constructivist view can be applied to Podcasts as it introduces the author’s socio-cultural perspectives or the students’ research, and the construction of new knowledge by presenting competing world views to what the student may already know and understand. There are some common themes identified from the literature on constructivism: 1) “new knowledge is built upon the foundation of previous learning,” 2) “learning is an active rather than passive process,” 3) “language is an important component of the learning process,” and 4) “the learning environment should be learner-centric” (Kanuka & Anderson, 1999, p. 14). When taking a constructivist view of education, teachers must understand that for learning to occur, there must be different experiences to allow for different levels of understanding (Kanuka & Anderson, 1999).

Although much of the research highlights the postmodernist and constructivist potential of Podcasts and Podcasting within education, the theoretical framework that best fits the implementation of Podcasts and Podcasting as an educational tool is that of TPACK due to it
highlighting the interplay of technology, pedagogy, and content when used in an educational setting.

**Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK).** The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK or TPACK) framework was developed by Koehler and Mishra (2007) to “help researchers and teacher educators better understand the complexity of the knowledge required for effective technology integration” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, p. 79) as well as and “has been recognized as an important theoretical foundation for technology integration research” (Wu, 2013, p. E73). It also “provides a framework through which to view instructional planning and implementation in order to understand better the successes and challenges teachers encounter in integrating technology into their teaching” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, p. 79). Giving a way to look “at a complex phenomenon like technology integration in ways that are now amendable to analysis and development” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 67). As Koehler and Mishra (2009) created the framework, according to them TPACK is,

> “the basis of effective teaching with technology, requiring an understanding of the representation of concepts using technologies; pedagogical techniques that use technologies in constructive ways to teach content; knowledge of what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn and how technology can help redress some of the problems that students face; knowledge of students’ prior knowledge and theories of epistemology; and knowledge of how technologies can be used to build on existing knowledge to develop new epistemologies or strengthen old ones” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66).

Using the TPACK Framework opens avenues by which teachers, researchers, and teacher educators can move beyond seeing technology as an ‘add-on’ and instead “focus again upon the connections among technology, content, and pedagogy as they play out in classroom contexts” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 67). Situating this research within this framework research allowed me to see how the interplay between technology, content, and pedagogy supports student learning.
Koehler and Mishra expanded upon the theories of Shulman’s (1987) pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Shulman (1987) “stressed the importance of a teacher’s understanding of the discipline as well as the most effective strategies to facilitate discipline-based learning” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, p. 78). According to Archambault and Barnett (2010), before the TPACK framework, “the notion of a unifying conceptual framework was lacking in the educational technology literature” (p. 1656). Kohler and Mishra introduced technology to Shulman’s theory. As such, TPACK represents the complex interaction of three types of knowledge: content (CK), pedagogy (PK), and technology (TK), that produce flexible types of knowledge that are required to successfully integrate technology into teaching and learning (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Hilton (2015) highlights this when discussing how the different areas function individually and the interactions required for effective teaching with technology (Hilton, 2015). The framework, represented by a Venn diagram in Figure 1, highlights the interactions between the three types of knowledge: Technological Content Knowledge (TCK), Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), and finally, the interaction of all three with Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, pp. 62-63).
Content Knowledge (CK) “is the teachers’ knowledge about the subject matter to be learned or taught” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 63). Content can include anything from basic concepts and ideas to more complex theories that represent the fundamentals of a subject area. Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) is “teachers’ deep knowledge about the processes and practices or methods of teaching and learning” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 64). Pedagogy encompasses the skills and knowledge necessary for running a classroom smoothly and creating an environment conducive to learning. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is the overlap of PK and CK in which the teacher knows the content that needs to be taught how it needs to be taught to reach their students (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Technology Knowledge (TK) is an aspect of the framework that is “always in a state of flux” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 64) as technology is an ever-evolving thing with new technologies introduced all the time. Koehler & Mishra (2009) attempt to define
it as the understanding of how information technologies work, how they apply to everyday life, and their ability to either help or hurt a goal (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) is “an understanding of the manner in which technology and content influence and constrain one another” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65). Teachers need to be able to understand how technology helps to build content knowledge and how it influences how learning occurs. Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) is “an understanding of how teaching and learning can change when particular technologies are used in particular ways” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65). According to Koehler and Mishra (2009), “this becomes particularly important [when] popular software programs are not designed for educational purposes…and web-based technologies such as blogs or Podcasts are designed for purposes of entertainment, communication, and social networking” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66). Teachers can overcome the hurdle of technology not being directly designed for educational purposes with TPK. It requires them to be creative and open-minded about how technology can play a role in teaching and learning. Finally, TPACK (technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge) “is an emergent form of knowledge that goes beyond all three “core” components” and “is an understanding that emerges from interactions among content, pedagogy, and technology knowledge” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66).

Researchers have used the TPACK framework to analyze podcasts in educational settings. Swan and Hofer (2011), in their article “In Search of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: Teachers’ initial foray into Podcasting in Economics,” worked with economics teachers to implement Podcasts in their secondary economics classrooms. Highlighting the last of research “in the K-12 classroom context,” they point out that “only eight journal articles document the use of Podcasts as a tool for learning” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, pp.
They discuss the advantages and appeal of Podcasts to the digital generations and how they can help students to “move beyond conceptual understanding” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, p. 78). Using the TPACK framework in their research, they were able to “view instructional planning and implementation in order to better understand the successes and challenges teachers encounter in integrating technology into their teaching” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, p. 79). The study by Swan & Hofer (2011) provides a framework for teachers to examine how they experience using Podcasts or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms and the interplay of pedagogy, content, and technology in their decision-making.

**Structure**

This study sought to fill in the gap in the literature about 6-12 educators’ experiences with the use of educational technology in their classrooms by looking at how and why they choose the technologies of Podcasts and Podcasting. According to the research by Kophcha et al. (2020), “our field still lacks a comprehensive understanding of the process of a teacher’s decision making: that is, how a teacher makes decisions about using technology” (p. 731). There is also a lack of research on the TPACK model and its use in social studies (Miguel-Revilla et al., 2020). This research took a qualitative approach using narrative inquiry to seek to build an understanding of how teachers use the educational technology of Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms, their perceptions of Podcasts and Podcasting as a pedagogical tool, and how they perceive the impact of this tool on their students understanding of history as well as their own.

Using narrative inquiry in this research attempts to answer the questions posed by Kophcha et al. (2020) by using themes presented in the literature (advantages and challenges) as basic coding. It also aimed to understand better why educators chose podcasts as tools to build historical knowledge or skills and how they impact student learning. After identifying educators who use or have used Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms, researchers asked them to
participate in semi-structured interviews to understand the reasoning behind their choices. The interview is “one of the most common ways of producing knowledge in the human and social sciences” (Brinkmann, 2018, p. 577). In addition, this study highlighted any emergent themes that appeared throughout the interview process.

**Sampling**

Using purposeful sampling to identify participants, the criteria were educators teaching secondary (6-12) social studies in the United States and using or used Podcasts/Podcasting in their social studies teaching. The goal was to have a sample size of 6 participants (n=6); however, only five participants finished participating in the research.

I interviewed each participant using a semi-structured interview protocol. I conducted the interviews via Zoom to allow for the broadest possible sampling, removing the geographic restrictions of in-person interviews. Utilizing Zoom also reduces the impact of inconveniencing participants in the study. Participants engaged in three interviews to obtain a thick, rich description of their experience using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This platform also allowed time to meet with them to review research findings and triangulate the data with their understanding and the meanings of their experiences.

I obtained the sample by sending an interest form (Appendix X) to my contacts within the education community. I also used social media and asked respondents if they knew anyone else interested in potentially participating in the research. The interest form was a short survey that would collect general demographic data such as their name, location of where they teach, the grade level(s) taught, number of years of teaching, number of years teaching social studies, if they used Podcasts or Podcasting as an instructional tool, and their positive or negative experience with the tool. After approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study, I posted the call for participants on several social media sites, including Reddit and
Facebook. A colleague shared my Facebook post with a social studies teacher group she belonged to, which helped identify the first participants. From there, others shared the post, and I identified two more participants through social media. A third participant offered to join after talking with another colleague. I identified two final participants at the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) conference. During a session on podcasts and podcasting in education, a conversation began between myself and two others about my research. They volunteered to participate as they were also interested in hearing more about other teachers’ experiences using Podcasts or Podcasting.

**Setting**

Each participant chose the interviews, and some decided to complete all three at once. Allowing the participants to choose times that worked best for them, helping mitigate the risk of inconvenience to the participants. Each interview was conducted via the Internet platform Zoom to allow for more flexibility in meeting times and negate geographical distance issues that could have limited participation for some in the study. Each one-hour interview was structured to focus on one of three domains: content, technology, and pedagogy. I designed the questions to allow participants to fully share their stories about their experiences while focusing on a specific aspect of their decision-making process. I asked participants about podcasts or podcasting in the three domains in each interview. This approach not only situated the narrative within the domains of the TPACK framework and revealed their overlap but also provided a more nuanced look at the decision-making process these educators underwent.

The first interview began with a background question of ‘Start by telling me about yourself” to begin to establish a rapport with participants to allow for ease of discussion. Then, participants were asked to describe their curriculum, including the limitations they felt existed, how they approached them, and how they defined ‘success’ in their classroom and their ‘dream’
lesson. In addition to other questions, these first interview questions sought to establish the participants’ content knowledge of their subject area and how they, as learners, learned new content. I designed the final question to introduce the second interview, which focused on technology, by asking participants to think about how “teaching and learning of history have changed in the Internet Age.” Building off the previous discussion of their content, I asked participants to focus on educational technology in the second interview. I began with questions designed to get them thinking about what they knew about educational technology and how they might use it in their classrooms. This approach provided a way to see content and technology domains overlapped. In this interview, I focused subsequent questions on Podcasts and Podcasting, including participants’ personal experiences with them, how they thought they might use them in their classrooms, and what success might look like when using podcasts or podcasting. Finally, I asked questions to link their discussions of technology back to the curriculum, exploring how they might use it to address limitations or enhance content in their classrooms. Much like the first interview, one of the final questions sought to introduce the domain of the following interview by asking participants why they chose to use podcasts or podcasting over more traditional methods such as textbooks. The third and final interview focused on pedagogy. I began by asking about best practices for using technology in a history classroom and what ‘success’ looks like when using technology in a pedagogically sound way. This line of questioning aimed to reconnect participants to their discussion of technology while highlighting the overlap between the domains of technology and pedagogy. The rest of the questions focused on how participants built their lessons and what they felt worked best or not. The final question aimed to highlight the overlap of pedagogy and content by asking participants how using Podcasts or Podcasting impacted their students’ knowledge of history.
Participants
Participants came from various states throughout the United States, including states in the Northeastern, Midwestern, and Southern parts of the United States. I asked each participant to choose a pseudonym to maintain anonymity. I provided a list of potential options, but participants could choose their own. A summary of each participant is below, with a more in-depth look in later sections.

Kaidan. Kaidan has been a teacher for 13 years and has earned a master’s degree in American history. He has taught both 8th grade, and 11th grade at a small school in the Northeastern United States. He teaches primarily US History, Honors US History, and AP US History. The school in which he teaches allows him and his colleagues freedom of choice to approach their curriculum, so he decided to have his students engage in Podcasting to facilitate writing arguments and making claims in a new way.

Mrs. R. Mrs. R has taught for 15 years, earning a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction focusing on literacy education, and earning a gifted certification. Having worked in government for ten years, including at the State Department of Education, Mrs. R decided to become a teacher to help address the teacher shortage. She now teaches in a major city in the Southeastern United States. She teaches 6th grade social studies, but she did teach ELA for her first eight years of teaching. Mrs. R previously taught World History, but she now teaches US History due to curriculum shifts in her state. She has also taught elective courses such as Yearbook. Despite a curriculum that moves very quickly, Mrs. R decided to have her students engage in both Podcasting by having students create a podcast about West African Empires and listening to Podcasts to engage them in learning supplemental material on Plymouth.

Nyreen. Nyreen has been a teacher for 30 years, holding a master’s degree in American history, and is pursuing a Doctorate. She has taught primarily in the Midwestern United States
and abroad. Her experiences as a teacher have varied from high schools that serve predominately immigrant populations to more affluent, predominately white school districts. She has taught American History, Economics, state history, and World Geography. Nyreen decided to have her students engage with Podcasts to help them learn more about cultural relativism and supply and demand in a new and different, as well as to engage in the practice of listening.

**Tali.** Tali has been in education for 14 years. Having earned her master’s in educational leadership and administration, she taught for ten years in Secondary education. After earning her master’s, she pursued a Doctorate in Literacy Education and is now an assistant professor at a University in the Northeastern United States. She spent her time in secondary education as both a classroom teacher and a humanities supervisor for her district in the Northeastern United States. Tali primarily taught high school during that period but spent one-year teaching middle school. She taught 10th to 12 graders in US History and taught some sociology and an introduction to social justice class. Tali decided to have her students engage with podcasts because she wanted them to hear multiple perspectives about social injustices people face. Podcasts offered her a new way to achieve this compared to traditional documentaries.

**Zelda.** Zelda has been a teacher for 12 years, holding a master’s degree in history and pursuing a Doctorate in Education, and has taught primarily in the Northeastern United States. As a teacher, she has taught in different types of schools ranging from urban schools to charter schools, to, finally, a top-performing vocational school. She primarily teaches US History and some Dual Enrollment courses and is also her district’s Social Studies curriculum coordinator. She decided to have her students engage with Podcasts after a graduate course required her to listen to them. The podcast offered a unique perspective on the American Revolution that Zelda wanted to share with her class, one not usually told in the curriculum. Building off the Podcasts
ability to provide a different perspective, Zelda had her students engage in Podcasting. They created a biography podcast about a person not discussed in most mainstream textbooks or narratives and discussed why that might be.

**Data Analysis**

One of the challenges of using narrative inquiry is “the development of a set of methods” (Salmon & Riessman, 2013, p. 202) and the “tension [of] the place of theory in inquiry” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 40). I conducted semi-structured interviews with participants who used podcasts in their classrooms to gather further evidence to answer the why’s and how’s of educational technology and its use in the secondary social studies classroom. Using interviews in qualitative research has the goal of “generating detailed accounts rather than brief answers or general statements” (Riessman, 2008, p. 23) and is “one of the most common ways of producing knowledge in the human and social sciences” (Brinkmann, 2018, p. 577). Brinkmann (2018) articulates why semi-structured interviews, a more postmodern method, are better suited to Narrative Analysis by stating:

“compared to more structured interviews, semi-structured interviews can make better use of the knowledge-producing potentials of dialogues by allowing much more leeway for following up on whatever angles are deemed important by the interview, and the interviewer has a greater chance of becoming visible as a knowledge-producing participant in the process itself, rather than hiding behind a preset interview guide” (p. 579).

This more dialogical process allows for more of a conversation that generates knowledge, rather than a more formal interview that may cause the interviewee not to be as comfortable with the interviewer. Interviewing requires forming a relationship between the interviewee and interviewer, which must shift to a “narrator and listener” (Chase, 2018, p. 423) dynamic. Since the interviewer and interviewee co-construct the produced knowledge, it is essential to identify both individual voices. This “collaboration involves negotiation relationships between the researcher and the participant to lessen the potential gap between the narrative told and the
narrative reported” (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 332), and “no matter what approach they take, narrative researchers work closely with individuals and their stories” (Chase, 2018, p. 423). As such, both the researcher’s experience and the participants’ experiences overlap and intertwine to create the experience narrative.

By using narrative analysis, “researchers narrate the story and often identify themes or categories that emerge from the story. By conducting the in-depth interviews, the qualitative data analysis may be both descriptions of the story and themes that emerge from it” (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002, p. 332). By using narrative inquiry and narrative analysis as the method by which to understand teacher decision making, I sought to “capture both the individual and the context” (Moen, 2006, p. 4) as “narrated by those who lived them” (Chase, 2018, p. 421). I used basic coding structures to identify themes presented in the literature, such as advantages and challenges. This approach helped situate the research in a more formalistic setting by positioning it within the existing literature. The analysis also allowed themes to emerge from the interview process as participants shared their stories.

Thematic analysis focuses on what is said where “narrative scholars keep a story ‘intact’ by theorizing from the case rather than from component themes (categories) across cases” (Riessman, 2008, p. 53). They do not try to generalize themes to fit into a broader context; they just stick to the content, paying attention to ”’what' is said, rather than 'how' it is said” (Riessman, 2008, p. 53). This approach allows it to be diverse in its uses, from active interviews to document analysis to ethnographies. I used this approach to triangulate the data within the themes of the existing literature on the use of podcasts and podcasting and to situate teachers’ experiences within the TPACK framework. I organized the data analysis in three ways:
1. The teachers’ narrative of their experiences using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms.

2. An analysis of instances of TPK (technological pedagogical knowledge), such as how technology supported the learning outcomes, and TCK (technological content knowledge), connections between Podcasts and Podcasting, and the content.

3. An analysis of themes that appeared throughout the literature on the advantages, challenges, and role of pedagogy in the use of Podcasts or Podcasting in social studies classrooms.

I also read the interview transcripts to identify any emergent themes.

**Validity and Rigor**

Although qualitative research has many benefits, the literature also discusses its weaknesses. One of the issues that qualitative research needs to address is validity and rigor. When conducting interviews, particularly those conducted in narrative inquiry and Analysis, “narrative inquiry involves a particular set of issues concerning the research relationship, ethics, interpretation, and validity” (Chase, 2018, p. 423). To address the question of validity and rigor, researchers use ‘triangulation,’ which uses a careful selection of data collection methods to be “strategic [in the] multiple data sources to achieve greater rigor validity” (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 93). “The idea of extending research approaches by combining several methodological (or theoretical) approaches is not new in social research” (Flick, 2018). However, the warning is that “multiple data sources may help to achieve rigor, but it does not ensure rigor” (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). In qualitative research, the researcher must continually ask the best way to collect the data that will answer the questions. According to the research, there are two types of validity: internal and external. Internal validity is “the truth value, applicability, consistency, neutrality, dependability, and/or credibility of interpretations and conclusions within the underlying setting
or group” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007, p. 234). *External validity* is the “degree that the findings of a study can be generalized across different populations of persons, settings, contexts, and times” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007, p. 235). There are also several other methods, other than triangulation, to address validity and reliability in qualitative research. They include checking with participants to have them review your research and interpretations, keeping extensive field journals to reference back to, and providing thick, rich descriptions (Patton, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Onwuegbuzi & Leech, 2007; Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

I compared detailed interview transcripts to interview notes. I then provided them to the participants to verify their thoughts and meanings and to address any interpretations that emerged during the data analysis. The final research text included thick, rich descriptions as part of the narrative journey. I provided participants with their narratives to ensure their voices and stories were accurate and their meanings understood before including them in the final research text. As Riessman (2013) notes, “…storytelling happens relationally, collaboratively between the speaker and listener” (Salmon & Riessman, 2013, p. 201). This collaboration provided the basis for rigor in this qualitative research study.

There are disagreements about how narrative inquiry fits within the grander narrative and its validity as a form of research. One of the issues is temporality. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), the grand narrative of objectives, preset and 'attainable,' removes itself from time and temporality. The issue for narrative inquiry is that temporality plays a huge considerable in understanding experience. Some argue that narrative inquiry does not have the same 'rigor' as quantitative proposals due to the lack of paradigmatic structures (Riessman, 2008). However, quantitative research sometimes fails to consider how knowledge and perspectives change over time (Andrews et al., 2013). The literature offers several suggestions
for approaching a discussion about the validity of narrative inquiry. Suggestions include the use of secondary analysis (Andrews et al., 2013), categorizing narratives to provide generalizations to a larger population (Maynes et al., 2008; 2012), and keeping track of decision-making (Riessman, 2008). If one exists, all these approaches have theoretical frameworks to validate data and get those in academia to accept the work as valid. I refrain from using the word 'true' because, in narrative inquiry, truth is not always the same and changes based on context. The fact that narrative inquiry accepts that truth is not always the same and is subject to change is an issue that those who adhere to stricter research paradigms struggle to understand.

**Ethical Issues**

This research posed a negligible risk to the research participants. However, it presented a risk of inconvenience or “taking up time that a person might more profitably spend otherwise” (Sieber & Tolich, 2012, p. 18). As such the basic principle of ‘respect for persons’ is adhered to (Spickard, 2017, p. 89). The anonymity and confidentiality of data were maintained by storing interview transcripts in a secure online location accessible only through multi-factor authentication (MFA) methods.

I needed to address ethical issues regarding qualitative data. Researcher bias could be introduced in any qualitative data analysis. To mitigate this, I involved participants in interpreting the data throughout the process, allowing them to provide feedback and insights into their narratives.

Another issue, partially addressed with the narrative analysis process, is the issue of voice. There is a common argument about narrative inquiry that “voices are heard, stolen, and published as the researcher’s own or that the researcher’s voice downs out the participant’s voices so that when participants do appear to speak, it is, after all, nothing more than the researcher’s voice code” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 75). This issue requires balancing
voices, where the researchers share their experience and interpretation while honoring the
participants’ narrative. To do this, I ensured that the “first audience and, indeed our most
important audience” was the participant (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, pp. 173-174), working
with them to ensure that their story of experience was told as they understood and remembered
it. In this research, the participant voices will be honored and respected by telling their stories of
their experience to answer everyone’s ‘how’ and ‘why’ of their experience in using Podcasts or
Podcasting in their secondary social studies classroom. However, research must also fit within
the “grand narrative” of the larger audience of “the conversation of a scholarly discourse”
(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 174). To situate the narrated experience within the grand
narrative of theoretical discourse, I examined the narratives through three different lenses of the
TPACK framework. This approach established the narratives within the theory and strengthened
the validity of the research.

There is also the consideration of the idea of power. Interviews, as discussed earlier, are
an essential part of narrative inquiry, but the structured interview process tends to have
unnaturally rigid boundaries in which narratives do not thrive. This boundary is due to the
structure having “an inequality about them” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110) in which one
person controls the setting and flow of discussion. The semi-structured interview process was
required to facilitate discussion, but the participants could tell their story as they remembered it.
Acknowledging, “the limits of one’s ability to imagine the other’s experience…humility…lays
the groundwork for trust and further efforts to hear another’s story, the groundwork for genuine
dialogue” (Chase, 2018, p. 557). A relationship must be established between the interviewer and
interviewee; however, the balance of power still leans towards the interviewer, as they have
created the interview protocol. Allowing the interviewee to tell their story and not interrupt them
balances the power dynamic and allows them to control their narrative. In the end, this research
text, interim texts, field notes, and other materials were shared with the participants throughout
the process to ensure their narrative was honored.

Another ethical issue is that of anonymity. In narrative research, we tell the stories of the experiences of individuals. Clandinin & Connelly (2000) address this issue of anonymity and its unique issue within narrative research by stating, “…even when we guarantee anonymity, it is not at all clear that we can do so in any meaningful way” (p. 174). The issue of anonymity can shift throughout the research. Participants may wish to be anonymous at the beginning of the research, but by the end, they may wish to be no longer anonymous, and vice versa (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Using pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of the participants, they had the option to either choose their pseudonyms or have one given to them. In addition, research texts, interim texts, field notes, and other materials were shared with the participants throughout the process to ensure that their choice of continued anonymity or identification was honored.

**Limitations**

This study encountered several limitations. The first is the limitation of generalizability. Specifically, how individual participants in this used Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms cannot be generalized to the larger population. However, it could be used to inform future research on the pedagogical implementation of Podcasts and Podcasting in social studies classrooms. Also, there is no quantitative way to measure whether the implementation of Podcasts impacted student learning; as such, there is no quantifiable way to measure whether the use of podcasts or podcasting successfully impacted students’ knowledge of social studies. To address this would require another study in which pre/post-test data was collected and analyzed to see if there was a significant difference in knowledge construction. This study does not seek to address the quantifiable ‘success’ of using this technology; rather, it seeks to understand each
participant’s perceived understanding of ‘success’ in fulfilling the educational goals they established. Each participant’s definition of success was different, much like each experience was different, and their ‘success’ is not generalizable to a larger population due to each unique experience.

Findings

Kaidan

Kaidan always knew he wanted to be a history teacher. With a quick smile, he said, “Oh, I knew for a long time that’s what I wanted to do. Starting in middle school, I enjoyed reading history, and that got me interested.” As he went into high school, “I had history teachers that I
really enjoyed learning from.” He also always knew he wanted to work with kids. “I did all sorts of summer camps, Sunday school, all that kind of stuff,” he said, “So it all kind of fell into place.” So, with a heart set on working with kids and a want to engage with the past, Kaidan went and got his undergrad in history education. Although he got his degree, he never stopped learning as much as he could about history, “I enjoy engaging with people from the past; I have a passion for it,” he continued, “The idea of engaging in the past was just really interesting and fun for me..” He does a lot of reading and points out that,

“If you teach history, you need to be reading history. To really be able to successfully teach history, you need to learn how historians participate in their craft so that we can apply those same lessons and skills for our students.”

He brought that mindset with him into his teaching career, which began in 2011. Currently, Kaidan teaches at a small school with about 120 students per grade. He teaches both 8th grade and 11th grade US History. So, he covers all of US History from 1783 to 1877 in 8th grade, and in 11th grade, it is “from Reconstruction, so 1865, to as far as you can get.” To cover the timeline, he and his colleagues focus a lot on project-based learning. “We’re looking for trends in historiography but doing it within this project-based lens to give them as much choice, as much voice and opportunity as possible.” He is able to focus on project-based learning because his curriculum focuses more on benchmarks, “there are some subgroups, but change and continuity over time, historical research, interrogation of primary sources, and historiography. We have some content standards, but we don’t ever really talk about them.” Kaidan doesn’t feel limited by his curriculum requirements, “we are kind of lucky in that way.” He continues saying, “My social studies supervisor for my district has been very supportive of our project-based initiative,” The only real limit he sees would be those initiatives that would try to limit his curriculum. To address this, he says,
“I've tried to be involved when I have found and heard of ways and initiatives that might limit my curriculum. I try to include my voice in there as much as possible by being a part of committees, trainings, or workshops.” The freedom he has, he says, is typical of his school, “we really do feel like curriculum-wise; we get a lot of freedom here.” Kaidan still has to deal with his students’ perceptions of history. He says that he gets the stereotypical from the students,

“We’re going to do a lot of reading, and maybe some engaging stuff, and maybe story time. We’re going to listen to the teacher tell their story about history, and we’re going to take some notes one it.”

However, he feels like his students do not really understand what history is. “I don’t know if they totally understand the purpose until they really get into it. I don’t think they understand it as the study of people as it really is.”

Still, Kaidan teaches in the Internet Age, and he sees the impact it has had on the teaching of history. He states,

“I don’t know if there’s a discipline that’s been more affected. As technology has created so much opportunity, it has created an even greater need to educate about how to source, how to contextualize, and how to corroborate. It’s made historical thinking skills and analysis just so important.”

For him, he feels that he is in a unique position because he experienced learning both before the Internet Age and after, “My generation is very unique in that we kind of experience both,” he said, “I went to school as the Internet Age was starting to come about.” Now in this digital era, “in this Age of the Internet, you have the world at your fingertips in terms of resources and materials. There is just so much that is available.” Kaidan is quick to point out that not everything out there is great, “we as teachers are having to be even more critical about what we’re using and for what purposes.” It’s not just teachers who have the information at their fingertips; it’s the students as well, and teachers have to help them navigate the information too,

“We’re trying to teach them, more than ever, to ask and critique what they are using and why they’re using it. But those discussions sort of bring themselves back to history and gives the teaching of history skills even more importance.”
So, he has seen a shift in his pedagogy because of the Internet Age. “I use it on an everyday basis. It’s really enhanced what I can do; I can dig deeper into different ideas and concepts.” In his classroom, he uses technology to enhance his students’ learning, “probably 99% of my classroom is totally electronic; we hardly do anything via paper.” When he creates assignments, he makes sure to “incorporate technology with the purpose of really enhancing the educational process.” He also finds it very helpful for assessments, saying, “Technology, in general, is super helpful for assessments. Being able to get that data back really quickly, aggregate it, and find patterns. It gives me a clear idea of where exactly my kids are.” Kaidan points out that teachers need to leverage technology to remove roadblocks to learning, to “promote collaboration and create opportunities for different kinds of examples of learning and pathways to learning.” He continues by saying,

“If we want students within a history classroom to engage as historians to create histories, technology has really opened up the different ways that students can create history. I think it’s an absolute game-changer. Leveraging different kinds of mediums for evidence of learning and the learning process.” Technology opens the pathways for students to make connections on their own; and for Kaidan, that is a success. He points out that “the historical thinking process is not innate.” He uses technology to help students learn that thinking process and to “continue to cast a wider and wider net and make these wider and wider connections. That’s where real deep understanding is. Real success.”

Kaidan laughs when he thinks about his favorite lessons, “I love running around like a maniac.” His dream lesson is,

“Any kind of collaboration where they’re working, they’re engaging, they’re getting their hands dirty. It could be as simple as ‘We’ve got a big post it paper, some documents, and we are going to draw some arrows and make some connections.’ When the students are so deep in either their learning or the experience, and they like what they are doing.”
He began to think about how to get his students to not only be hands-on and engaged but do it in a unique and different way while maintaining his focus on project-based learning. He points out,

“I wanted to create some structured academic conversations. Something I could assess formally and summative, but also have some freedom of choice. I also wanted them to engage orally with their topics and have conversations with one another but in an organized way.”

He discovered Podcasts “on accident,” and began to listen to Podcasts, specifically sports Podcasts and 15 Minute History. He “found the conversations for the sports Podcasts engaging on an intellectual level, so I started to think about ‘what are some different ways to really leverage this medium in a classroom to create?’” So, he began to discuss the potential with his colleague. “We were trying to come up with a project for our fourth marking period. So, I thought the Podcast would be an interesting way to engage the students and get them to explore a different kind of medium.” They discussed how “it could be used as a great warm-up or core text of a lesson. It could definitely be used as a source for research and could also be used to show a pathway or product of learning.” Based off his experience with Podcasts, he saw the potential to have his students create an argument in a new way,

“In my experience in listening to Podcasts, I found that they were grounded in arguments, claims, and evidence. So, it was a no-brainer to incorporate that into the classroom. Give them the opportunity to create an argument that relies on claims and on evidence and present it in an authentic real conversation.”

So, the Podcast project began. He first used it with his 11th grade US History class during his fourth marking period. Initially, it was a single episode where the students,

“Pick a decade from the latter half of the 20th century and identify turning points within the decade that fit certain themes. They work in groups of two and they develop a Podcast which focuses on events that they believe to be a turning point in the decade. So, they identified one event within the decade that was a turning point and produced a Podcast about it.”

However, he began to realize that a single episode wasn’t the best way to have the students really engage with their topics. “It kind of shifted a few years later because I didn’t want them making just one episode.” He thought about the Podcasts he had listened to and said, “It is very rare
someone is going to put in the effort into a single episode. The project expanded to be a 5-part series that the students would create. The new format was similar but with some added requirements,

“They once again pick a decade, and now they have to pick a particular theme that they want to explore within the decade. We give them some possible themes, so like in the fifties, they could look at conformity, consumerism, the American Dream, Civil rights, but they’re not tied to those themes. They identify three events that represent turning points within the decade that all connect to that theme.”

The series consists of an introduction episode, “they articulate, this is the decade that we’re exploring, this is the theme, these are the events we’re going to look at, and these are the questions that we’re looking to answer.” In the three-body episodes, they “explore each event, and they incorporate primary source evidence into it. They have to make the episodes feel natural and organic like a conversation, while also structured.” Then the conclusion episode is just “wrapping the whole thing up.”

Overall, Kaidan believes that the project was a good choice to make. He points out that this project is very similar to writing an essay,

“We don’t have our kids in this class write a five-paragraph paper. I have thought, ‘Am I doing them a little bit of a disservice because we don’t do this?’ but at the end of the day, we really follow this process of practicing and historical apprenticeship throughout the year.”

Even though they don’t write a traditional research paper, his students are still practicing their historical thinking skills “more clearly, more purposefully and deliberately. They look at not only change over time and continuity over time but also consider what the long term and immediate impacts of events might be.” In terms of articulating arguments, an important skill, the Podcast series provided a different way to present it. Kaidan elaborates on this further, saying,

“The way you present an argument in the Podcast is different than how you would do it in, say, a paper. It allows students to participate in historical apprenticeship but also utilize different techniques and to think about their arguments in a different way. I think
it lends itself best to very thoughtful and meaningful conclusions and arguments. More so than other mediums or projects we do. It allowed them to connect claims to evidence and use evidence not just to support but to enhance. Plus, I don’t think they can hide as much with this medium because they have to verbally articulate their knowledge. It shines a light on if they don’t know it.”

The biggest challenge he has is that of time and does “require a certain number of moving parts.

He says, “Typically, the way it works is essentially 3 days in which they do research, start developing the episode, and then a day to produce it and post.” He wishes that “we had a little more time to develop the episodes so that they could be a little bit longer, like 5 to 10 minutes.”

He also has a lack of space to allow his students to record, “I wish we had a place where these kids could record. We don’t have the capability for them to record their Podcast in class. I just don’t have the physical space available for them.” Despite these challenges, Kaidan said he felt the project was a success. “I think it’s more engaging at the end of the day. When I developed this, my kids were not listening to Podcasts. Now I am pretty confident that they do.” Also, they were “engaging with the history and making connections with the history. When they’re enjoying the history,” it allowed his students to “create lasting learning through exploring history through a deeper lens, and this really allows them to do that.” It also just allows them to be human,

“...I think they can be a little more human with this medium. You know you can’t laugh in a paper; you can imply it, but we can’t hear you giggling, but it’s okay to do that within this medium, which I think is cool.”

In the end, he points out that his students learned some transferable skills. “They are totally capable with a lot of technology. So, the transfer of those skills that they use in their everyday life to this other technology.”

In the future, Kaidan would be very interested in using a pre-recorded Podcast in his classroom. He points out,
“I've had students use them as sources in research projects. I would really want to leverage them more in terms of ‘Hey, here is this lesson, and instead of this source, we’re going to listen to this Podcast.”

Mrs. R

Mrs. R was not always a teacher. For the first 10 years of her career, after earning a bachelor’s degree in journalism, she worked in politics and communication, handling media relations. As an appointed employee, she was not in a protected civil service position, so she went to work for the State Department of Education, where she continued her work in media relations. One day, she and a colleague were discussing the teacher shortage, and Mrs. R, coming from a family of teachers, decided to become a teacher herself. She entered an alternative certification program and has been teaching middle school, grades 6-8, for the past 15 years. For the first 8 years of her career, she taught English Language Arts because “English was the easy way for me to become a teacher,” she said. Mrs. R took a year off to pursue a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction with a focus on literacy and instruction, as well as gifted certification, earning both. She has dual certifications in both ELA and Social Studies, and now she teaches 6th-grade Social Studies. Laughing, she says, “Sixth graders are a whole different breed of kid.”

She continued,

“They’re used to having their hand help. They’re used to being told ‘Write this in your planner. We’re going to take a test on this day. You’re going to do this on this day. Then they get to middle school, and it’s a whole new world of ‘we’ll let you know when the test is coming up. You’re not going to have a test every week’.”

She chose middle school because she likes it and “coaches teach social studies in high school. It’s reserved for coaches at a lot of public schools.” But she enjoys it and “not many people do. I felt like it was job security because no one wants to teach middle.”

For Mrs. R, she has always loved history. “It was one of my favorite classes,” she said, “and the one thing my son and I always kind of geek out on together.” For her, learning new content “reading is my starting point, especially for learning this semester and refreshing myself”
on history.” However, one day, “my son came home, and he said, ‘You need to listen to this Podcast,’ so I started listening to it, and then I got into those true crime Podcasts.” So, she and her family started listening to them while driving to and from swim meets. The Podcast they listened to was International Infamy, a true crime Podcast. “It was about different, famous crimes and murders around the world.” She learned a lot of content from the Podcast, “we learned about what is a famous murderer in each of these different countries.” She is quick to remind you, “I am just a reader, so if I had to choose between a Podcast and reading, I’m going to choose reading unless I am driving.” For the Podcasts she does listen to, she enjoys it when the hosts are knowledgeable about their subject and “actually does have knowledge about what they’re talking about,” unlike some, where she feels people just talk to talk. “I feel sometimes some of the Podcast that people have told me about, and I’ve gone and listened to, I’m like I think this person is just talking, and there’s not a lot of substance.” She also isn’t a fan of “when somebody tells me to listen to one that should teach me something or whatever, and then I’m like, ‘these people don’t know any more about this than I do!’”

Teaching in the Southeastern United States, Mrs. R follows the state curriculum. This year, the curriculum shifted; she used to teach World History, “which I loved teaching World History,” and now she teaches early US history. “This year, we are kind of out there on our own,” she said about the state’s new curriculum, “I’m basically making up all my lessons myself and using things from past years from when I have had to pick up one section of another grade level.” One of the biggest limitations to the new curriculum, according to Mrs. R, is assessments. The state provides primary and secondary source documents that the students need to know, but “assessing their knowledge of that information, I’ve for to come up with all of that and creating assessments takes a lot of time.” Mrs. R points out that social studies are not just
memorizing dates: “People think we still just teach them that Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492. That’s not important. What’s important is why Christopher Columbus came and then what he did when he got here.” She is faced with a dilemma, “Do I spend my time planning an assessment, or do I spend my time planning a cool lesson? Because the curriculum, it’d be very boring if you just follow it.” With the curriculum shift and her gifted students, “it’s been hard, especially with gifted kids. They remember everything. It’s been kind of hard because they learned so much of this curriculum last year in 5th grade, and they’re like, ‘Why are you teaching us the same thing?’” So, she tries to address this by linking it to World History content that they missed, “I’ve been trying to connect the Renaissance and what was going on in Europe and the Black Death. So, all the stuff going on in Europe to why explorers started coming to the New World.” However, missing the World History connections isn’t the only problem; most of her students do not have a positive perception of Social Studies. Coming from elementary where it’s not always a separate class, her students see it as more work and “kind of this boring thing that gets tacked on at the end of another class.” As such, she has “always been one to plan extra activities. Middle schoolers still need activities.”

Mrs. R was an early adopter of technology in her classroom, “my very first year, my principal was like, ‘You like technology, so I am going to get you a Promethean Board.’” The issue was that had a lot of great resources for math or classroom management but limited for other subjects. “Fast forward a few years,” she continued, “and my principal at my new school asked me if I wanted one, and I said no, give them to other teachers like math and science.” She still had the students use their cell phones for research, assessment, and review games, “if they were caught using them for other purposes, it would get taken away.” As time went on, planning a lesson began to change. She recalled,
“When I first started teaching, back then, the only component of technology in the lesson plan was ‘I am going to use PowerPoint.’ So, it’s gone from teachers dealing with technology to now, what I am using technology for, plus what the students are doing with technology in the classroom.”

The widespread use of the Internet has changed social studies education. “We can find out things a lot quicker,” she says about the Internet, “there used to be a delay in getting the information.”

Now, she is working with students who want immediate access to information, “There’s a demand for immediacy and getting answers quickly to questions because that’s what they’re used to.” She also points out that because of the immediate access to information, teachers can no longer hide what we don’t know. She elaborates by saying, “Now in teaching history, when we don’t know something, number one, we can’t just face it and be like, ‘Well this is what happened’. They’re going to be able to find out if we are faking it.” For students, technology can be a double-edged sword. On the positive side, “It’s made history a lot more visual to students.” It has done away with the whitewashing of history by providing different perspectives. “It’s made it easier for us to be able to teach all sides of history and all perspectives of history. We’re actually getting history from all the perspectives versus the perspective of the winner. Until the Internet, we weren’t able to get that.” On the negative side, students could use technology for ill. “They sometimes know bad stuff about computers,” she said, “like we’ve had kids that have taken down the whole school’s wi-fi.” They also lack the critical reading skills needed to, “Be able to dig through the false information. Students whose critical reading skills are not there, they’re just going to read stuff and believe it. They read it without considering who is the author, what is the perspective, and could it be propaganda?”

So, for using technology in the classroom, Mrs. R says always monitor what they are doing, “always be aware of what they are doing and what they are on,” and be aware of how much time they spend on technology. She also cautions “don’t let a computer take the place of good teaching or quality instruction.”
The school that Mrs. R is at now is a one-to-one school with Chromebooks. In her classroom, she uses “Chromebook to use a bunch of educational platforms that are available, from Flocabulary, BrainPOP, Kahoot, Quizzizz, and Gimkits. Then, having them start to create Google slide presentations. I also do all of my testing online using Illuminate or Edulastic.”

Although she says,

“My favorite thing is when the students are using it to create. I really love the options that technology has for that create phase of your lesson. When they are taking what they’ve learned, creating something from it, and connecting it to today’s life or other parts of history.”

However, the district is quick to jump from technology to technology. For example, Mrs. R used Edulastic a lot, but the district got rid of the subscription. She laments, “The minute we all learned how to use it and loved it, they took it away. Now we can use the free version, but it limits you.” She also uses access to technology to “start to teach them the 21st-century skills that they are going to need,” like how to draft a proper email. Her students need to learn appropriate digital behaviors, how to be digital citizens, and the dangers of the Internet. “We really try to drive in, in all of their classes in 6th grade, that we are going to use technology; technology is good, but there are some really bad things that can happen with technology if you’re not careful.”

Technology in the classroom isn’t just for accessing information, Mrs. R, highlights that the “technology to me is best used when they’re actually in that create phase of a lesson.” Her dream lesson would be “to have the luxury of time. That you can take one topic and devote that much time to creating something like a Podcast or movie. Where they could go out, well first write a script, go out and record it, and then come back into class and play them for their peers.” For Mrs. R., the issue is time, “I find they are cramming more and more into what we are required to do, and it makes it harder and harder to find time to teach them other skills.” Skills such as 21st-century skills “that will help them in their use of technology going forward.”
The first time Mrs. R was approached about Podcasts was when her yearbook students, who were listening to a Podcast, asked if they could do one for the school. “I asked our principal, and she said yes. So, they just kind of created a script and started doing a Podcast for the school. I had to start learning what platform are we going to use that isn’t blocked by the school.” As her students began to create the Podcasts, Mrs. R thought, “Hmmm, how about if we do a lesson where you have to create one of these in my history class. And so, we did!” Mrs. R continues by saying,

“The main thing was trying to find a way to reach them in a digital world, in an immediate need or an immediate want for information. That sounded like kind of a good way. And also, to give them the opportunity to practice their 21st-century skills or to learn new ones.” She saw the potential of Podcasts to allow the students to showcase their knowledge in a different way, “it’s not the typical way of regurgitating and showing that you learned something. It’s so much different. How they demonstrate mastery of the information versus actually processing the information and creating with that information.” This new way to demonstrate knowledge, she believed it would allow students who may struggle with traditional assessments “another way of showing, a different way, that they’ve learned information.” She elaborated further on the potential for a different way to assess student knowledge, saying,

“It’s important to give these other outlets to kids, especially your kids who have ADHD, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, all those challenges. Offering them another outlet, it’s a good way for them to be able to show what they know because they may not be able to show you what they know in a written format.”

Podcasts also offered her the chance to teach skills that students could apply to the real world. She says,

“If we teach a kid to do a Podcast, they have the technical things they have to learn and the content things they have to learn. They apply those same skills if they want to be a mechanic. They have to learn technical skills to be a mechanic and also have to know the content of what they are doing and understanding of that car.”
Plus, creating a Podcast reinforces the importance of accuracy, “you don’t want them putting out a bad product. You want them to know the importance of accuracy and success.”

So, she began to plan how to have her students in her Social Studies class create Podcasts. “I was looking for something else, something new, something different. Because even with being able to make Google slides, they get tired of that too.” She laughs, saying, “Plus none of the other teachers were trying it or doing it.” Her students are primarily gifted students, so “in order to keep them engaged, you have to come up with new ways, if not, they are going to use their powers for bad.” The first time she had her students create a Podcast it was on the West African Empires. “We got some hilarious Podcasts where they were like, ‘Today I'm going to interview Mansa Musa as he’s in the middle of his trek to Mecca.’ They would do all these funny, cute things, and it was a lot of fun. They enjoyed it.” And for Mrs. R, that is the definition of success, when they are happy, and they learn something new. “Success to me is when the kids,” she pauses, “when the kids go home happy, and they can tell their parents they learned something new.” The lesson was engaging, “there was never a moment where they weren’t engaged during that lesson,” and the students developed a deeper understanding of the material. She elaborates on this understanding by saying,

“When they were doing the interviews with these fake historical people, they really had to think about what would that person have said? Would a woman really have been interviewed during that time period? They really had to think about those things, and I think it took them to a deeper level in what they had to think about.”

Mrs. R learned a few things about grading the Podcasts they created. She looked at their content accuracy and “had to grade them on the content and make sure they learned the content.” She knew they had learned it because “even after we did it, I would see them the next year, and they would be like, ‘remember when we learned about Mansa Musa?’ They remembered the stuff.” She also looked at their ability to adapt to disruptions, “success is, did you roll with the punches,
and did they learn how to use the new medium, how well did they learn how to use it? Would they be able to use it again, but at a quicker, more knowledgeable rate.” She pointed out not to grade the students on extra elements like music and transitions. “I had to create very specific instructions and make it on my rubric that I didn’t grade them on those kinds of things. Because if not, it was going to become overwhelming to them to try to include all of those elements and stuff.” Unfortunately. The next year, “we started on that project, and the week they were supposed to upload so we could listen to them in class, it was the week everything shut down for COVID.”

She did not give up on having her students use Podcasts. This time, she had them listen to a Podcast, one from Plymouth Plantation called Interwoven. “It’s a Podcast that they’ve created for kids to learn more about Plymouth, and it includes their researchers.” So, she decided that in an age where everything is so visual for students today, “I kind of wanted them to step back and just listen to something.” Plus, it fit her desire to teach them the skill of listening that would translate to a future project she was planning. “This time, I actually wanted them to listen. In the past, I have had them create Podcasts, maybe I will have them do a Podcast on the French and Indian War. I want them to have heard a Podcast, have listened to a Podcast before they do one.” When she browsed the Podcasts that Plymouth Plantation offered, “I was trying to choose the Podcast that they would listen to, I was trying to find ones that had new information, something they might not already have known about Plymouth.” She found one on “exercise and games that the colonists and Native Americans played,” and another on “fashion and what they wore.” It was “really just some enrichment stuff. I was trying to hold their attention, but also give them extra information.” From having her students create a Podcast, as well as listen to a Podcast, she learned it is important to have clear expectations. When creating Podcasts, “it’s really important
to make sure that you have very clear expectations, very clear directions, and a rubric that allows
the students to give you the content but also give you the pizazz.” For listening to Podcasts “as a
part of the class, it has to be kept short or even just do it in little segments over several days
versus listening to a whole entire thing in one day.”

Mrs. R did encounter a few challenges while using Podcasts and Podcasting in her
classroom. The first challenge was that of time, “the resources are available. I have the
microphones and the things necessary; it’s just the time in class to get it done.” She said it would
take 5-6 class periods to do it right. First, you have to teach the technology, and “90 minutes
seems like a long time, but when you have students who have never done a Podcast before,
you’re having to teach them how to do those things.” Then, “one class period to do the research,
one to come up with the script, one to make and record the Podcast, and another to present.”
Plus, “before you can start creating Podcasts, there has to be a certain level of maturity there. If
not, they’re going to say stupid stuff, and they’re going to act dumb.” For the past two years, she
hasn’t been able to do the Podcast project, but now “we’re kind of starting to get back to these
kids who were in school coming out of COVID, and they’ve learned the necessary how to
behave in a classroom and how to be a good student.” With it being 6th graders, it is sometimes
difficult to find Podcasts that are appropriate for them, “finding ones that are specifically for a
certain age group.” A final challenge was trying to find something that would hold their
attention,

“I wanted something new or different, but I also have to figure out how to balance that
with how do we keep the attention of the students. It’s very hard for me to find something
on there that would be helpful for them to listen to that weren’t an hour long. You can’t
expect kids to sit there for an hour with headphones on, listening to a Podcast to learn
something from it. They’re going to tune out.”

Despite the challenges, she still experienced success when using Podcasts and Podcasting. Her
students made connections,
“That’s what we want them to do, right? Not just memorize it for the test, but actually know it. And I think it also helped them connect history to today. Because they are using a modern technology to talk about something or listen to something that is historical, so it kind of merges the two things into one thing.”

With her new curriculum, Mrs. R hopes to start using Podcasts more. “I think the group of kids that I have this year, the maturity I see in them is a little bit higher than what I've seen the past two years.” She wants to “start with a little short segment the first part of the year. Then add and have them do 2 segments of a Podcast type thing. Work our way up through the year.” She does see a great opportunity to use them in the future with her ‘Teach the Teacher’ assignment, where her students get to teach her about any topic they want. “I think I am going to add a Podcast, possibly, to this year’s Teach the Teacher,” she said, “So that they can record a Podcast and pretend to interview people and all that kind of stuff. It’s really good at the end of the year when they are doing finals everywhere else.” She pauses and says, “I mean, I do still have to give a final, but it gives them something else to work on.”

Nyreen

Nyreen has been teaching for thirty years and has taught in many different places, both in the United States and abroad. Her educational background includes bachelor’s degrees in psychology and social studies education, a master’s in American history, and is working on a Doctorate. In her 30 years of teaching social studies, she has taught a variety of subjects at different levels. Nyreen recounts:

“I've always taught high school. And I've taught primarily history, psychology, and sociology. I've done AP, and I've done Dual Enrollment. I've taught women’s studies. I've talked about global issues, the history of Latino Americans.”

Coming into a new school year, she was given new preps teaching government and economics. “My two least favorite classes,” she said, “I have never taught them.” This posed a new set of challenges for not only content knowledge, but meeting state requirements, while also continuing to instill a love of history in her students.
With teaching new classes comes new standards that must be met, and her school district is big on meeting standards. “I'm held to our state standards, so I have to make sure that I'm meeting those standards,” but she adds the caveat of “recognizing I'm not going to meet them all.” Not being familiar with the content makes it difficult to meet every standard.

She is also uniquely aware of the community and societal standards that she must meet. These are not the written requirements but rather a more de facto type of standard. She elaborates on this by saying, “I also am very aware that in my community that I'm teaching in now, I have to walk a line with issues that can be perceived as, ‘oh, she’s teaching CRT (Critical Race Theory).’” She provides the story that brought this de facto standard to her attention:

“I had a poster up on my door, and it was a rainbow flag in the background, and in Spanish, it says ‘all are welcome.’ I mean, it’s a really common poster for teachers to have, and I was asked to take that down before school started. So, to me, that was a message about what my limits are.”

With this awareness of societal standards, she expresses a concern over ensuring that there is a balance between her goal for teaching social studies, looking at historical themes and trends and how we deal with the repercussions of it today, “trying to meet the standards, trying to meet the needs of the students, and not having too many conferences with my admin about what I'm teaching.” She strives to identify sources that are “keeping it neutral and not learning right or left,” but she acknowledges, “I'm still figuring that piece out.”

For Nyreen, Social Studies is “less about dates, its less about names, because they can find that information pretty easily online. It’s more about, how does this connect to other things? I want my students to love history.” Stemming from a love of history as a child, “I was always fascinated by the holocaust as a kid growing up.” She continued to learn and study history even though “I did not like my history teachers in high school. I thought they were boring.” Later, she began to realize that “we, as humans, frequently keep making the same mistakes, and until we
change our own behavior, we’re not going to move forward.” As this realization continued to grow and evolve, it influenced her approach to teaching Social Studies. “I became more aware of our own nations contributions to where we are today,” she recounts, and “I really felt like kids were just looking at adults, looking at the world, events in isolation and not recognizing themes and trends.” She highlights how social studies opens the door for her students to realize that the effects of events from our past, specifically citing slavery, are still present and how “we are still dealing with repercussions of it today.” Teaching social studies allows her to say, “your right; you know it is different now, how is it different? And how is it not different?” Trying to find ways to create these situations in which her students could question and critically analyze events led her to begin to think of new ways to teach.

One of the things that Nyreen highlights is that success in Social Studies is “not super quantifiable…it’s a lot of feeling, and I don’t know how you measure my feelings.” So, success in her classroom can take many different forms. She wanted to create a novel situation in which her students could learn, moving away from the “memorize, memorize or read from the book.” This novel situation that Nyreen wants to create and her students’ responses to it, in her opinion, is the best way to define success. “I feel like students are successful if they can take the material I've given them and apply it in a novel situation.” She provides the example of a lesson on the Double V campaign in which she gets her students to try to see how the treatment of African American soldiers differed abroad versus at home and have them relate it to potential situations today. However, Nyreen acknowledges that “one of the issues I struggle with is creating that situation.” She is not sure of the best way to approach creating these situations in a way that meets the needs of her students. “Anytime I can create a lesson where it comes alive, where they get to meet somebody who lived through that and had the experience, so meaningful.”
Technology for Nyreen is not something she is “super comfortable with.” “I know that there’s a lot of people that use quite a bit of technology in their classrooms. I don’t,” she states. Even in her own classroom with Google Slides and her projector, she is still “not comfortable with my own technology.” She highlights that she did not grow up with technology, “technology was not a piece of my own education growing up,” and she struggles with it so, “I really don’t use much of it.” She sees technology “as more [a] support role” and acknowledges that there are some great resources out there online for students to use, like “access[ing] some primary sources online.” She highlights her state’s Historical Society’s website on the US Dakota War of 1862 stating, that the “website does such a better job than I do of explaining the war.” But “because I’m not comfortable with it…. I’m reluctant to hand that over to students.” One concern she has is trusting her students online is staying on task, “I wish I could trust students to pull it up on their devices, and then go through it step by step. But I know if I give them that time to do that, some of them just won’t do it.” Because of this, she is reluctant to let students go online at all. She is hesitant to have her students “make a website or make a Podcast” because “I don’t know how to do those things, so I don’t ask my own students to do it.” So, when using technology in her classroom she struggles to define what success looks like because “success would be when students can show me that they have mastered the skill. But I haven’t mastered the skill yet.” She acknowledges that “once I feel comfortable with it [the skill], when they can show me that they can do it,” that is when she can accurately assess success in using technology.

However, she is addressing these issues due to the requirements of her PhD program. “They’re asking us to build a website,” she states, but then laughs. “I was like, oh, can we just like implement it in maybe 3 years?” However, although she is not looking forward to building the website, she acknowledges it will help her teaching:
“You know what the thing is? I should learn how to do that and, so now I'm going to learn how to do that. It’s good for me to do this because it’s encouraging me now to think of ways to bring more technology into my classes so that when my kids do go to college, if they choose to do that, they’ll have a few more skills.”

She also highlights how readily available information is for students to consume. A struggle she faces is finding things that are “neutral,” expressing, “I would like to know more about resources I can use and share [with] my students that are more neutral.” She wants her students to be “good consumers” and question the abundance of information available to them in the Internet age. For example, Instagram opens a new door for students to consume information. She highlights the need for questioning sources, asking questions like “Did you check it [new information] out? How do you know for sure that it’s real information?” due to the abundance of information available at the student’s fingertips. She states, “Kids, society, adults, anyone can just type a word in, and they just consume it. And people say things in various ways.” This desire to help her students become “good consumers” drove her to find new ways to create situations that would allow her students to question information presented to them in the media.

Nyreen’s typical way of learning new information was through reading, writing, and discussing historical topics. She never thought that she would listen to Podcasts to learn new information. “I thought Podcasts were for just random people doing a radio show, but it was on the Internet. And I thought they were kind of silly, to be quite honest,” she recounts. An avid listener of public radio, “On Saturdays and Sundays, they have these extra shows, and so I would listen to those sometimes, not realizing that that’s essential a Podcast, but it’s on public radio.” So, her colleague suggested a Podcast to her, and she thought, “Oh, I should listen to more Podcasts.” She also discusses how she deals with the wide variety and sheer number of Podcasts available to consumers. “I don’t want to spend a lot of time or invest a lot of time to finding ones I like,” she states, “I don’t know how to gauge if it’s appropriate or not…. I’m not always sure
just by reading the description.” Rather than navigating the plethora of options, she relies on others to suggest Podcasts or by stumbling across them when listening to NPR.

Another issue that she highlights is the amount of time that Podcasts can take up. “Social studies standards are huge,” and using Podcasts covers a “really specific” topic that could “take away from spending time on other things that could be a concern or an issue.” She is still tied to her state standards and meeting those requirements. However, she highlights a desire to incorporate more Podcasts into her curriculum. “I would really like to find a way to bring in the speeches one that you introduced me to,” discussing a Podcast series called “It Was Said,” narrated by John Meacham. “I always talk about Robert F Kennedy, and that whole lesson takes the whole class period, but I do like the 2 episodes about those 2 men,” referencing the episodes on speeches given by Robert F Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

For her personally, Podcasts present a way for her to “know more and be better educated.” In particular, she is “working hard to eliminate bias” and identify tools that she can use in her classroom. She also highlights how she chose a specific Podcast, Teaching Hard History, “because I want[ed] some insight into how to approach challenging topics in my classroom.” She chose this Podcast because she felt at times, she “lack[ed] the right words or context” for teaching harder topics, and so she would “just not [do] it.” So instead of avoiding it, she chose a Podcast “as a way to become more familiar with those stories, and another way I can present it or tell it.” Her introduction to how Podcasts could impact her students was via one of her students. She recounts that this student was struggling with her identity as an immigrant and black woman “in a town that hasn’t always embraced immigration.” The Podcast was called Code Switch, and since Nyreen was already a runner, she decided to replace music with
Podcasts, and “I became addicted.” “I love listening to them, and there is a theme,” with Podcasts such as Sounds like Hate and Nice White Parents.

Podcasts provided a new way of listening and learning and sparked a want to incorporate them into her curriculum. Nyreen expressed, “I want my students to also really appreciate them, but I can’t be too political,” so she began her search for Podcasts that she could use in her classroom. She landed upon two that she was interested in using, one by NPR called This American Life and another by Planet Money on Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream. These Podcasts provided a way by which she could get students to listen and introduce them to topics and ways of thinking that were not the typical way of learning in a social studies classroom. For her, Podcasts represented “something different. It’s novel,” and it wasn’t “a video clip on YouTube.” Highlighting the reason for choosing Podcasts over other methods, “I want my students to feel connected to my content. So, I feel they’ll learn best if they feel connected.” She highlighted that Podcasts allow the flexibility for “everyone [to] find something they like,” but she also just wanted “to try something different.”

When using Podcasts in her classroom, she tried different techniques, trying to “find a way to make the Podcast meaningful, experiential,” but she was not sure how to do that. She elaborates by saying, “Whatever assignment I have, I'm always trying to have them bring it back to themselves because I feel like they’ll know it better.” She wants her students to “have some ownership over their lesson,” elaborating that “I grow tired of me lecturing all the time or talking, and they get tired of listening to me.” This allowed her to introduce a new way of learning to her students, “exposing them to another medium. Another way to learn about things.” As well as work on important skills such as listening, “I was hoping they would be better listeners, and they’d focus on what they were listening to.”
On top of active listening, “I'm also trying to help them to identify bias and reputable source’s” she discusses, “but I don't know if that comes across in my lessons.” One of the things Nyreen struggles with is trying to find Podcasts that are not biased. “The ones I listen to, not all of them, but so many of them as still so biased,” she discusses, and “I'm really reluctant to have my students listen to them because I know it’s going to alienate the kids who don’t share my philosophy.” She highlights one Podcast, One Year, in which “they do all these episodes on a single year, and there are really neat stories, like the things that happen” in a single year. She highlights that these particular episodes “are not biased at all. It’s just telling the story as is.”

For every lesson she plans to use technology for, be it listening to a Podcast or writing a research paper, there is a fear that students “won’t make good choices” when using technology. Be it using inappropriate names during a classroom Kahoot review or simply copying and pasting from the Internet. “I wish I knew more like what other teachers do to deal with that,” she expresses, “but I can’t control for all those factors, and I just have to let go of that. That’s hard for me, though.” She finds that her pedagogy has changed in the Internet Age when it comes to assignments in classrooms, such as research papers. “I’m less likely to assign research papers that they do outside of class,” she recounts, “I know kids were copying and pasting.” She tried to address this by having them “come up with and create their own argument” even finding a lesson plan “on how to have kids make their own Podcast.” “I thought, ‘Oh, this is a great idea,’” but I got scared because I didn’t know how to do it’. There is the concern of the students not being engaged in the listening or making it so they do not cheat. “I feel like I don’t trust the kids to do the assignment. I don’t know how to make it so they can’t cheat.” For now, her solution to that problem is having them listen together in class, but she says, “I don’t know if that is the best method either.”
Her use of the Podcast by Planet Money was sparked by the fact she had never taught economics before, “I don’t know economics well,” and she wanted to “make it more living on your own skills.” She stumbled across this episode listening to public radio and thought, “Oh, this is a really cool story. It’s sort of supply and demand, and that’s what my lesson is about.” One of the things that drew her to the Podcast series was the fact that “Planet Money episodes are not all the same length. You can find them to be under 20 minutes, which is more than enough time, and they are easy to understand.” With this in mind, she decided to use it in her classroom to help her students better understand economic concepts that she was not completely comfortable with either. Her hope was that her students would be more engaged because the Podcast took “something that’s happening now and tie[d] it to this not very exciting term or concept in their textbook.”

She chose to have them listen to the initial episode covering Ben and Jerry’s together as a class and decided to provide the students with the transcript of the Podcasts. For her personally, “as someone who struggles with hearing it, I always like to see the words I’m listening to,” and she acknowledges that her students may “struggle with just listening and paying attention,” so she “always print[s] a script out too so kids can hear it and see it.” She also broke down key terms with her students to ensure their understanding of concepts. After listening together as a class, she asked them to listen to their “own Podcast on that same site and do an assignment with it.” Her assignment was for them to create a visual based on another episode in the series that they were allowed to choose, “they all got to pick an episode off of that series, and they had to listen to it, and then they had to create some type of visual story picture of what they learned.” Creating this visual proved to “be a challenge for them,” she recounted, “and I will be honest, I
looked at the pictures, and I thought, well, you could have drawn that picture without listening to the story.” For this first time using this Podcast, she did not “think it was very successful.”

After her first attempt with the Podcast series Planet Money, she reflected on adjustments she could make. She isn’t sure that the way she structured the lesson initially was “the best way to incorporate that,” but again, she was unfamiliar with the content and was using a new technology. In terms of continuing to use episodes from the Podcast, she said, “I am going to do more of that this year.” She highlighted that she wanted to use the Podcast as “an introduction to a unit. Like when we talk about taxes, they got a good one on there on taxes.” However, she still needs to adjust how she assesses the students’ success in learning from the Podcasts. “I need to come up with a different way. So, I'm still working on that.”

The episode from NPR highlighted a story of “a man who was grieving loss, and he put up an old telephone booth in his backyard in Japan. He called the wind phone, and it was his way of reconnecting with family who had died.” Upon realizing this story was part of a greater Podcast series, This American Life, Nyreen decided to incorporate the episode on the wind phone into her curriculum. She first had to “figure out first where it would fit into my curriculum” and saw it as a good fit for her unit on culture unit in her World Geography class. She highlights her reasons for using it:

“It’s just a really great way to talk about in our culture, ‘what do we do?’ ‘How is that different/similar to other places? It opened the door for a lot of students to talk about loss in ways they hadn’t known they were able to.”

She followed much of the same structure as her lesson on Planet Money, having everyone listen together as a class. She did address a mistake she made the first time around. When letting the students listen to the Podcast the first time, “I made the mistake of saying, you can close your eyes,” laughing, she continued, “Well, don’t close your eyes.” So, “it became clear to me that if I don’t give them questions to think about while they’re listening, then they don’t really pay
attention.” After that, she provided transcripts and questions for her students, “prepping them with here’s what we’re going to listen to and here’s what I need you to think about, instead of just starting it.” Instead of having the students choose their own episode and create a visual like her Planet Money lesson, Nyreen had them, compare American culture and Japanese culture on the board as a class. This provided her students with the opportunity to learn more about the concept of cultural relativism by “open[ing] their eyes to another way that people do things.” It helps her students to “see things in context” and “appreciate other people do things differently in another location.” She hoped to teach them that these differences are “not right or wrong, good or bad, just different, and apply those principles” to their everyday lives.

She also had the goal of teaching them the important skill of listening. “I feel like we as a culture have lost the ability to listen,” she states, “and it was so clear to me that a lot of kids have a hard time just listening.” She says her students “are so visual” and that society as a whole “rely on our sense of vision so much,” but her hope was to show the value of “imagining a story unfolding in your ears” when listening to a Podcast. So, to address this skill, she saw two opportunities, one as a “great way to introduce the topic of culture,” but also “another avenue for them to hear something, learn something,” and make them more comfortable with a skill that she identified as lacking. “I don’t know if they liked the Podcast…but at least they were exposed to it, and they had an idea now.”

Tali

Tali has always had a personal interest in history. “I always liked history class when I was younger,” she said, “That was always a class I looked forward to.” She discusses how she had good teachers in high school, “they did a nice job at kind of showing you the broader picture, the more global perspective as to why things matter.” So, when she went to college, she earned a bachelor’s degree in history and special education. “I had phenomenal professors in undergrad,”
she said, “they made sure to always connect that everything always comes back to history.” She has also earned a master’s degree in educational leadership and administration, and a doctorate. Tali has worked in education for 14 years, with 10 of those years in secondary education. After 10 years in the classroom, she transitioned to a position as her district’s humanities supervisor for two years and now has been working as an assistant professor for the past two years. During her secondary career, she mostly taught high school, grades 10-12 US History, and some sociology, but she also taught middle school for a year. Laughing, she said, “Middle school is not for me.” Continuing, she elaborated that “social studies content at the middle school level is so different; it’s way more social studies versus history, and I didn’t really love social studies in middle school.” Tali made it her personal goal to help students care about history, “really spelling it out for students to help them see why we are talking about something that happened 400 years ago and why it’s still relevant.” She made sure to use a lot of current events to try to achieve that goal, “it was a way for me to really blend current events into the classroom with history and figuring out how to link them to make it so students cared.” She says “it’s hard for them to put history into context. To understand or care about something that’s not happening right now or happening in a way that they can see.” She also played a role in the creation and opening of a Social Justice Academy in her district. “I was heavily involved with the creation and opening of it. I taught the Intro to Social Justice course.”

When teaching, she followed her state and district curriculum for US History 1. “It was framed out to start with colonization, and ideally, we were supposed to get up to Reconstruction, which never happened. That is problematic in itself.” But in her second or third year of teaching, the curriculum changed, and she was part of the rewrite process, “we went by standards and figured out how to create a scope and sequence with the standard guiding the topics we actually
taught.” The new curriculum also had a huge reading and writing emphasis, “all teachers were required to keep writing portfolios, and they were very structured assignments that had to go in it. We were more focused on the content and teaching students how to research and analyze primary sources,” but it mimicked the requirements of an English class. The writing portfolio requirements created a big limitation for Tali and her students. “As beneficial as those things were, they took up a lot of time depending on your students and their abilities.” Plus, the number of assignments slowed the pacing down, “we had to have a set number of assignments per marking period.” To try to address the time crunch, Tali would try to cut some things out, “but that is just against my nature. I felt like I couldn’t teach things incompletely.” So, she would create station activities to get through the content. “I really tried to create a student-centered classroom, and sometimes to get through the content I’d almost create three mini centers and cover three big topics to chunk up material and get through things quicker.”

As for teaching today, the Internet has changed her teaching, “I really just don’t think I plan anything that’s not Internet or tech based. I am always trying to bring in something that I've accessed via the Internet.” She points out that the Internet has both positive and negatives for teachers and students. On the positive side, “there are so many more resources for teachers to pull from. It’s a lot easier to access things and has, in a way, made it more equitable for schools.” It has allowed history instruction to be enhanced, “it’s not just printed primary sources anymore. You can access so many other forms of media to present history.” Plus, she points out that the Internet has connected teachers. “The Internet has allowed a lot more teachers to connect that normally wouldn’t. I love seeing how different teachers do things. I get a ton of instruction ideas through Instagram, and I find a lot of strategies through them.” However, with the good comes the bad. The Internet has “made it more difficult for students to discern truth and what early
happened” because the Internet “makes it really easy to edit things and change history.” For her, learning to use educational technologies “is pretty much in the context of my own experience as a history teacher. I don’t even think I had any classes on it in my undergrad.” She points out her district was big on tech, “they were always buying different platforms and products to use,” but they tended to introduce things too quickly. “I don’t even know how many subscriptions our district had to all these different things. My biggest problem with it is that they introduce so many so quickly, I never got to know any one very well.” So, she advises her pre-service teachers now, “You find the technology that you adapt to in terms of your instruction,” but to be culturally responsive in your use of tech,

“Be mindful that not every student has the same access to technology at home. Success is basing your instruction around technology in the classroom in a way that is meaningful there, but it is not necessarily dependent on it outside of the classroom.”

In her classroom, Tali used “a lot of technology for review games. I was an early Kahoot user and then Quizlet. Using these platforms made it a lot easier and more interactive for the students, and I have data that I could look at.” Ed Tech platforms like Peardeck and Nearpod helped her to address a limitation to her curriculum as well, the movement of ‘no direct instruction.’ “History lends itself to direct instruction, even if it’s not always the best practice,” she said. “You need to make sure students have context and background before you launch them into doing a center or guided practice.” Using the educational technology platforms, she was able to address that need for direct instruction. “Peardeck and Nearpod were really great ways to have direct instruction. I would add them into my existing Google Slides and made sure that I stopped and checked in with the students for assessment purposes.”

To make her job more difficult, she dealt with her students’ perception of history as a class that is not valued, “it often gets pushed to the side. It’s less prioritized than English or Math, and I think students perceive it as an extra class. So, she tried to make history more
relevant for her students by using technology that they wanted to use, “think being really responsive to what our students are using, or least acknowledging it and talking about it.” For Tali, listening to her students is very important, “I try to take into consideration what is meaningful to the students and engaging to them, really listening to what the students like to work with.” She gives the story about a student who heard about a current event on Snapchat that she, as the teacher, had not heard about,

“We were talking about current events, and they said, ‘So this happened’ and I was like, ‘I didn’t hear about this at all.’ They said, ‘I saw it on Snapchat’. So, I started to speak to that with students and acknowledge it was something they were using.”

Success for her students wasn’t about using these platforms to assess exact dates; she “cared more that they know the order in which things happen and how they impacted other things. I don’t think knowing the date makes you think about history differently.” She wanted to see her students make connections, “success would be students being able to make these broader connections within history to understand how everything impacts other things and are still impacting us today.” So, she began to focus on experiential learning because it’s “something that I always felt made lessons really good, the blending of different materials.”

To learn new content, Tali says, “It’s 100% through Podcasts. She was an early adopter, “but I was also a resistant adopter.” For her, it creates a spark “where I am like ‘of this is something I want to know more about’ and I can learn the basics about something and if I’m interested, I go pursue it more.” She does point out that a downside for Podcasts is how many people can make them, “it’s one of the downsides, but it is also one of the pluses. It’s a wonderful thing, but it’s also very challenging in terms of vetting sources.” One of her favorite types of Podcasts is in the vein of “stuff you missed in history class.” She says, “Typically, I listen to expand my knowledge of current events or times in history that I didn’t know a lot about or want to know more about. I love the ones that are like, ‘Hey, this happened in history, and you
probably weren’t told about it’. She feels that “I learn a lot from them. I like hearing from people’s experiences,” and that it made her more aware of “learning and listening through audio.” So, it was due to her own personal interest that she began to think about how to use it in her classroom,

“It was something that I did every single day, and I was always looking for cool things to bring into the classroom. This presented itself as something that really didn’t have an end to it. Once I get through this series, I'll move to something else.”

Not only were Podcasts relevant technology to her students, “it’s the platform that people are using right now to get their thoughts out,” but it was also mostly free, “which is a huge plus for teachers.”

In the classroom, Podcasts have the potential to “bring a new energy to history learning. It’s a different resource to access history material through,” and it allowed Tali the flexibility to enhance her curriculum and address limits by providing students with more and new perspectives on topics. “So, talking about World War 2, I think there’s probably a lot of human-interest stories that you could highlight versus some of the other kind of overdone things,” she said. She adds, “Plus it’s a fun way to maybe connect a student that is typically so bored in a history class because the same stuff is kind of regurgitated year to year. It’s different.” So, in her search for different resources for her classroom, she equated Podcasts to documentaries. She elaborated, saying,

“I was constantly looking for different resources to bring into my teaching. So, for example, every year when we got to the reform unit, I was always linking it to a modern-day reform, and so that was always an opportunity where I’d bring in a modern documentary. I thought they were alternative viewpoints, not something I always agreed with, but it was something that prompted discussion in the classroom, and Podcasts became another source for me.”

It helped to address getting her students into an inquiry mindset. Podcasts provided “a different way of discussing topics with students and would get them to agree or disagree. I like that it led them to kind of having that more inquiry mindset, rather than ‘I'm just receiving information
from a textbook’. In terms of choosing a Podcast for her students to use, she began by looking at the existing curricular resources to see how to supplement them,

“The curriculum for the social justice course did not include Podcasts. So, I would look at the topic and what the resource was, and then I would figure out what I can add to it to provide the students with a clear picture of what was going on. I feel like Podcasts lends itself to the things I am trying to incorporate in my classroom, which is multiple perspectives and understanding sources. It kind of hit on a lot of social studies elements I think were important. Thinking like a historian, talking about sourcing, and contextualizing. Podcasts were a way to let the student’s kind of work through those processes.”

Tali hoped her students would learn multiple skills from listening to a Podcast, like the critical evaluation of sources. She highlights that for students, “it’s important to make yourself aware of the intentional thought put into how students are presented history. There is more out there and to question sources and question media.” She also liked that “it was not a video. I liked that it forced them to listen and access the content in a different way.” She used Podcasts as a supplementary resource because “during the curriculum rewriting process, I became super aware of supplementary resources.” So, she began to think of ways to incorporate them, and she chose her social justice class. She picked it because “in the history of injustices unit, we looked at the horrible, multiple ways that people have been denied justice. It was the perfect opportunity to bring in Podcasts that highlighted those stories.”

The first time Tali used a Podcast in class, “it went horribly,” she sighed. The students were lost; “they didn’t pay attention; they didn’t know what to listen or look for.” The problem was, she points out,

“I didn’t treat it the way I would treat other resources in my classroom, where I would introduce it and provide context. I didn’t do that. I was just like, ‘Oh, we’re going to listen to this really interesting Podcast about this topic in history,’ and just played it for them.”

Back to the drawing board, she went and shifted strategies. “When I started to implement them more, I did use more of those strategies to kind of set up the Podcast more in the context of what
we were doing, like I would any other source.” Part of that adjustment included adding guiding questions to help guide her students’ listening. She said, “I was resistant to it because I felt like it kind of went against what I wanted them to do, which was just listen. But I think it supported them.” She also decided to allow her students to choose which Podcast they wanted to listen to, which is “not something that I normally did with resources. I always selected them.” She is quick to point out, “I didn’t just let them go off into iTunes or Spotify. I curated a very extensive list and let them go from there.” By letting her students choose, she said, it “was a huge benefit because it increased their interest. They seemed more engaged with it.” Most of all, they would help her students to be more empathetic by showing them multiple perspectives. “One of the hardest things to teach students in history is to get them to care about stuff that happened a long time ago. I felt like using Podcasts helped the students connect to the content or history that they were so far away from. It actually made them care.” So, she provided her students with “multiple Podcasts on the same topic to ensure that they were getting different perspectives.” She provides an example of a set of Podcasts on the treatment of LGBTQ populations with “a specific focus on the United States and its failed reaction to AIDS. So, they listen to two different Podcasts about that time. One was more of a news-related one, and one was more of a person’s personal experience.”

Tali faced a few challenges while creating the lessons with Podcasts. One was the sheer number of sources. “You type in a topic, and you get so many things. How do you know which one you want to use? Some of the Podcasts are boring and not engaging, or not necessarily something that belongs in the classroom.” She elaborates further by saying,

“If your using them academically, you have a huge responsibility to make sure that you’re providing Podcasts that are credible. In the Age of Misinformation, a Podcast could just exist, and no one ever could correct it. There is no responsibility for it, especially if it’s a Podcast that’s not major in scale.”
To try to combat this, she took a large amount of time to curate a specific list for her students. “I went into Apple Podcasts, typed in a topic, and saw what came up. Then I tried to create my own database for students because there is just way too much in there.” Despite these challenges, Tali still believed that using the Podcasts was a success. She starts by asking herself, “The first thing is, did the student like using them?” and for this listening lesson, “The majority of students did engage with a resource and were excited to learn about something.” She attributes them engaging with it because they were given a choice, “that student choice piece really helped with their engagement because they were invested in the materials. They were almost excited to share their choice with the class.” Her students even “started listening to Podcasts on their own,” which she was very proud of because listening is a form of literacy. She said,

“They were engaging with them outside of school, and I think it opened up discussions about listening literacy and allowed students to see that it was okay if they listened to learn. It shouldn’t replace reading, but it allows students to open themselves up to other types of audio learning as well.”

It also helped to accommodate some of her students “who maybe didn’t do as well with traditional reading materials. It kind of removed a barrier by allowing them to access content in a meaningful way.”

Overall, Tali believes that the Podcasts impacted her students’ knowledge in some very positive ways. First, it broadened their perspectives,

“They were like, ‘Wait, I can’t believe this was happening’ or ‘I can’t believe the government did this’. So, I think it, maybe, helped to broaden their perspective, provide them more insight into topics than I could alone, and prompted them to talk more amongst themselves.”

It also allowed them to see different sides of history that they may not have been exposed to previously, and she felt her students really took home the lesson of questioning sources and media.

“More than anything, it showed them the power of whether its media, or textbook companies, or school districts in kind of dictating and controlling what stories are told
and what stories are forgotten. Showing them that often-marginalized groups in history are marginalized because that’s how the narrative has been told. Podcasts really help them to be equipped with the ability to look at things and question them. Podcasts really helps them to see stuff they hadn’t heard of. Now, Podcasts alone did not make them more critical, but it did give them way more perspective.”

**Zelda**

As a young girl, Zelda always had a love for history. “I attribute the American Girl series for why I am a history teacher,” and it was “the one subject in school I always thought was interesting because it’s a never-ending story,” she said. She was always fascinated by the narrative of history, and when the Disney film Pocahontas was released, “it got me interested in the real Pocahontas.” So, she leaned into learning more and more about the history, and finding it interspersed within pop culture pushed her to learn “the real history.” Armed with an “innate curiosity or like love of learning,” Zelda pursued her goal of becoming a social studies teacher. “From the time I was a little kid, I would always say I want to be a social studies teacher or history teacher, and I just never wavered.” She obtained a bachelor’s degree in adolescent education and social studies, then the self-proclaimed “history nerd” pursued a master’s degree in “straight-up history” and is now working towards an EdD.

After graduating college, she stepped into the teaching field and has been teaching for 12 years. Over the course of her career, she has taught in different places, “I've taught in urban schools…in charter schools…and now I'm at a top performing vocational school.” Where she is now, she primarily teaches US History and some Dual Enrollment courses and is also the social studies curriculum coordinator. “I have a very small school, so I'm lucky I get to keep the whole grade. I teach all of US History One.” This course is taught to sophomores which is “a crash course, quick summary of Colonial America, and then go all the way to the Progressive era.” Then to juniors she teachers “a dual enrollment course…. its American history. So, it’s
essentially US 1 and US 2, but condensed down in one year and at the college level,” so instead of ending at the Progressive era, the curriculum goes to the Modern Era.

In terms of limitations to her curriculum, Zelda acknowledges that she is incredibly fortunate that my only limitation is time.” The state in which she currently teaches has “a very progressive education system” that includes several curricular mandates to cover “LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, the Amistad Black History mandate, [and] out newest mandate is Asian American Pacific Islanders.” Between the states curriculum and her school where “humanities we fly below the radar,” she acknowledges that she is “blessed with great freedom” to cover various topics. As much freedom as she does have, Zelda is quick to acknowledge that she does face some other issues within her classroom. One of her biggest concerns is “the amount of time I now have to spend teaching skills that they would have already come to with,” skills such as reading and writing proficiencies. This causes her to have to “factor [in] more time to re-teaching these skills,” and “it gives me less time to do the in-depth fun activities” because she is rushing to “make it to the end of the curriculum.” But she wants to ensure that her students learn those skills because “reading and writing is going to be what matters years from now,” because most of them “go off into STEM fields, and a lot of them do end up getting published in scientific journals and such.” So, she hammers home the fact that “if you want to be successful in your field, you need history because you need your research and your writing skills.”

However, for Zelda, society does not seem to hold social studies as high as STEM fields, saying she has “definitely seen a decline in the value of it.” She attributes this to “the nature of our society” and where you get your media from. In many media sources, “what you’re learning in your social studies class is being attacked on the news,” she laughs and continues, “No one’s coming after the calculus curriculum.” This general decline in the value of social studies she
attributes to “the norm now to attack social studies content,” continuing she elaborates, “a huge chuck of our country that actually questions academia in general.” She attributes this to why teaching social studies has become more difficult. “It’s not even things that can be debated,” she discusses about the difficulty of presenting historical facts. “Like, no, George Washington wasn’t an opinion…that wasn’t the example, but something on par with that,” she continues, trying to showcase some of the ways students question fact versus opinion. “We have all the information in the world at our fingertips, but it seems to be doing more spreading misinformation that actually helping thoughts and ideas, at least factual thoughts and ideas spread,” she laments when discussing the Digital Age impacting social studies.

Zelda’s approach to technology use in her classroom is limited, “the running joke in my classroom it is the 1990s. No cell phones and limited, shoddy Internet availability.” Everything is done on pen and paper. For her, Educational Technology “means a whole different thing to me” after the COVID-19 pandemic. The “COVID Age, that’s where I see the clear, sharp distinction in my career” when discussing a shift in technology use in her classroom. She elaborates further, “Like it used to be the different tech aids that would help me in my classroom. Now, it’s just too many gizmos and gadgets.” For Zelda, just hearing the phrase Educational Technology made her think of all the online subscriptions and other websites, and “it’s overwhelming.”

She decided to move to mostly pen and paper assignments after an experience during a digital literacy assignment. When teaching about current events, she “went over what sources are and how to locate them” and allowed the students to go search on their own. She found her students “were literally googling the phrase current event” and “then clicking on the first thing,” even after instruction on how to find sources. “I find that I’m the outlier because everyone else is still doing digital stuff.” She argues that “basic critical thinking skills that we also took for
granted all these years that we learn in like elementary/middle school are lost because everything is digital, and that compounding my literacy and writing problems.” Technology, in her opinion, has, “definitely hindered our critical thinking skills and how we process information.” So, for her using technology in a classroom is “a tightrope” and one has to be sure “you’re not using technology to the point where it’s doing all of the thinking for the students.”

As someone who is “anti-tech,” Zelda still uses some in moderation. The biggest benefit for social studies, in her opinion, is “definitely the access to archives and having that availability of all these different types of primary sources.” As a teacher who does a lot of writing, she highlights the need for them to learn to do research, “at least with the digital archives, it gives them, in my opinion, some sense of what it means to physically do the research.” Zelda is quick to point out, though, that her students “know more about the technology that I do,” and she sometimes allows them to decide how they want to approach projects. She also uses videos for her classroom instruction because she “feels certain things in history, having those images and videos with it, it just engages the students more than just a regular reading of a primary source or a class lecture would.”

When asked about her background with Podcasts, she recounts, “Oh gosh, I don’t remember the first time I heard about what a Podcast was.” She continues, “I do know all of my friends listen to Podcasts, especially my educator friends,” and she gets recommendations from them for ones to listen to. However, when it comes to listening to them, she really did not because if “I'm going to listen to something, I'm going to listen to music.” The ones she was being told about were mostly ones dealing with popular culture, something she is ambivalent about. Zelda’s interest was sparked in a graduate school class she was taking. “I was required to listen to a few for a class that I was in as a graduate student, and then that really kind of opened
up my eyes to it.” She started to enjoy them because she was listening to one “related to history and things that I'm passionate about,” but also, “I was required to do it for class.” After the class, she started listening to more Podcasts, “my interest got peaked,” and she began to get recommendations from “my history teacher group chat from all over the country.” She continues by saying, “I actually don’t venture out and look for them on my own,” relying on the recommendations from her educator friends. The Podcast that she was required to listen to is called “The Rich Man’s Revolt,” an episode that is part of the larger series called “Seen on the Radio.” This episode dealt with the American Revolution, and she was found it awesome because it “kind of challenges that all men are created equal…. we always think of it about gender and race, but really, it’s about class.” This particular episode presented her the opportunity to try to “reconcile Thomas Jefferson and the fact that he enslaved people and Sally Hemmings and the historiography,” as well as the tie-in with the “whole thing about all men are created equal on the aristocracy and the nobility.” She continues, “That Podcast really changed my perception on that. I never heard it explained that way before.” With this new perspective, she decided, “I'm bringing this into my kids.”

A key challenge that Zelda faces is “the nature of our world today.” “It’s just getting them to question their commonly held beliefs that they’ve always had,” she states when discussing one of her goals in her classroom:

“Whether it’s thinking about what positions they take on debates or research papers, or what sources they’re using, or just seeing them being able to actually listen to an opinion or a thought they don’t necessarily agree with, and not freak out. Being able to see them progress from not being able to have those types of conversations to them being able to.” A Podcast, in Zelda’s opinion, “could be a way to maybe carefully bring in some of those [controversial] topics, but still keep it in a way that’s not going to get you into trouble.” “A Rich Man’s Revolt” provided Zelda with “a really great way to reinforce historiography.” She knows
that “high school students have a really difficult time grasping that concept because they’re so used to the history books.” She continues, “like understanding that you can have different perspectives in history and different schools of thought. So, this Podcast, in particular, helps open their eyes to that.”

When building lessons, she keeps in mind her goal for her students to interact with artifacts like they did on her favorite field trip to the Tenement Museum. “We essentially do a DBQ, except instead of looking at the document, we’re actually looking at the real document,” she elaborates on the hands-on experience. “Seeing the students get excited about history, that’s my ideal…. seeing them fully immersed in the history, that’s the ideal.” “I hate doing the same things over and over again,” she discusses about projects in her classroom. “A Rich Man’s Revolt” presented a unique opportunity to present a different perspective on a topic that is heavily discussed in social studies classrooms. For her:

“I feel like at this point in my life, for me to learn something new or have like a different perspective that really makes me think differently about this thing [the American Revolution] that I have been learning about for like 30 years that you think you know everything about, but you don’t. So, for it to kind of shed new light on that topic for me, that’s when I was like, ‘Wow! This is cool. I have to share this with everybody I know.’” Zelda began the process of deciding how to use this episode in her classroom. Zelda liked “A Rich Man’s Revolt” because “I feel like they spin it a little bit differently and how it’s presented.” She elaborates further, “I think it’s more enjoyable to students. They won’t complain about having to listen to something because their air pods are on 24/7.” The Podcasts, in her opinion, have a “certain pizzazz to it that a textbook doesn’t…there is emotion behind it. There’s a story behind it.” Not to mention any Podcast, not just “A Rich Man’s Revolt,” takes “a unique perspective on whatever that topic is.”

She also had to include how to tackle issues that she herself dealt with while listening to Podcasts. One of the biggest issues that she has with Podcasts is that “they take too long to listen
to” and the “length of it was definitely something that turned me off.” For Zelda, she is a much faster reader and “learned to find the transcript of the Podcast, and then I would read it.” She also acknowledges that when listening to Podcasts, “my mind starts wandering if I don’t have the visual to follow along with.” So, when she decided to use a Podcast in the classroom, the underlying goal was to create a more immersive and engaging experience for her students while also presenting them with different perspectives.

The first time using a Podcast in her classroom was “almost like spur of the moment” because she was in the graduate class and happened to be covering that same material in her classes that next week. So, Zelda began with what was familiar to her, “I just assigned it the first year I used it. I just assigned it like homework, and the kids loved it.” She laughed, “They [the students] would like flex on the other history kids and be like, ‘Our homework was to listen to a Podcast’.” Soon, the Podcasts became just like “any other reading or a piece of homework,” and her students would engage in discussions about the topics. For her, success is when her students are engaged with their learning, and “because Podcasts are so different as compared to what you normally get in this subject area, I think that it’s going to get students engaged.” She felt that she could have structured the “conversation a little bit better,” but “it overall works well.” Zelda soon began to consider morphing it from a listening and discussion exercise to a project “after getting a little bit more comfortable with the Podcasts.” The project was “Hidden Heroes of History,” and the students would create their own Podcasts and do “a biography project with a partner about someone from American history who typically we don’t know about or who isn’t as prominent.” For her, this fulfilled the goal of blending historiography into her classroom while also addressing social justice themes. During the project, the students considered questions such as, “Why do we always hear about the same names over and over again in history? Why aren’t
these people more prominent? Why are they becoming more prominent now?” This allows the students to “learn about someone new, and then also opens up the door to the question of ‘why don’t we learn about these people?’.” One of the biggest issues Zelda discussed for her “Hidden Heroes of History” project was time. “When it came time to grade it, and I realized how many hours with of stuff was made,” the project was not done again. For her issues with the amount to grade, Zelda continually says that her students loved the project. For Zelda, using Podcasts and Podcasting in her social studies classroom “helps show them that you haven’t learned everything there is to learn in elementary and middle school.” She has considered extending it down to her underclassmen. Her concern is that the content of the Podcasts, where they are “not just talking about straightforward stuff, there is usually a little spin or some flavor to it,” could present a challenge for her underclassman, but it is “more like a maturity thing, not so much the technology.” In the end, Zelda highlights that with Podcasts, her students can begin to understand “historiography and that shift in perception” that “they can’t get from me telling them or watching a video.”
Discussion

In the discussion below, I will address each research question outlined in the Methods section in an earlier chapter of this dissertation. The questions will also be restated at the start of each section. The discussion will also seek to address any emergent themes from teachers’ experiences, as well link their experiences back to the existing research. Possible theoretical and practical implications will be discussed, as well as potential topics to consider for further research. Through reading the transcripts of interviews, I saw many similarities between my thoughts on using Podcasts in my classroom and the experience of those participants. I found it very interesting that the topic of student maturity came up for participants. It was not something that I had considered as a teacher or researcher when beginning this process, nor did that consideration appear in any of the literature. As stated previously, each participant’s experience is unique, as is their narrative. Although I seek to situate their experience within the existing research, I do not seek to assert that their experience or beliefs about what success means to them can be translated to a larger population. Rather, I sought to learn more about the ‘how’ Podcasts or Podcasting were being utilized in secondary social studies classrooms to potentially open a door to further research and understanding. Again, there is very little research that exists on the topic of using Podcasts or Podcasting in secondary social studies classrooms (Celaya et al., 2020; Debele and Plevyak, 2012). To better understand its impact, other studies would need to be conducted, ones that could possibly quantify the impact. However, as some participants pointed out, they hesitated to use Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms because there was nothing that they could base their decisions on to determine if it was worth taking that chance with their students.
Research Question 1: How do social studies teachers describe their experience using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?

Summary of Findings

This narrative study aimed to address a gap in the research about teachers’ experiences using Podcasts or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms that was highlighted by Gibson & Noncente (1999) in their study of the potential of Podcasts when they said that to understand the benefits better, we must hear “about the experience of those who have used it" (p. 73). Participants in this study came from various parts of the United States and taught various grade levels, providing a broad look at various experiences. Many teachers expressed similar things about their classroom experiences using Podcasts and Podcasting. Several themes emerged, such as using Podcasts or Podcasting looking for a new way to teach content, trying to enhance learning in a Digital World, and teaching historical thinking skills and critical media literacy. Finally, there was a wish for students to learn to engage with and appreciate history as more than facts and dates.

Teachers were seeking new ways to teach content to their students. Many of the participants expressed their desire to find new ways to not only engage with their students but also to find a new way to teach content. Mrs. R summarizes this when she says, “None of the other teachers were trying it or doing it” when using Podcasts and Podcasting in her classroom. Another participant, Tali, highlighted that,

“I was constantly looking for different resources to bring into my teaching. So, every year when we got to the reform unit, I was always linking it to a modern-day reform, and so that was always an opportunity where I’d bring in a modern documentary. I thought they were alternative viewpoints, not always something I agreed with, but it was something that prompted discussion in the classroom and Podcasts became another source for me.”

These educators sought a new learning path by finding new and innovative ways to reach their students by having them engage in Podcasting or by using them as supplemental materials in their classes. Makina (2020), “The 21st-century is globally seen as the century of technology-
supported learning options, with developments that offer many opportunities for a new range of technology-based learner support options” (p. 67). Podcasts or Podcasting allow teachers to access those technology-based options. Participants were motivated to use Podcasts or Podcasting either through their personal use or by being introduced to it by their students. In addition, they sought to move beyond traditional technology, such as videos, in their classrooms and move away from using textbooks. The final motivation was their student’s consumption of any form of media, be it Podcasts, social media, or the news.

**Influences for Use.** Throughout the interviews, many participants expressed that their consumption of Podcasts or interactions with students listening to them inspired them to use Podcasts and Podcasting in their classrooms. For some, their start came from personal consumption. “I discovered them on accident,” Kaiden said, “I really enjoyed some of the discussion and the media format and found the conversation to be a lot more meaningful and a lot more purposeful.” Tali also cites her interest as her reason for using them in her classroom. “It was my own personal interest and something that I did every single day. This presented itself as something that really didn’t have an end to it.” Their interaction with Podcasts on their own time influenced them to use them in their classrooms. Shamburg (2021) supports the idea of personal use leading to educational use by stating, “The popularity of Podcasting as a medium is growing, and its role as an educational tool is paramount” (p. 701). A final participant, Zelda, was introduced to Podcasts in an educational setting. “I was required to listen to a few for a class that I was in as a graduate student,” she said, “And then that really kind of opened up my eyes to it.” The existing research does highlight the use of Podcasts in higher educational settings (Vess, 2006; Sutton-Brady, 2009; O’Brien et al., 2011; Popova et al., 2014; Pegrum et al., 2015;
Another way that teachers were introduced to Podcasts or Podcasting was by their students introducing them to it. For Mrs. R, her students were listening to a Podcast outside of school and asked if they could do one for the school. She says, “I asked our principal, and she said yes, so they just started doing a Podcast for the school, and I thought, how about we do this in our [social studies] class?” Students engaging with the media outside of class is supported by a research study conducted by Edison Research and Triton Digital (2019) that 74% of US citizens over the age of 12 who consumed Podcasts reported that they did so to learn new things (The Infinite Dial, p. Slide 31). Although Mrs. R’s students were not necessarily listening to learn new things, they somehow saw their value as something they wanted to engage with more. Nyreen is another participant who was turned on to Podcasts by her student. “I did not listen to Podcasts until a student of mine turned me on to one,” she said, “She is from Ethiopia, and she was adopted by a white family, and she was in my homeroom and really was struggling sort of with her identity and the community.”

Moving Beyond Traditional Technology. In social studies classrooms nationwide, teachers often use videos to highlight content that may benefit their teaching from a more visual aspect. However, Nyreen wanted to move beyond that. “I feel like as a social studies teacher, I get charged with showing videos all the time, and everyone thinks I am lazy,” she said. Adding to it, she discusses how her students are “so visual” in their learning and found that Podcasts offered them a way to “start imagining a story unfolding in your ears.” This logic of having her students listen to learn is supported by Shamburg (2021) and Wurst (2020) when they discuss how Podcasts can offer a level of intimacy and control in learning only with the audio. Mrs. R
builds upon this by discussing how she “kind of wanted them to step back and just listen to something.”

Wurst (2020) supports this use of learning through listening by highlighting that “the human brain is wired to receive information in the form of stories” (p. 22). “It’s a different act to listen,” said Tali, citing her reason for moving beyond more traditional technologies seen in social studies classrooms such as videos. Tali further elaborates, “I like that it was not a video. I like that it was audio, and it forced students to listen. It was a different way for them to access content in the history classroom.” Zelda echoed her take on providing a different way to access content: “because I feel like Podcasts are very different in a history class. What do you usually have? Reading of text, then maybe a video.” By moving beyond the more traditional technologies used by teachers, such as videos, these educators are engaging in what Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2013) call “technology-enabled learning” (p. 176). This type if learning is when “teachers go beyond the typical uses of computers to engage students” (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2013, p. 176). Zelda further builds on this by saying, “Really that historiography and that shift in perception, and they're able to get that from the Podcast in a way that they can't get it from me telling them or watching a video.”

Moving Away from Textbooks. For decades, teachers have used textbooks as a “guide and reference to facilitate [the] teaching-learning process both in the classroom and outside of the classroom” (Widodo, 2007, p. 121). However, a common theme from the interviews was how many teachers highlighted that they no longer looked to their textbooks to enhance their instruction. Mrs. R highlights this when discussing how her students now have immediate access to information. “We can find out things a lot quicker,” she says, “there used to be a delay in getting the information. You could either get it from a textbook or an encyclopedia.” Nyreen
even went so far as to have her students do evaluations, and “they made it clear to me, you don’t learn from reading a book.” So, for Nyreen, moving away from books to something that may engage her students in their learning more, allowed her to address her students’ learning wants. Nyreen summarizes this choice by saying, “I feel like they take something that's happening now and tie it to this not very exciting term or concept in their textbook.” For Zelda, it is the fact that Podcasts “deliver the information… I don't want to say it has attitude that sounds bad, but it has, like, a certain pizazz to it that a textbook doesn't.” Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) support the use of audio instead of textbooks when they state, “using audio in learning and teaching has occurred for decades with some authors highlighting advantages of audio over text” (p. 220).

For Zelda and Tali, Podcasts provide a way to show their students how textbooks can dictate which story is told. Zelda looked for different perspectives than what her textbooks provided,

“Typically, the content of the Podcast are also, in my opinion, taking a unique perspective on whatever that topic is. As opposed to, you know, you can flip open how many different textbooks and it's going to sound similar, you know, depending on where you are versus listening to different people's Podcasts going to give you different takes.”

Even Malott (2018) argues that “every textbook has multiple audiences” (p. 552). Tali also discusses this motivation to highlight different perspectives of history.

“More than anything, it showed them the power of whether it’s media or textbook companies or school districts in kind of dictating and controlling what stories are told and what stories are forgotten. Showing them that often-marginalized groups in history are marginalized because that’s how the narrative has been told.”

By highlighting this, Tali allows her students to construct a more rounded understanding of the narrative of history while also using "resources on the Internet can help teachers and students learn about [many stories] that challenge typical textbook narratives" (Schrum & Schrum, 2009, p. 24).
Motivated by Students' Consumption of Media. Another theme that emerged was that many identified students’ digital media consumption as a motivating factor for using Podcasts or Podcasting. For the 21st-century learning, technology is not just a tool but a “cultural identity” (Gómez, 2019, p. 37). Nyreen speaks about her own experience with her family, “My son, he is on Instagram a lot, and he gets this information, and I'm like, ‘well, did you check it out? How do you know for sure?’” Tinker et al. (2007) identify this new generation of learners as the “NetGeneration” (p. 19). As such, much of their exposure to current events and historical perspectives is via social media, which influences how they learn things. Tali highlights this with an example from her classroom of a student who learned about a current event on Snapchat that not even Tali was aware of.

“We were talking about current events, and I had a student come in and say, ‘So this happened,’ and I was like, ‘I didn’t hear about this at all!’ They said, ‘I saw it on Snapchat’. So, I started to speak to that with students and kind of acknowledge that was something they were using.” For Tali, the way best way she could speak to it was to introduce Podcasts to her classroom. This choice to use a Podcast is supported by Celaya, Ramirez-Montoya, Naval, and Arbues (2020) when they discuss the idea of “educommunication…the synergy between education and communication” (p. 180). Podcasts for Celaya, Ramirez-Montoya, Naval, & Arbues (2020) are a form of educommunication. It also allows Tali to be “really responsive to what our students are using, or at least acknowledging and talking about it.” This idea of students excelling in the use of and exposure to technology is reflected in their “knowledge of and experience with” (Tinker et al., 2007, p. 19) technologies, as well as seeing “technology as an essential part of their lives” (Vasquez, 2015, p. 148).

Teaching and Learning Social Studies in a Digital World. “Laptops, cell phones, PlayStation, all of it, are an extension of who they are, it is a part of their culture, their identity”
Another common theme that emerged is the idea of constantly being connected to the media and harnessing it to help their students engage with history. Zelda highlights, “Students are not going to moan as much about having to listen to something because their AirPods are on 24/7 anyway.” According to Hagood (2021), “a Podcast offers the ability to use not just words but also sound, music, and silence – powerful tools for formulating arguments, providing evidence, illustrating points, developing empathy, and giving listeners space to think” (p. 185). These educators used Podcasts or Podcasting to bridge the gap between how they were taught and how their students consume knowledge.

**History as an Undervalued Subject.** As with most social studies teachers, participants found their students did not have a favorable view of social studies. So many participants highlighted that they were trying to foster an appreciation of history in a subject that students and districts often undervalue. Mrs. R says her students see it as more work, “kind of this boring thing that gets tacked on at the end of another class.” As Tali says, “It often gets pushed to the side. It’s less prioritized than English or Math.” This sentiment is reflected by Nyreen as well, “Like I want my students to love history. I love history, and they don’t always love it, but I think they don’t think they like social studies because of how they’ve been taught.”

Some participants equate their student’s views with not fully understanding history or social studies. “I don’t know if they totally understand the purpose until they really get into it. I don’t think they understand it as the study of people as it really is. It’s hard for them to put history into context, to understand or care about something that happened 400 years ago and why it’s still relevant,” Tali elaborates further. To Mrs. R, Nyreen, and Tali, social studies is more than just memorizing dates. Mrs. R summarizes this well by saying, “People think we still just teach them Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492. That’s not important. What’s
important is why Christopher Columbus came and then what he did when he got here.” Nyreen said, “It’s less about names because they can find that information online pretty easily. It’s more about, how does this connect to other things?”

For so many of these educators, their job is to impart that love of history to their students and let them see that history and social studies classes are more than what Kaidan describes as,

“We’re going to do a lot of reading and maybe some engaging stuff and maybe story time. We’re going to listen to the teacher tell their story about history, and we’re going to take some notes on it.”

Kaidan’s description is the common perception that these teachers who use Podcasts or Podcasting in their classes are fighting and trying to use this medium to combat it.

**Enhancing Learning.** Sutton-Brady et al. argue that, “a myriad of digital, electronic and mobile technological tools available to lecturers, enabling them to enhance the learning experience” (p. 219). For Kaidan, “technology allows us to get them utilizing, incorporating and connecting different ideas in different ways,” he says about using Podcasting in his classroom. He continues saying, “It’s just a different medium. It lets students explore topics in a new, fresh way and activate and utilize some different parts of the brain, some different skills.” Prensky (2005/2006) argues that educators can “no longer use either our 20th-century knowledge or our training as a guide to what is best for [students] educationally” (p. 9). As such, educators such as Mrs. R “was looking for something else, something new, something different” because her favorite part of her lessons is when “students are using technology to create.” So, by using Podcasting in their classrooms, Kaidan and Mrs. R are using “new media formats such as Podcasts [to] revolutionize the production and simulation of knowledge” (Brehm, 2022, p. 785).

Nyreen wanted to “find ways to introduce topics that sometimes I lack the right words or the context, and I don’t want to stumble my way through it. Podcasts is another way I can present it or tell it.” Using Podcasts or Podcasting to enhance students’ learning in social studies classes
can “bring a new energy to history learning,” says Tali. Zelda summarizes this enhancement to student learning by saying, “Again Podcasts are laying out the information, of course, but there is emotion behind it. There is a story behind it.”

**Student Enjoyment.** Building off the enhancement of learning, these educators noticed that their students seemed to enjoy using Podcasts or Podcasting as a method of learning material. As Schrum and Schrum (2009) suggest, the 21st-century learner is “curious and enthusiastic about the past and about using technology” (p. 24). When trying to gauge success using Podcasts, Tali asks herself, “Did students like using them?” For her, “The majority of students did engage with the resource and were excited to learn about something.”

To try to engage her students more, Mrs. R had her students create a Podcast on West African Empires. “They loved it!” exclaimed Mrs. R, “they thought it was great. It just kept them engaged. There was never a moment they weren’t engaged during that lesson.” By using Podcasting in her classroom, she uses a tool that Sutton-Brady et al. (2009) define as a mobile learning platform “which utilizes such technologies [Web 2.0 tools], offers educators a means to design learning activities and resources that allow students to individualize their learning’ (pp. 219-220). By individualizing their learning and creating, these students were, in Kaidan’s words, able to be more human. “I think they can be a little more human with this medium,” he says, “You know you can’t laugh in a paper; you can imply it, but we can’t hear you giggling. But it is okay to do that within this medium.” In the end, students made connections. “That’s what we want them to do, right?” says Mrs. R,

“No just memorize it for the test, but actually know it. And I think it also helped them connect history to today. Because they are using a modern technology to talk about something or listen to something that is historical, so it kind of merges the two into one thing.”
Even teachers such as Zelda were “at first very resistant, very, very resistant” to the idea of using Podcasts in her classroom. She soon realized “how much my students enjoyed it and how it is a way to get them hooked.” In his study on students’ reasons for enjoying a textbook, Malott (2018) highlights that students said the “best features of the book” that Malott authored called *Elementary Principals of Behavior*, were “the examples, the stories, the real-life people, the humor, and the entertainment” (p. 558). So, by using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms, these educators allowed their students to connect more with the content and the stories beyond dates and people.

**Enables the Teaching of Many Different Skills.** Another theme that emerged from interviews with participants was that using Podcasts or Podcasting allowed them to address many different skills, such as critical media consumption, the importance of new perspectives, and various 21st-century and real-world skills.

**Critical Media Consumption.** One of the significant skills discussed among participants was the potential of Podcasts or Podcasting to address discussions around critical media literacy. What many deem the “Age of Misinformation,” Zelda highlights that, “We thought the Internet would help us. You know, we have all the information in the world at our fingertips. But it seems to be doing more spreading misinformation than actually helping spread factual thoughts and ideas spread.” So, the need for critical media literacy, a skill that many social studies teachers attempt to teach in their courses, becomes more critical. Saukko (2018) reinforces this by stating, “Individuals no longer simply interpret media text created elsewhere. Rather, they also create meanings and practices themselves through digital devices and platforms designed by (mainly) commercial companies” (p. 261). Even when using Podcasts in their classrooms, there is still the concern about misinformation. Tali reinforces this by saying
“a Podcast could just exist, and no one ever could correct it. There is no responsibility for it, especially if it’s a Podcast that’s not major in scale.” By having access to what Gonulal (2020) calls the “dynamic hub of knowledge” (p. 312), it signals a shift in the learning environment from the confines of the classroom to expand to include the broader contexts of on online interactions. “Kids have everything at their fingertips,” Kaidan says. “We’re trying to teach them, more than ever, to ask and critique what they are using and why they are using it,” he continues. Because this broader platform that, in Tali’s words, “people are using to get their voices out there,” creates an instance where you have the “influence of Podcatters as informal educators” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 699). So, by teaching her students to “be good consumers,” Nyreen sets up, in Kaidan’s words, “those discussions about why they are using something sort of bring themselves back to history and gives the teaching of history skills even more importance.”

**Importance of New Perspectives.** Those who used Podcasts in their classes, such as Mrs. R, Tali, Zelda, and Nyreen, found that they served to introduce new perspectives to their students - allowing them to expose their students to perspectives they may not have before letting them begin to form a broader understanding of people’s experiences. According to the literature, Podcasts can also “extend the classroom interaction to other locations via communication networks” (Baran, 2014, p. 18) by “reach[ing] across racial, gender, and geographic divides” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 68). That extension allows students to step outside their bubble and see how things are done differently elsewhere. “I have found a way to open that door,” Nyreen says about comparing perspectives, “because I can say ‘you’re right, you know it’s different now. How is it different? How is it not different?’” Mrs. R builds upon this by highlighting how
Podcasts have “made it easier for us to be able to teach all sides of history, and all perspectives of history.” Podcasts “open up the door,” Zelda says,

“So, we’re learning about someone new, and then it also opens the door to the question of ‘why don’t we learn about these people? It leads them to historiography, contemporary issues, and like understanding that you can have different perspectives in history and different schools of thought.” By providing this exposure to new perspectives, it can also help students to foster real-world skills.

**Fostering Real World Skills.** Participants also found that this tool allowed them to teach historical thinking skills required by their curriculum, and work on skills they may need in their future endeavors. Podcasts or Podcasting can be used not only “to deliver content” (McNamara et al., 2020, p. 2515) and provide a new means by which to “design and delivery of instruction” (Kennedy et al., 2016, p. 304) but they can also help students to learn 21st-century skills (Goldman, 2018, as cited in Norsworth and Herndon, 2020) and teach them new technologies (McMahon & Walker, 2019). Mrs. R articulates the multi-faceted way that Podcasting allows her to teach her students skills that can be applied to the real world. She says,

“If we teach a kid to do a Podcast, they have the technical things they have to learn and the content things that they have to learn. They apply those same skills if they want to be a mechanic. They have to learn technical skills to be a mechanic and also have to know the content of what they are doing and understanding that car.” She does not try to assert a direct correlation between becoming a mechanic and having created a Podcast in 6th grade; instead, learning the steps necessary to accurately convey content while learning the technical skills needed to create a Podcast allows students to foster skills that could help them. These skills also apply to articulating an argument. Kaidan highlights this by saying,

“Can you actually make these connections? Can you actually take these different ideas and form really complicated and interesting conclusions from it? I think it lends itself best to very thoughtful and meaningful conclusions and arguments. More so than other mediums or projects we do. It allowed them to connect claims to evidence and use evidence not just to support, but to enhance.”
The final skill highlighted came from Nyreen. She felt that using a Podcast about Japanese rituals on death and dying provided an opportunity for her students to practice cultural relativism. “I feel like the goal is for them to appreciate other people do things differently in another location,” she says. She continues, “and approach it like not, right or wrong, good or bad, just different. Not right or wrong, just different.”

**Importance of Planning and Context.** Planning and context are essential to achieving all the benefits participants highlighted that Podcasts or Podcasting can provide. When choosing a technology to use, especially Podcasts or Podcasting, much of the literature also warns about putting technology before pedagogy and the dangers of doing so (Kidd, 2011; Baran, 2014) as well as an “important warning…pedagogy before technology” (Beetham and Sharpe, 2007, as cited in Kidd 2011, p. 55). Mrs. R reinforces this by saying, “Don’t let a computer take the place of good teaching or quality instruction.” Participants stressed the importance of lesson structure and purpose to facilitate learning when recalling their experience using Podcasts and Podcasting.

**Need for Educational Goal or Context.** This need for planning and context is supported by Making (2020a), who states that educators must have an educational goal or outcome in mind when using these Podcasts to ensure “effective, successful teaching and learning take place” (p. 32). Nyreen and Tali tried introducing Podcasts to their students without providing context. Tali discusses,

“The first time I ever used a Podcast in my classroom, it went horribly. I didn’t treat it the way I would treat other resources in my classroom, where I would introduce it and provide context. I didn’t do that, I was just like, ‘Oh, we’re going to listen to this really interesting Podcast about this topic in history,’ and just played it for them. They didn’t pay attention; they didn’t know what to listen or look for. I don’t even think I finished using it. I could read the room, and it wasn’t going well; I'm losing them.”
Tali’s experience mirrors by research by Sutton-Brady (2009), who highlights that, in some cases students just stopped listening altogether. Nyreen had a similar experience as Tali, but hers focused more on the assignment she gave her students. She says,

“They all got to pick an episode off of that series they had to listen to it, and then they had to create some type of visual story picture whatever of what they learned. And I will be honest. I looked at the pictures and I thought, well, you could have drawn that picture without listening to the story.”

As such, both Tali and Nyreen learned the importance of providing context when using a Podcast in their classes. Pegrum et al. (2015) discuss that “although teachers cannot control all factors to guarantee students will take a deep approach, they can create conditions that maximize the likelihood of this occurring” (p. 144). To create these conditions for learning, both realized the need for guiding questions to support their students. "I did add guided questions, which I was resistant to because I felt like it kind of went against what I wanted them to do which was just listen,” Tali said, “but I think it supported them. It felt to them like previewing a text. They would read the questions over and would either answer them actively while they listened or would answer them at the end.”

Similarly, Nyreen highlighted the same decision. She says, “It became clear to me if I don't give them questions to think about while they're listening, then they don't really pay attention.” Even Zelda admits that the first time she used a Podcast in class,

“I probably could have structured the conversation a little bit better, although we're supposed to be talking about the Podcast and, like a few other additional sources, inevitably, the conversation always ends up being just about the Podcast because that's the part of the homework that all the kids did.”

Makina A (2020b) supports this experience of learning the importance of context by highlighting that educators must consider ways in which to best utilize the technology to meet learning goals.

In terms of having students create a Podcast, known as Podcasting, the act of creating a Podcast in a classroom setting “allows students to articulate a position or information on the
knowledge they have constructed” (Mathany & Dodd, 2018, p. 66) the importance of educational
goals and contexts are still important. For Kaidan, he sees it as a way to engage his students as historians,

“I do feel like we are able to practice these historical thinking skills more clearly, more
purposefully, and deliberately. No matter what, they are engaging with the other decades
and finding connections to their own. Look not only at change over time but continuity
over time. As well as consider what the long term and immediate impacts of events might be.”

Mrs. R builds on this further by stressing the importance of clear expectations. “It is really
important to make sure that you have very clear expectations, very clear directions,” she says.

This need for preparedness and expectations is supported by Villano (2008), as quoted in Kidd
(2011), who “offers teachers four simple pieces of advice to ‘build a better Podcast’: be
prepared; focus on sound; edit wisely; be consistent; follow the leaders’” (Kidd, 2011, p. 55).

*Situate Within Instruction.* One of the most significant challenges educators face in
utilizing Podcasts and Podcasting is determining the most valuable to use (Sutton-Brady et al.,
2009). Participants who used Podcasts, those media items that are commercially made and
consumed by students to “support learning” (Mathany & Dodd, 2018, p. 66), highlighted the
need to ensure it fits your instructional needs. Nyreen highlights the importance of finding
Podcasts that are not biased, “so when I'm looking for Podcast to share with the class, I really try
to find things that are neutral, and don't lean a certain way.” Others, such as Mrs. R, were
looking for something that “had new information, something they might not already know.” So
many use a Podcast as a supplement to their instruction. “Really, it’s just kind of some
enrichment stuff,” Mrs. R said. Tali highlights her use of Podcasts as a supplementary tool in her
social justice class, “in the history of injustices unit, we looked at the horrible multiple ways that
people have been denied justice. It was the perfect opportunity to bring in Podcasts that
highlighted those stories.” However, some, such as Nyreen, fit Podcasts into their instruction as a
supplemental tool because “I'm so limited in my knowledge of technology,” she does not feel comfortable having her students create their own.

**Aware of Time Spent with Technology.** As the literature points out, Podcasts and Podcasting “provide educators the opportunity to converge social and entertainment uses of mobile devices to scaffold student learning and foster deep engagement with content” (Ng'ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 181). However, participants highlight that one must know how much time is spent using technology. Zelda argues, “technology in small doses, like as needed.” It is not just Zelda; Mrs. R reinforces it by saying, “I don’t think an entire class period should be used on technology.” This concern also plays into student attention span. Mrs. R suggests,

“When listening to a Podcast as a part of class, it has to be kept short or even just do it in little segments over several days versus listening to a whole entire thing in one day. We can’t expect kids to sit there for an hour with headphones on listening to a Podcast to learn something from it. They’re going to tune out.”

No matter what age group, students will get bored and not engage in learning. There were instances in the research that indicated that, when not used properly, students saw Podcasts as extra work (Shamburg, 2021). With students not engaging with their work, Podcasts or Podcasting cannot facilitate learning.

**Importance of Vetting Sources.** One final theme during interviews with Tali and Kaidan was the importance of vetting sources, either those used for research to create a Podcast or a commercially made one. Nelson et al. (2016) highlight the importance of not only identifying the tool being used but also previewing the product so they can help students navigate any challenges (pp. 297-298). Tali stresses that “if you are using them academically, you have a huge responsibility to make sure you’re providing Podcasts that are credible.” Kaidan also echoed a similar warning, “we as teachers are having to be even more critical about what we’re using and for what purposes. Not all the stuff out there is great.”
Research Question 2: How do Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) and Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) play a role in teacher’s decisions to use Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?

Summary of Findings

One of the gaps identified in the literature is detailed by Kopcha et al. (2020) when they say, “Our field still lacks a comprehensive understanding of the process of a teacher’s decision making: that is, how a teacher makes decisions about using technology” (p. 731). To better understand the ‘how’ of a teacher’s decision-making process when choosing an educational technology, we will use the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model developed by Koehler & Mishra (2009). According to Koehler and Mishra (2009), there are three types of knowledge that a teacher uses when deciding to use a new educational technology in their courses. These three realms are Technology Knowledge (TK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), and Content Knowledge (CK). As Koehler and Mishra (2009) highlight in their TPACK model, it is not just these three types of knowledge that play a role in decision-making but also the overlap of the domains. Educational technology can be defined as “the broad range of communication, information, and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching, and assessment” (Raji & Zualkernan, 2016, p. 307) and “the application of technology to teaching and learning” (Nelson et al., 2016, p. 293). In this discussion, I will focus on the educational technology of Podcasts and Podcasting. I will examine pivotal areas in teachers’ decisions to use this technology in their classrooms: Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) and Technological Content Knowledge (TCK). I will identify how each participant’s experiences fit within these domains.

Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK). Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) is “an understanding of how teaching and learning can change when particular
technologies are used in particular ways” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65). According to Koehler & Mishra (2009), “this becomes particularly important [when] popular software programs are not designed for educational purposes…and web-based technologies such as blogs or Podcasts are designed for purposes of entertainment, communication, and social networking” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66). As cited in Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2013), Jonassen defined this interaction between students and technology in three ways, “Learning about technology (technology as a subject), learning from technology (technology as a delivery tool), and learning with technology (technology as a cognitive partner)” (p. 176). As such, teachers must balance their knowledge of technology, it’s uses, and how to use it effectively in a classroom setting to facilitate student learning.

**Kaidan.** Kaidan is a teacher from a “unique generation.” A generation who experienced learning without and with technology. He says “My generation is very unique in that we kind of experience both. I went to school as the Internet Age was starting to come about.” In his classroom, he uses technology “on an everyday basis. I use it to make slides and lectures more engaging. It’s really enhanced what I can do. I can dig deeper into different ideas and concepts.” Kaidan incorporates technology to enhance his lessons by having his students create a Podcast, or as this study defines it, Podcasting. This use of Podcasting is supported by Green et al. (2019) when they discuss that “there are many ways for teachers to integrate technology within a classroom” (p. 146). In Kaidan’s classroom,

“Technology has really opened up the different ways that students can create history. I think it’s an absolute game-changer. Leveraging different kinds of mediums like media and mediums for evidence of learning and the learning process.”

His pedagogical decision to use this technology stems from his desire to have his students not only engage with history but also be able to articulate and support an argument in a new way. Influencing this decision was his own experience,
“In my experience in listening to Podcasts, I found that they were grounded in arguments, claims, and evidence. So, it was a no-brainer to incorporate that into the classroom. Give them the opportunity to create an argument that relies on claims and on evidence and present it in an authentic real conversation.”

One of the skills that Kaidan’s curriculum requires is the ability to create and support an argument using evidence. Podcasting presents him with a way “to create some structured academic conversations. Something I could assess formally and summative, but also have some freedom of choice. I also wanted them to engage orally with their topics and have conversations with one another but in an organized way.” By situating the creation of the Podcast within the educational goal of creating and supporting an argument, he has kept the educational goal or outcome in mind to ensure “effective, successful teaching and learning take place” (Makina A., 2020a, p. 32). The creation of these arguments presented Kaidan’s students with a new and unique way to articulate their knowledge,

“The way you present an argument in the Podcast is different than how you would do it in, say, a paper. It allows students to participate in historical apprenticeship, but also utilize different techniques and to think about their arguments in a different way.”

So, Kaidan’s approach is not only supported by Gachago et al. when they discuss that "Pedagogy or teaching with the use of Podcasts, refers to the recording, editing, and subsequent distribution of audio files to students...in order to support student learning with technology” (Gachago et al., 2016, p. 860), but he further works within both the TPACK model via the “pedagogical techniques that use technologies in constructive ways to teach content” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66). Kaidan situates his pedagogy within constructivist theory by encouraging “reflective, experiential, and critical engagement with the subject matter” (Kumar, 2019, p. 199) by creating arguments via Podcasting instead of the more traditional essay.

Mrs. R. Mrs. R began her teaching career when only teachers were using technology, “back then the only component of technology in the lesson plan was ‘I am going to use PowerPoint.” However, the digital age has “gone from teachers dealing with technology to now,
what I am using technology for, plus what the students are doing with technology in the
classroom.” As Jonassen recommends, “teachers go beyond the typical uses of computers to
engage students in what we [Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich] term [as] technology-enabled
learning” (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2013, p. 176). So, for Mrs. R’s students, the pedagogy
of using technology in the classroom is “not just how the material is being delivered to them, but
it’s also created. How they demonstrate mastery of the information versus actually processing the
information and creating with that information.” By having her students create a Podcast on the
West African Kingdoms, Mrs. R creates the “discrepancies” that would cause students to
question and construct their knowledge (Brainerd, 2009). Highlighting the need for deeper and
more critical thinking that her lesson created, she says,

“When they were doing the interviews with these fake historical people, they really had
to think about what would that person have said? Would a woman really have been
interviewed during that time period? They really had to think about those things, and I
think it took them to a deeper level in what they had to think about.”

Like Kaidan, Mrs. R firmly situates her lesson in constructivist theory by creating the
opportunity for “critical engagement with the subject matter” (Kumar, 2019, p. 199). She also
situates it within the TPACK model by “pedagogical techniques that use technologies in
constructive ways to teach content” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66). While also providing “the
opportunity to converge social and entertainment uses of mobile devices to scaffold student
learning and foster deep engagement with content” (Ng’ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 181).

**Nyreen.** Nyreen’s pedagogical approach is to use a pre-made Podcast in her classroom.
She is hesitant to use technology in her teaching because “technology was not a piece of my own
education growing up,” and she struggles with it. Her decision to use Podcasts was influenced by
her viewing technology “as more [of a] support role.” As such, she chose to use a Podcast by
Planet Money about Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream for her economics course because she felt she
“lack[ed] the right words or context” and because it was “a really cool story. It’s sort of supply and demand, and that’s what my lesson was about.” So, she ensured that her lesson aligned with the learning goals to allow for “effective, successful teaching and learning to take place” (Makina A., 2020a, p. 32). Although Nyreen’s pedagogical choices do not move the technology past being an ‘add-on,’ it did allow her to shift how her students learned the topic of supply and demand by using Podcasts to cause a shift in teaching and learning (Koehler & Mishra, 2009).

She also uses Podcasts to address the skill of understanding bias in media by using Podcasts to introduce different perspectives. Taking a more postmodern approach to teaching and learning about media bias, she wants her students to be “good consumers” and question the information at their fingertips in the Internet Age. Trenia Walker stresses the importance of critical literacy in helping students understand how knowledge is socially constructed (Kumar, 2019). “Did you check it [new information] out? How do you know for sure that it’s real information?” Nyreen constantly asks of her students. Saukko (2018) supports this pedagogical approach to more critical viewing media, stating, “Individuals no longer simply interpret media text created elsewhere. Rather, they also create meanings and practices themselves through digital devices and platforms designed by (mainly) commercial companies” (p. 261). This is shown through her choice to use a Podcast on Japanese rituals on death and dying to teach cultural relativism, in addition to perspectives. Allowing her students to “see things in context,” and “appreciate [that] other people do things different in another location.” This approach is supported by using Podcasts as a “tools, either physical or psychological, that serve as the links to the broader social and cultural context” (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003, p. 221). Although Nyreen is “uncomfortable with technology” she still acknowledges its influence on her students learning and its power as a pedagogical tool. She knows the concept of supply and demand is something
that is “not a very exciting term or concept in their textbook,” so by finding this Podcast, she is able to address the “knowledge of what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn and how technology can help redress some of the problems that students face” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66). In the end, Nyreen uses her knowledge of technology to support her pedagogy and create an environment where learning can occur.

**Tali.** Tali’s decision to use Podcasts in her classroom was influenced by her desire to have her students engage with multiple perspectives and think like a historian. About using Podcasts in her class, she says,

> “I feel like it lends itself to things I am trying to incorporate in my classroom, which was multiple perspectives and understanding sources. It kind of hit on a lot of social studies elements I think were important. Thinking like a historian, talking about sourcing and contextualizing. Podcasts let the student’s kind of work through those processes.”

This pedagogical decision to use Podcasts as a way to get students to engage with historical thinking skills is supported by Makina (2020a), who supports the importance of pedagogy by stating, “…the choice and use of technology should be closely aligned to the pedagogical intent of the learning and teaching transaction” (p. 32). Tali does this by finding “the one that you adapt to in terms of your instruction.” She highlights using multiple Podcasts about social injustices to situate her students’ learning within a medium they are familiar with because students easily accept integrating Podcasts with curriculum content because they are already competent users of MP3 players and iPods (Armstrong et al., 2009). Using these Podcasts, she wanted to provide her students “with a clear picture of what was going on” using multiple different voices. Doing so situates her pedagogical decision within the postmodernist perspective by showcasing that stories can change based on context and situations (Kumar, 2019) while also addressing the “knowledge of what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn and how technology can help to redress some of the problems that students face” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66), through showcasing the
multiple perspectives of instances of social injustice. By using Podcasts to show her students the multiple perspectives and “provide them with a clear picture of what is going on,” Tali effectively demonstrates the interplay between technology, Podcasts, and how they can be used to help her students construct their knowledge in a classroom setting, pedagogy.

**Zelda.** Zelda sees the pedagogical potential of Podcasts as a way to “engage the students more than just a regular reading of a primary source or a class lecture.” Her choice is influenced more by her students’ knowledge of technology because “these kids know way more about the technology than I do.” Zelda understands that to effectively create a situation where “processing and conceptual learning” (Hargis et al., 2008, p. 36) can occur, she has to position the Podcast to get the students to engage with it. To begin with, she “just assigned it in class as a part of one of our readings,” acting as another perspective in a discussion of the concept of “All Men are Created Equal” and its multiple interpretations. Fitting within the postmodernist approach, Zelda sought to encourage discourse to deconstruct knowledge (Kumar, 2019) while remaining, as Koehler and Mishra (2009) highlight as being creative and open-minded as to how this technology can be used in teaching and learning (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). However, she also highlighted the importance of using Podcasts to “convey whatever the content or message or skill is that you’re trying to teach your students” while also making “sure that you’re not using technology to the point where it is doing all of the thinking for the students.” This warning is reflected in the existing literature about the danger of putting technology before pedagogy (Kidd, 2011; Baran, 2014). Zelda acknowledges that her approach was lacking in its initial use because she says, “I probably could have structured the conversation a little bit better. We were supposed to be talking about the Podcast and other sources, but the conversation ended up being just about the Podcast.” In this, she reinforces the need for “…the choice and use of technology [needing
to] be closely aligned to the pedagogical intent of the learning and teaching transaction” (Makina A., 2020a, p. 32).

Technological Content Knowledge (TCK). Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) is “an understanding of the manner in which technology and content influence and constrain one another” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65). In this, teachers need to be able to understand how technology helps to build content knowledge or how it influences how learning occurs. As Ng’ambi & Lombe (2012) discuss, the use of Podcasts or Podcasting “provides educators the opportunity to converge social and entertainment uses of mobile devices to scaffold student learning and foster deep engagement with content” (p. 181). In terms of social studies education, this can help students to be exposed to multiple different perspectives in history, firmly situating its use within the postmodernist framework, which highlights that some multiple perspectives and identities influence the way we interpret, understand and narrate the world, while also acknowledging that knowledge is socially constructed encouraging discourse to deconstruct knowledge (Kumar, 2019). Using Podcasts or Podcasting as a technology by which to help students construct their knowledge of social studies allows them the opportunity to present the “multiplicity of perspectives and identities” (Kumar, 2019, p. 198) while also encouraging “reflective, experiential, and critical engagement with the subject matter” (Kumar, 2019, p. 199).

Each participant’s approach to the interplay of technology and content knowledge is addressed individually. Some experienced the influence of outside knowledge sources via media and popular culture, which is postmodern constructivists deem as the ‘First Curriculum’ that students are first exposed to, influencing their social studies knowledge. They also see how technology constrains their students’ knowledge in their inability to consume information to differentiate fact from fiction critically. This domain helps to address what Jonassen, as cited in Ertmer &
Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2013), defines as two of the three ways technology and students interact, “learning from technology (technology as a delivery tool) and learning with technology (technology as a cognitive partner)” (p. 176).

**Kaidan.** Kaidan highlights his opinion on how social studies education has been impacted by technology in general, saying,

“I don’t know if there’s a discipline that’s been more affected. As technology has created so much opportunity, it has created an even greater need to educate about how to source, how to contextualize, and how to corroborate. It’s made historical thinking skills and analysis just so important.”

To address this, he focuses on using Podcasting to help his students articulate their knowledge more. He sees the potential of Podcasting to open pathways for students to make connections on their own. He frames his lesson within the latter half of the 20th century, having his students “identify turning points within the decade that fit certain themes to develop a Podcast which focuses on events that they believe to be a turning point in the decade.” His reasoning is that when he listens to their products of learning,

“The way you present an argument in the Podcast is different than how you would do it in say a paper. It allows students to participate in historical apprenticeship but also utilize different techniques and to think about their arguments in a different way. I think it lends itself best to very thoughtful and meaningful conclusions and arguments. More so than other mediums or projects we do. It allowed them to connect claims to evidence, and use evidence not just to support, but to enhance. Plus, I don’t think they can hide as much with this medium because they have to verbally articulate their knowledge. It shines a light on if they don’t know it.”

He uses this technology to have his students “explore history through a deeper lens,” Podcasting “allows them to do that.” Using Podcasting, a student-created product, he encourages “reflective, experiential, and critical engagement with the subject matter” (Kumar, 2019, p. 199) to have his students articulate key turning points during various decades. Kaidan acknowledged that his students did not know what Podcasting was. “When I started doing the project with students, I don’t think they knew what Podcasts were,” mirroring a warning that Oblinger & Hawkins
(2006) about the assumption that students will automatically be able to use technologies (Oblinger and Hawkins, 2006, as cited in Sutton-Brady et al. 2009). In terms of Podcasting impacting his student’s knowledge, Kaidan says,

“I do feel like we are able to practice these historical thinking skills more clearly, more purposefully and deliberately. No matter what they are engaging with the other decades and finding connections to their own. Look not only at change over time but continuity over time. As well as consider what the long term and immediate impacts of events might be.”

Throughout his project, Kaidan’s experience highlights the “connections among technology, content, and pedagogy as they play out in classroom contexts” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 67), showcasing “an understanding of the manner in which technology and content influence and constrain one another” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65) and how his students build not only their content knowledge of themes and decades but also how their construction of arguments is influenced by creating Podcasts.

Mrs. R. Mrs. R highlights a similar feeling about technology in that the Internet Age has not only impacted her students’ understanding of history but also her teaching of it. “Now in teaching history, when we don’t know something, number one, we can’t just face it and be like, ‘well, this is what happened.’ They’re going to be able to find out if we are faking it,” she says. She used both commercially made Podcasts and has her students engage in Podcasting, in her classroom. For her, using Podcasting allows her students to present their learning in a new way, “it’s not the typical way of regurgitating and showing that you learned something, it’s so much different,” seeing as a way to “enable students to make connections” (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 220). In terms of her students making connections, she says,

“That’s what we want them to do, right? Not just memorize it for the test, but actually know it. And I think it also helped them connect history to today. Because they are using a modern technology to talk about something or listen to something that is historical, so it kind of merges the two into one thing.”
Her acknowledgment of “using a modern technology” to “talk or listen to something historical” highlights the interplay between technology and content (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). While also linking Wurst’s (2020) idea of the relevancy of learning when stating, "Good teachers present the material so that students can understand its application in their lives” (Wurst, 2020, p. 22).

She also acknowledges how Podcasts provide the opportunity for her students to view multiple different perspectives on history. For her, it has done away with the whitewashing of history and “made it easier for us to be able to teach all sides of history and all perspectives of history.” So it allows her students to use a technology to “build on existing knowledge” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 66) that they may have of history by presenting the “multiplicity of perspectives and identities” (Kumar, 2019, p. 198), as well as “voice to underserved or niche areas” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 704). However, Mrs. R acknowledges another side to these multiple perspectives in Podcasts’ content. Her students struggle to “dig through the false information. They’re just going to read stuff and believe it.” As such, when choosing a Podcast, the teacher must, as Nelson et al. (2016) highlight, “not only identifying the tool that is being used, but also preview the product so they can helps students to navigate any challenges” (pp. 297-298). This inability to discern accurate and false information highlights what Koehler and Mishra (2009) discuss as the constraint’s technology can put on students’ content knowledge.

**Nyreen.** Nyreen’s decision to use a Podcast with her classes was born out of her desire for her students to understand “how things connect to other things.” To tell her students “You’re right, you know it is different now, how is it different? And how is it not different?” and get them to analyze events throughout history critically. However, she struggles with her lack of technological knowledge and hesitates to have her students “make a website or make a Podcast” because “I don’t know how to do those things, so I don’t ask my own students to do it.” As such,
she is restrained in how she can build her students’ content knowledge through Podcasting, but she still uses Podcasts to address students’ content knowledge. Using the Podcast episode from Planet Money on Ben and Jerry’s ice cream, she wanted to help her students better understand economic concepts that she was not wholly comfortable with while also tying it into “something that’s happening now and tie it to this not very exciting term or concept in their textbook” of supply and demand. This fits within TCK because it highlights “the manner in which technology and content influence one another” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65).

She also used another Podcast episode in her AP Human Geography course on Japanese rituals of death and dying while comparing it to American culture. This Podcast allowed her students to learn more about the concept of cultural relativism by “open[ing] their eyes to another way that people do things” and allowing them to “see things in context” and “appreciate [how] other people do things differently in another location.” By using this Podcast to influence her students’ content knowledge of cultural relativism, she “offers learners a supplement to existing instruction and a way to receive high-quality instruction beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom” (Kennedy et al., 2016, p. 304), by introducing them to other cultures approach to death and dying. Showing them that these differences are “not right or wrong, good or bad, just different, and apply those principles” to their everyday lives. As Hagood (2021) points out, “a Podcast offers the ability to use not just words but also sound, music, and silence – powerful tools for formulating arguments, providing evidence, illustrating points, developing empathy, and giving listeners space to think” (p. 185).

**Tali.** Tali was always big on making her students care about history, “really spelling it out for them to help them see why we are talking about something that happened 400 years ago, and why it’s still relevant.” Her students struggle to “put history into context” and “to understand
or care about something that’s not happening right now or happening in a way that they can see.”

However, Tali was quick to identify that her students engaged with technology outside of her classroom and how it impacted their understanding of history. As such, she focuses on taking “into consideration what is meaningful to the students and engaging to them” when choosing the medium to engage them with content. By being “more conscious of technology in the classroom because [their students] are more familiar with it outside the classroom…” (Altvater, 2009, p. 80), Tali creates situations in which her students can build their content knowledge while also acknowledging that they are engaging with other technologies that are “always in a state of flux” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 64) and influencing their content knowledge. So her decision to use a series of Podcasts in her Social Justice course was influenced by her desire to find some new way to engage her students using a technology they might be familiar with. Tali says,

“I was constantly looking for different resources to bring into my teaching. So, every year when we got to the reform unit, I was always linking it to a modern-day reform, and so that was always an opportunity where I’d bring in a modern documentary. I thought they were alternative viewpoints, not always something I agreed with, but it was something that prompted discussion in the classroom, and Podcasts became another source for me.”

In doing so, she presents her students with the “multiplicity of perspectives and identities” (Kumar, 2019, p. 198) that are a part of her lessons on the history of injustices and people’s experiences with them. She highlights how it impacted her students’ knowledge,

“They were like, ‘Wait, I can’t believe this was happening’ or ‘I can’t believe the government did this’. So, I think it maybe helped to broaden their perspective, provide them more insight into topics than I could alone, and prompted them to talk more amongst themselves.”

However, much like Mrs. R, she acknowledges the downside of the abundance of Podcasts at students’ disposal, including the fact that the Internet “makes it really easy to edit things and change history.” As such, she experiences the constraints technology (Koehler & Mishra, 2009) places on students’ content knowledge because of a lack of critical literacy skills. She does point out that,
“Podcasts really helps them to be equipped with the ability to look at things and question them. Podcasts really helps them to see stuff they hadn’t heard of. Now, Podcasts alone did not make them more critical, but it did give them way more perspective.” Not only did it impact her students’ content knowledge, but it also allowed them to foster skills such as critical thinking by offering them varying perspectives on events.

Zelda. Zelda realized the ability of a Podcast to greatly impact her students’ content knowledge when listening to a Podcast about the American Revolution called “The Rich Man’s Revolt.” When listening, she was shocked that her understanding of the concept of ‘all men are created equal’ was challenged. She said,

“So I feel like at this point in my life, for me to learn something new, or have like a different perspective that really makes me think differently about this thing that I've been learning about for like 30 years that you think you know everything about, but you don't.”

So, she decided to incorporate this episode into her classroom because it impacted her knowledge. “New media formats such as Podcasts are revolutionizing the production and dissemination of knowledge” (Brehm, 2022, p. 785).” She sees it as “a really great way to reinforce historiography,” which is something her students struggle with, and “this Podcast in particular helps open their eyes to that.” In doing so, she acknowledges how this particular episode, or technology, can influence how her students build their content knowledge (Koehler & Mishra, 2009).

Zelda also engaged her students in using Podcasting to build their content knowledge when she had them create a Podcast called “Hidden Heroes of History,” which was a “biography project about someone from American History who typically we don’t know about or who isn't as prominent.” Once again, utilizing the power of technology to build their content knowledge (Koehler & Mishra, 2009), Zelda, this time, uses it to address perspectives that give “voice to underserved or niche areas” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 704). In this instance, her focus was on helping her students to “learn about someone new, and then also open up the door to the question of
‘why don’t we learn about these people’?” In doing so, she shows “an understanding of the manner in which technology and content influence and constrain one another” (Koehler & Mishra, 2009, p. 65).

Research Question 3: What advantages and/or disadvantages do teachers articulate when using Podcasts and/or Podcasting as an educational technology in their secondary social studies classroom?

Summary of Findings

As with any media, there are inherent advantages and disadvantages to their use in a classroom setting. Throughout the interviews, participants identified advantages such as increasing student engagement an advantage (Vess, 2006; Baran, 2014; Steventon, 2013, as cited in Norsworthy, 2020), the ability to address multiple skills (Goldman, 2018, as cited in Norsworthy and Herndon, 2020), a flexible learning environment (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; Steventon, 2013, as cited in Norsworthy, 2020), ability to remove learning barriers (Ifedayo et al., 2021; Makina A., 2020b; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009), and to create lasting learning (O’Bannon et al., 2011; Mitchell et al, 2021; Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020; Pegrum et al., 2015; Shamburg, 2009). Participants also identified several disadvantages such as the teachers lack skills or understanding of the technology (Baran, 2014; Ertmer, 1999), the issue of time (Ertmer, 1999; Sutton-Brady, 2009; Vasquez, 2015), maturity of students, access issues (Haythonethwaite, 2007), and the issue of appropriateness and choice (Gonulal, 2020; Making A., 2020b; Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). These advantages and disadvantages articulated by participants were seen when they engaged their students in Podcasting or listening to a Podcast.

Advantages of using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in an educational setting.

Throughout the literature on the use of Podcasts and/or Podcasting in an educational setting, it highlighted many different advantages that this technology offered to educators and their
students to engage in learning. Podcasts and the devices on which they are consumed create a flexibility by which educators can deliver content and learners can consume it (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; Steventon, 2013, as cited in Norsworthy, 2020). This flexibility is identified as an advantage by students in terms of engagement in their learning (Vess, 2006; Baran, 2014; Steventon, 2013, as cited in Norsworthy, 2020), greater time management (Vess, 2006; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009), and a strategic advantage in the learning process (Makina A., 2020b). Similar to the literature, the interviews with participants yielded a few common themes as they dealt with the advantages these teachers felt that Podcasts and/or Podcasting offered to achieve their classroom goals.

Increasing Student Engagement to Foster a Deeper Understanding. One of the first themes that emerged when asking about the advantages that Podcasts and/or Podcasting offered was that of increased student engagement. Kaidan says of his decades Podcasting project, “I think it’s more engaging at the end of the day. When I listen to their episodes, they’re engaging with the history and making connections with the history. They’re enjoying the history.” He also highlights how his students did not listen to Podcasts before his project, and “now I am pretty confident that they do.” This engagement outside of the classroom with learning that Kaidan observed is supported by Mayes & de Freitas (2004) in their assessment that Podcasts or Podcasting can “encourage the development of autonomous learners” (p. 13). Kaidan also highlights that via the Podcasting project, he uses in class, “we believe we can create lasting learning through exploring history through a deeper lens, and I think that is what this project really allows them to do.” This mirrors what Hargis et al. (2008) discuss when addressing the ideas of relevancy to the learning context by highlighting that “greater conceptual learning is fostered when teachers use interactivity-based teaching strategies to train students to link
everyday experience in the real physical world to formal school concepts” (Hargis et al., 2008, p. 37).

Mrs. R had a similar experience in terms of her student engagement. “They loved it!” she exclaimed, “They thought it was great. It just kept them engaged. There was never a moment where they weren’t engaged during that lesson on West African Empires.” By merging the technology of creating a Podcast with the content knowledge needed to accurately describe West African Kingdoms, Mrs. R harnessed “the opportunity to converge social and entertainment uses of mobile devices to scaffold student learning and foster deep engagement with content” (Ng'ambi & Lombe, 2012, p. 181). She also held that they not only knew the content, “they knew the stuff. Even after we did it, I would see them the next year and they would be like ‘remember when we learned about Mansa Musa?’” but her students also fostered a deeper level of understanding about the content,

“When they were doing the interviews with these fake historical people, they really had to think about what would that person have said? Would a woman really have been interviewed during that time period? They really had to think about those things, and I think it took them to a deeper level in what they had to think about.”

Her experience with students retaining the information from the lesson matches with what Pegrum et al. (2015) argue about the connections that are fostered by using Podcasts and/or Podcasting that allow for a deeper approach to learning and improved material retention.

Zelda also experienced an increase in her students’ engagement when using a Podcast in place of a more traditional source document. “I knew they listened to the Podcast, and I knew they didn’t do the whole reading,” she says, “and that circles back to what I was saying about engagement. They were more likely to listen to the Podcast than they are to read the primary
source.” This engagement with content that Zelda observed is supported by engagement
Norsworthy and Herndon (2020), who cites a study by Shamburg (2009), saying, “Students can authentically connect and engage with current media trends; thus, Podcasts can allow students to more deeply connect with a curriculum” (p. 62). This engagement is further supported by O’Bannon et al. (2011) when they discuss how “students are more receptive to learning material provided in Podcast form” (p. 1887). Finally, Tali also saw an increase in engagement with the content with her students, but she attributes that increase to her allowing her students to exercise choice when choosing which Podcast episodes to engage with. “That student choice piece really helped with their engagement because they were invested in the materials,” she said. This use of student choice to increase engagement is supported by Prensky (2005/2006) when he says, “As 21st-century educators, we can no longer decide for our students; we must decide with them, as strange as that may feel to many of us” (p. 11).

The interviews also highlighted the theme of how Podcasts and/or Podcasting can help to create a flexible learning environment due to their easy access to pre-made Podcasts or to platforms that allow them to have their students create Podcasts. This also helped to facilitate student engagement in their learning. For teachers, Tali highlights that “there are so many more resources for teachers to pull from” when discussing platforms that have Podcasts. The topics that are covered by Podcasts “vary far and wide” (Gonulal, 2020, p. 312) and cover a “wide range of subjects and interests at a variety of depths” (Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020, p. 61), which makes them “have a key advantage of being able to present information about a topic accessible at any time or location” (Mitchell et al., 2021, p. 8). This ease of access is what prompted participants such as Tali, Zelda, Kaidan, Mrs. R, and Nyreen to use Podcasts and/or Podcasting in the classrooms. They were exposed to them personally and learned something, or
they felt they had a place in the classroom. They wanted their students to be able to understand how Podcasts can help enhance their learning as well.

**Addressing Multiple Skills.** Participants also identified similar feelings that Podcasts and/or Podcasting provided them with an advantage when trying to address the teaching of not only historical thinking skills but also 21st-century skills that their students may need. According to Goldman, “When Podcast production is included the curriculum, researchers have found that students develop both hard technical skills, like editing, and soft interpersonal skills like collaboration, task management, and critical problem solving” (Goldman, 2018, as cited in Norsworthy and Herndon, 2020, p. 62). Kaidan highlights how Podcasts allowed him to address skills such as practicing historical thinking skills. He says,

“I do feel like we are able to practice these historical thinking skills more clearly, more purposefully, and deliberately. No matter what, they are engaging with the other decades and finding connections to their own. Looking not only at change over time but continuity over time. As well as considering what the long term and immediate impacts of the events might be.”

He also highlights how creating a Podcast is similar to writing an essay because his students’ Podcast episodes “allowed them to connect claims to evidence and use evidence not just to support, but to enhance.” So, Kaidan is not only teaching his students how to articulate an argument similar to how one might teach it in an essay, but he does so by allowing his students to create a Podcast that serves to “up-skill and integrate a new approach into their traditional study process” (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 228).

Zelda also saw Podcasts as an opportunity to address multiple skills in her course, such as historiography and listening to multiple perspectives. The Podcast she used was ‘A Rich Man’s Revolt,’ which dealt with the American Revolution and the concept of ‘all men are created equal.’ She saw this as an opportunity to open the door for them to “question their commonly held beliefs that they’ve always had” and “just seeing them being able to actually listen to an
opinion or a thought that they don't necessarily agree with, and, you know, not freak out.” This Podcast provided an advantage in terms of addressing perspectives that make one question their knowledge. What Schrum & Schrum (2009) discuss as “resources on the Internet that can help teachers and students learn about [many stories] that challenge typical textbook narratives” (p. 24), thus allowing Zella’s students to work towards listening and understanding multiple perspectives. She also saw the advantage of having her students create a Podcast to address the topic of historiography and why some voices are left out of the narrative of history. “In that class, I talk a lot about historiography, and that was one of the ways that I blended in,” she says, “Well, why are you? Why do we always hear about the same names over and over again in history? Why aren't these people more prominent? Why are they becoming more prominent now?” Her approach to having her students look into these other narratives allows them, as Sutton-Brady et al. (2021) highlight, “the potential to add real value to students’ learning experiences” (p. 228)” by giving “voice to underserved or niche areas” (Shamburg, 2021, p. 704) or narratives that have been suppressed in history.

Mrs. R highlights how Podcasting allowed her students to learn more 21st-century skills, “They’ve picked up something in 21st-century skills. Whether it’s a new skill on the computer, how to be a better 21st-century student, or maybe it’s a new platform they learned during a lesson. They’ve learned some kind of skill that will help them in their use of technology going forward.” This is reflected in what Goldman (2018) highlighted “When Podcast production is included the curriculum researchers have found that students develop both hard technical skills, like editing, and soft interpersonal skills like collaboration, task management, and critical problem solving” (Goldman, 2018, as cited in Norsworthy and Herndon, 2020, p. 62).

Finally, Tali saw the advantage of using Podcasts to teach her students empathy. She elaborates on this by saying,
“One of the hardest things to teach students in history is to get students to care about stuff that happened a long time ago. I felt like using Podcasts helped the students connect to content or history that they were so far away from. It actually made them care.” This decision to use Podcasts to highlight stories of those who were subjects of injustices allowed her to "present the material so that students can understand its application in their lives” (Wurst, 2020, p. 22) while also taking it a “step further and find ways to create empathy and promote individual action” (Wurst, 2020, p. 22). By using Podcasts that highlighted people’s experiences, she was able to show her students how events can affect the lives of people and create a situation in which they could develop empathy.

**Removing Learning Barriers.** Another advantage that participants identified was using Podcasts or Podcasting to address the learning needs of different students and use them to help remove barriers to learning. These tools allowed teachers to “tailor instructions that fit students’ needs” (Ifedayo et al., 2021, p. 1), thus allowing them to “overcome many of the limitations of traditional education systems” (Celaya et al., 2020, p. 181). In Nyreen’s words, using Podcasts “exposes them to another medium, another way to learn about things.” Mrs R’s discussion of Podcasts or Podcasting, as she has used both in her classroom, shows how it allows students who may struggle with more traditional assessments such as quizzes or tests “another way of showing, a different way, that they’ve learned information.” Tali has a similar experience as she sees it as an accommodation for struggling readers,

“I think it was an accommodation at times for some of my students who maybe didn’t do as well with traditional reading materials. It was definitely something that allowed them to access content in a meaningful way. It kind of removed a barrier.”

Kaidan sees it as a way “to remove roadblocks with learning to promote collaboration and to create opportunities for different kinds of examples of learning and pathways to learning.” Again, this builds off the idea that this medium presents students with the opportunity to “up-
skill and integrate a new approach into their traditional study process” (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 228) by showcasing their knowledge in different ways. The advantage of Podcasts or Podcasting as a way for students to showcase their learning is highlighted by Mrs R when she says,

“It’s important to give these other outlets to kids, especially your kids who have ADHD, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, all those challenges. Offering them another outlet it’s a good way for them to be able to show what they know because they may not be able to show you what they know in a written format.”

However, for all their advantages in removing learning barriers, Tali highlights that one must be culturally responsive in their use of this technology, “be mindful that not every student has the same access to technology at home.” So, although access to Podcasts or the tools with which to create Podcasts may be what Ng’ambi and Lombe (2012) highlight as “Ubiquitous technologies [that] are technologies that are commonly available and accessible to most in a particular community” (p. 181), the concern about being culturally responsive remains a barrier to the advantage of using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in the secondary social studies classroom.

**Disadvantages of using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in an educational setting.** During the interviews, participants identified a few common disadvantages to using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms. Ertmer (1999) states, “Although teachers today recognize the importance of integrating technology into their curricula, efforts are often limited by both external (first-order) and internal (second-order) barriers” (p. 47). The disadvantages articulated by participants will be divided between Ertmer’s (1999) first-order barriers, which for participants were the issue of time and ensuring the appropriateness of Podcast episodes, and second-order barriers, which for participants were a concern of student maturity and behavior and the teachers’ personal unfamiliarity with strategies to effectively use Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their classrooms.
**Issue of Time.** A common disadvantage of using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in classrooms that emerged from the interviews was the issue of time. This issue of time is one of the first-order barriers that Ertmer (1999) describes “as being extrinsic to teachers and include insufficient time to plan instruction” (p. 48). As Vasquez (2015) states, “Today, more than ever, the mentality of making great time has become more widespread as teachers feel the pressure of covering a mandated or standardized core curriculum” (p. 147). “I find they are cramming more and more into what we are required to do, and it makes it harder and harder to find time to teach them other skills,” Mrs. R says when discussing the restrictions of required curriculum puts on implementing innovative strategies such as using Podcasts and/or Podcasting. Nyreen echoes the issue of being restricted by how much she has to cover with her curriculum standards,

“"The social studies standards are huge, wider than my arms, and I feel like sometimes they are different from what I would want to use them for. It's really specific, and it might take away them from spending time on other things that could be a concern or an issue.”

Tali also highlights the restrictive curriculums that could hinder the implementation of Podcasts or Podcasting, “I think the biggest limit to using Podcasts is going to be if you’re in a district where you can’t add things into your curriculum. If you are limited by the rules of your curriculum."

The issue of time in terms of planning and pacing out a lesson also appeared throughout the interviews. According to Sutton-Brady (2009), "Podcasting requires time for students to up-skill and integrate a new approach into their traditional study process" (p.228). Kaidan highlights how his project “is essentially three days in which they do research, start developing the episode, and then a day to produce it and post.” Three days in a classroom is a long time to devote to project-based learning, especially for Kaidan, who has his students create multiple episodes. Mrs. R expresses a similar issue of the amount of time it takes in class,
“One class period to do the research and come up with the script and another class period to make it….so you’re looking at 5 to 6 class periods. Ninety minutes seems like a long time, but when you have students who have never done a Podcast or a movie before, you’re having to teach them how to do those things.”

Villano (2008) quotes Warlick as saying, “You can’t just plop kids down in front of a microphone and say, ‘Okay, now it’s time to talk about this’ or ‘Read this’” (p. Paragraph 4) rather, as Kidd (2011) reinforces “a regular well-structured programme of Podcasts provides much more value of learning” (p. 55), however this requires time and planning on the teachers part, a luxury that poses a challenge to implementation. Although both Kaidan and Mrs. R are discussing the time restriction in terms of having students create Podcasts, Zelda highlights the time restriction when using pre-made Podcasts. For her, it was the fact that after the COVID-19 Pandemic, she found herself having to teach basic classroom skills that she did not know before. She says,

“I'm finding that because I'm factoring more time to re-teaching these skills in reading and writing after COVID. It gives me less time to do the in-depth, fun activities, or I'm hauling to make it to the end of the curriculum.”

The literature highlights that using Podcasts could free up classtime for discussions, higher-order learning activities, hands-on practice, and other activities that would promote further investigation into learning (Vess, 2006; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; O’Bannon et al., 2011), the participants highlighted that it still requires a significant amount of time to devote to teaching the skills necessary for implementation, as well as restrictive curriculum pacing.

**Ensuring Appropriateness for Classroom Use.** Another disadvantage is choosing appropriate episodes for classroom use. This is again one of the first-order barriers that Ertmer (1999) describes “as being extrinsic to teachers” (p. 48) as educators have to tackle a plethora of choices for Podcast episodes, ensure they are effective, and ensure their student’s attention is maintained. There is a highlighted need for support in choosing or creating a high-quality
Podcast with “evidence-based strategies for technology integration that will contribute to high achievement for all students” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 69). Tali highlights how when,

“You type in a topic, and you get so many things. How do you know which is the one you want to use? Some of the Podcasts are boring and not engaging, and not necessarily something that belongs in the classroom. It’s one of the downsides but is also one of the pluses. It’s a wonderful thing, but it’s also very challenging in terms of vetting sources.”

When choosing a Podcast, one of the greatest challenges that educators face in utilizing Podcasts and Podcasting is determining which is the most valuable to use (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009), and there is a lack of evidence of how effective new technologies are (McMahon & Walker, 2019). “One of the hardest things with Podcasts and letting students listen to them in the classroom is finding ones that are specifically for certain age groups,” Mrs. R discussed how many episodes were available. Nyreen also experienced this when discussing the abundance of Podcast episodes available,

“I'm also uncertain about how to make sure that kids are using the right types of resources they find online. I'm not always sure, just by reading the description, if I'm going to like it, and then I don't want to spend a lot of time or invest a lot of time and to find in ones I like.”

In terms of choosing an appropriate episode for her students’ attention spans, Mrs. R says, “because of the advertising they needed to pay to produce the Podcast, they tend to go long. And so, you have to find the specific segment or section that you want them to listen to.”

According to Bell, Cockburn, and Wingkuisit (2007), as cited in Sutton-Brady et al., there was a report that "in one experiment, computer science students stopped listening to Podcast episodes that they considered too long (8 minutes)” (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009, p. 221). Mrs. R expressed frustration with the length of the Podcasts: “It’s very hard for me to find something on there that would be helpful for them to listen to that weren’t an hour long.”

**Unfamiliarity with how to use Podcasts/Podcasting.** One of the final disadvantages of using Podcasts or Podcasting in a secondary social studies classroom articulated by participants was their unfamiliarity with how to effectively use Podcasts or Podcasting in their classroom. As
the literature states, most teachers today are ‘Digital Immigrants,’ and “have adopted many aspects of technology, but just like those who learn another language later in life, we retain an ‘accent’ because we still have one foot in the past” (Prensky, 2005/2006, p. 9). Nyreen is one of those ‘Digital Immigrants’ who is “not comfortable with my own technology.” One of the things Nyreen struggles with is,

“Trying to find ways to incorporate a Podcast. Where I'm struggling because I'm as old as I am, and technology was not a piece of my own education growing up. I want to find a way to make the Podcast meaningful, experiential. And so, I'm not 100% sure how to do that.”

Several studies have indicated that there was a need for more empirical research into how Podcasts can be used in a pedagogically sound way (Hargis et al., 2008; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; O'Bannon et al., 2011; Baran, 2014; Nelson et al., 2016; Ifedayo, 2021; Makina, 2020a; Makina, 2020b), and Nyreen’s experience and concern mirror that. Even when she found a lesson plan online “on how to have kids make their own Podcast. And I looked at it. I was like, ‘Oh, this is a great idea.’ But I got so scared about it because I didn't know how to do it,” so she avoided it. Kaidan had a similar experience; except he was concerned about not knowing how to implement a Podcast to use in class instead of Podcasting. He elaborates further, saying,

“I've had students use them as sources in research projects. I would really want to leverage them more in terms of ‘Hey, here is this lesson, and instead of this source, we’re going to listen to this Podcast.’”

This lack of empirical research and pedagogical theory presents a challenge to educators who hope to adopt these technologies as it makes it much more difficult to “investigate the advantages and make informed decisions” (Baran, 2014, p. 17). Nyreen summarized this well when she said,

“I don't have kids produce things on that are like, I, people say, we have that make a website or make a Podcast or make a whatever. But I don't know how to do those things, so I don't ask my own students to do it.”
Although these fit within the framework of a second-order barrier detailed by Ertmer (1999) as a perceived “unwillingness to change” (p. 48), it also is a first-order barrier in that is addresses an “inadequate technical and administrative support” (p. 48) that hinders their ability to implement this unique educational technology in their classrooms.

Maturity and Behavior. Zelda and Mrs. R expressed concerns about their student’s maturity in terms of how much learning needed to occur prior to implementation, as well as concerns about their understanding of how Podcasts present an interpretation of events. These second-order barriers “are intrinsic to teachers and include beliefs about teaching” (Ertmer, 1999, p. 48). Mrs. R describes her initial concern about the learning that needed to occur prior to implementing Podcasting in her classroom, “there’s a certain amount of learning of learning that has to occur in the first semester before you just can let them do that.” The literature warns against the assumption that all ‘Digital Natives’ have the knowledge of how to use these technologies and are not familiar with Podcasts (O’Bannon et al., 2011). This learning is not only the skills necessary to be able to engage with the learning in a meaningful way but also a concern that they may not yet be mature enough to handle the responsibility. “Before you can start creating Podcasts,” Mrs. R elaborates, “there has to be a certain level of maturity there.”

Maturity plays a role for Zelda as well, but hers deals with her students’ understanding of the interpretations that Podcasts can put on events. She says,

“I never thought about using it with my underclassmen. And I think that has to do more with the content of Podcasts. Like I said before, you know, they’re not just talking about straightforward stuff. There's usually a little spin or some flavor to it, so I think, content-wise. It's good for upperclassmen. But again, that's more like a maturity thing, not so much the technology.”

Zelda’s concern about her students not being mature enough to understand the “flavor” that can be presented in Podcasts is valid, and Saukko (2018) reinforces this concern by stating,
“Individuals no longer simply interpret media text created elsewhere. Rather, they also create meanings and practices themselves through digital devices and platforms designed by (mainly) commercial companies” (p. 261). Nyreen expressed the challenge of her trust in her students to behave properly while using this technology. “I feel like I don’t trust the kids to do the assignment. I don’t know how to make it so they can’t cheat on it,” she says. Her concern is validated by the literature when it highlights that “the use of Podcasts is complex and demands robust guidance for the lecturers to achieve productive student learning” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 70). So even though Podcasts and Podcasting present students and teachers with a unique way to address content, there are still concerns about students’ maturity and behavior when using the technologies, reinforcing the need for pedagogical goals when using this technology.

**Tensions within the Research**

As with any research, tensions can arise. Particularly around the use of Podcasts or Podcasting in secondary social studies classrooms. This research does not seek to create a framework by which teachers can implement this technology in their classrooms; rather, it seeks to tell the stories of those who took the chance and tried it. Sometimes, it takes a simple story to become a part of a growing narrative. Students today have access to information at their fingertips, and they are bombarded with videos, music, shows, and media that act as the “First Curriculum” (Kumar, 2019) for many. This consumption of media is where students first begin to construct their knowledge, and as educators, I believe we need to learn to meet them on their own level using many different forms of technology.

**Use in a Classroom Setting**

One of the tensions within the research is whether Podcasts or Podcasting should be used in classrooms. After conducting this research, listening to other experiences, and thinking about
my own, I would recommend that secondary social studies teachers consider using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms.

Beginning even before this research, I sought to find ways to incorporate Podcasts into my classroom. The choices of these teachers were like mine; I was trying to reach my students and found a new way to do it via Podcasts. My decision to use the Podcast, ‘Destroyer of Worlds,’ was an attempt to teach content to my students in a new, unique way. I wanted to present them with a different perspective on something that they had learned about for years, and much like Zelda, this podcast told the story in such a way that it had me thinking about it differently, and I wanted to share that with my students. This “technology-supported learning option” (Makina, 2020, p. 67) allowed me the flexibility to have my students engage with this perspective while simultaneously moving me, as an educator, beyond the more traditional technology of YouTube or the simple reading of a textbook. I always told my students that history is a story, and this Podcast offered just that, a story, and as Tali points out, “it is a different act to listen.” Wurst (2020) says, “The human brain is wired to receive information in the form of stories” (p.22), and by hearing it instead of reading it, it was a more intimate experience. As Nyreen says, it is like “imagining a story unfolding in your ears.” Unlike some of the participants, I do not think I was as influenced by my student’s consumption of other media sources such as Snapchat or TikTok; for me, it was more the ability to tell a story about a topic that my students had heard many times before. Allowing them to engage with a technology they may or may not have been familiar with, but still teaching them differently outside of lecturing or reading textbooks. Unlike Tali, I created a question set to help scaffold the instruction, but I do not think my students really enjoyed it enough to call it a success.
After finishing all the interviews, I decided to try implementing Podcasting in my classroom because the stories of these teachers inspired me to try using it again. Unlike the first time when I used a Podcast, this time, I decided to have my students create them, engaging in the process of Podcasting. Knowing my students enjoyed creating videos on TikTok and that they loathed, they used the word ‘hated’ when they took more traditional assessments such as unit tests, so I made the decision to change their final exam to a Podcasting project. I wanted my students to enjoy their final few weeks in my class, and when I posed the idea to them, they were enthusiastic about it, much like Schrum and Schrum (2009) suggest, they were “curious and enthusiastic about the past and about using technology” (p.24). By taking what I had learned from my participants about situating it within the learning goals and being mindful of the expectations, I created a project that allowed students to express their learning in new, innovative, and fun ways.

Again, my experience and the experience of the teachers whose stories are told are unique to our individual setting. Everyone who tries a new technology or tool will have vastly different experiences using it. However, the hope of this research was to give social studies teachers a stepping-stone by which to take the chance on something new. To provide teachers with a look at a tool that changes the “design and delivery of instruction” (Kennedy et al., 2016, p. 304) but also provides a new way “to deliver content” (McNamara et al., 2020, p. 2515) to their students. It is a chance worth taking, and just like any other lesson, if it felt like it did not work, back to the drawing board.

Measuring Success

Another tension present in the research is the question of measuring success. Within the context of this research, I do not seek to quantify success because, much like experience, we all
see success differently. Each one of these teachers whose stories are told felt they had success or failures in different ways. Kaiden, for example, felt that his students engaged much more deeply with the content but was concerned that he was doing a disservice by not having them write a traditional paper. Nyreen felt that using the Podcast episode about the ‘Wind Phone’ was a success in getting her students to consider cultural relativity, something she felt her students struggled with. Simultaneously, she felt that her use of the Ben and Jerry’s Podcast did not go well, and that the product of her students’ learning could have been created without the information presented in the Podcast. McMahon and Walker (2019) highlight how there is a lack of evidence of how effective implementing educational technology is; however, Mitchell et al. (2021), provide a potential method by which to quantify success in their study on the use of delirium awareness podcasts used in nursing education.

Again, this research does not seek to establish the quantifiable effectiveness of Podcasts or Podcasting, nor does it seek to generalize the success or failure of these individual educators. It seeks to tell a narrative of their experiences, and with that narrative, there are the hopes that more teachers may use this new and unique way of teaching and learning in their classrooms so that, eventually, a quantitative study can be produced to measure success.

**Education versus Entertainment**

The final tension within this research is the nature of a Podcast. It is simply a form of entertainment, or is it educational technology? This question is not easily answered. In my opinion, the participants in this study saw it as educational technology, a tool by which they could engage their students with the content and have them construct their knowledge. When Podcasts are used within a classroom setting and with a pedagogical purpose, they become educational technology and not just entertainment. Raki and Zualkernan (2016) define educational technology as “the broad range of communication, information, and related
technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching, and assessment” (p. 307), and Nelson et al. (2016) build on that definition further by adding it is “the application of technology to teaching and learning” (p. 293). The participants in this study applied Podcasts with pedagogical intent, thus, in my opinion, transforming a form of entertainment into an educational technology. Kidd (2011) suggests something similar when he states, “Podcasting technologies and tools are themselves a distinctive (edutainment phenomenon…an example of the very ‘social’ and rich-media, ‘time-shifting,’ cultural and leisure practices” (p. 54) that these newer technologies represent.

Further study is required to ascertain the exact nature of a Podcast when used in an educational setting. For years, teachers have used YouTube videos to supplement their instruction, and I argue that Podcasts represent just another form of media that transforms into an educational technology when used with pedagogical intent.

**Conclusion**

This research study sought to address the gap in the literature in terms of using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in the secondary social studies classroom (Celaya et al., 2020; Debele & Plevyak, 2012; Kopcha et al., 2020). Gibson & Noncente (1999) articulate it best when saying in order to better understand “the experience of those who have used it” (p. 73), we must also understand “the process of a teacher’s decision making: that is, how a teacher makes decisions about using technology” (Kopcha et al., 2020, p. 731). Articulating the difference between a ‘Podcast,’ media items that are commercially made, and ‘Podcasting,’ the act of creating a Podcast in a classroom setting, we sought to better understand the decision-making process and teachers’ experiences using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms. To do so, we looked at three key research questions:
• How do social studies describe their experience using Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?
• How do Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) and Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) play a role in teacher’s decisions to use Podcasts and/or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms?
• What advantages and/or disadvantages do teachers articulate when using Podcasts and/or Podcasting as an educational technology in their secondary social studies classrooms?

By using the research method of narrative inquiry to address this “research puzzle” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 41) on teachers’ experiences and decision-making process, we looked to hear the stories of those who experienced it because “experience is, therefore, the starting point and the key term for all social science inquiry” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxiii). Using three semi-structured interviews, 5 participants from across the United States discussed their experiences using Podcasts or Podcasting in their classrooms and provided a look at the interplay between teacher, student, curriculum, and technology. This includes their decision-making process as understood through the lens of the TPACK framework developed by Koehler and Mishra (2007) to “help researchers and teacher educators better understand the complexity of the knowledge required for effective technology integration” (Swan & Hofer, 2011, p. 79) as well as and “has been recognized as an important theoretical foundation for technology integration research” (Wu, 2013, p. E73). By looking at participants’ interviews through the lens of the TPACK model, you begin to see the interplay of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge that goes into the ‘how’ of using Podcasts or Podcasting in the secondary social studies classroom.

Kaidan’s experience using a Podcast project began when he listened to a Podcast on his own and saw its potential to allow his students to formulate and articulate arguments in a unique way. He saw it as a chance to “incorporate and connect different ideas in different ways” and engage his students as historians “to create histories using Podcasts.” Although faced with the
challenges of his students initially not knowing what a Podcast was, he found that his students enjoyed engaging with the platform and retained the information more. He would like to see his classroom move beyond “using them as sources in research projects” and use it as a potential audio source instead of a more traditional primary source reading for an assignment.

Mrs. R’s inspiration came from her students who were listening to Podcasts outside of school and wanted to create one. She saw the fun they were having and decided to incorporate it into her classroom. Trying to make her curriculum more engaging, she saw this as a way to “reach them in a digital world and give them the opportunity to practice their 21st-century skills or to learn new ones.” Plus, she wanted her students to realize that history was more than just memorizing dates and spitting them back. After having her students create a Podcast episode on West African Kingdoms, she saw that they were engaged, knew the content, and made connections. She felt “it also helped them connect history to today. Because they are using a modern technology to talk about something or listen to something that is historical, so it kind of merges the two into one thing.” She was also faced with challenges in using Podcasts or Podcasting in her classroom, particularly the concern of students’ attention spans and their need for maturity and learning before engaging in the creation of a Podcast. In the future, she wants to see her students get back to creating Podcasts, but by splitting it up over two semesters. First, she would like her students to listen to them and learn from them, not just content but also structure, and then engage in Podcasting in the spring semester.

Nyreen’s experience using Podcasts was born out of the new economics course that she was teaching, and she wanted her students to understand cultural relativity in her AP Human Geography class. So, she used a Podcast from Planet Money for her economics course and one on Japanese death and dying rituals for her AP Human Geography course. Although her students
engaged in listening to the Podcast, she isn’t sure that it was something that really worked because the product they produced “could have been done without listening to the Podcast.” Nyreen would still love to have her students listen to Podcasts and create them as well, but she is unsure how to do that, and that prevents her from implementing them more.

Tali’s experience in using Podcasts in her classroom began when she wanted to introduce her students to “something that I did every single day” when listening to Podcasts. To do this, she began to look for ones that would provide her students with varying perspectives on a topic. She began by looking at the requirements of her social justice course and how she could use Podcasts in it. Using various Podcasts in a curated list for her students, she was able to address many different skills such as “multiple perspectives, understanding sources, thinking like a historian, talking about sourcing, and contextualizing. Podcasts were a way to let the students’ kind of work through those processes.” Tali’s biggest challenge was creating that curated list for her students to work with because “there is just way too much in there” when referring to the abundance of Podcast availability on various topics. In the end, her students enjoyed learning from the stories that the Podcasts highlighted about the many injustices people face, and Tali felt her students’ perspectives on things were broadened.

Zelda’s experience using Podcasts in her classroom was born out of her interaction with one in a higher education course for a degree she was pursuing. This Podcast, “A Rich Man’s Revolt,” introduced her to a perspective on a topic that she “felt I knew all about,” and this new perspective prompted her to bring it to her students. It also presented a chance for her to address the ever-difficult skill of historiography to her students. They “have a really difficult time grasping that concept because they’re so used to the history books and don’t understand you can have different perspectives in history.” Although the initial use of the Podcast episode was, as
she puts it, “spur of the moment,” her decision to have her students engage in Podcasting was not. She decided to shift from a listening and discussion frame to a project “after getting a little bit more comfortable with Podcasts.” So, her “Hidden Heroes of History” Podcast project began. This allowed her students to engage not only in historiography but also researching and engaging with historical narratives that were not part of the narratives they saw in textbooks. In doing so, she allowed her students to “learn about someone new, and then also opened the door to the question of ‘why don’t we learn about these people?’

Each participant’s unique experience cannot be generalized to the greater population of teachers who use Podcasts or Podcasting in their secondary social studies classrooms, and nor can their experiences be generalized to any secondary classroom. However, it does provide a look into how teachers used Podcasts and/or Podcasting as an education tool in their classrooms to enhance their students’ learning.

**Future Research**

There is an abundance of ways that this research could be built upon. First, the structure of this study could be replicated, just with a different group of teachers in social studies courses. This would continue to address the issue of a gap in the research on the use of Podcasts and/or Podcasting in secondary social studies classrooms (Celaya et al., 2020; Debele & Plevyak, 2012; Kopcha et al., 2020). Another potential for future research would be to conduct a quantitative study to address the question of whether Podcasts actually help. The literature does indicate that there is a need for more empirical research into how Podcasts can be used in a pedagogically sound way (Hargis et al., 2008; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; O’Bannon et al., 2011; Baran, 2014; Nelson et al., 2016; Ifedayo, 2021; Makina, 2020a; Makina, 2020b). A final potential for future research could be to field test the strategies teachers engaged within this study. Although not quantitative, it would provide a tested way to engage with using Podcasts or Podcasting in
secondary social studies classrooms to address a gap in “evidence-based strategies for technology integration that will contribute to high achievement for all students” (Makina A., 2020b, p. 69).
Appendix A. IRB Approval Form

LSU
Office of Research & Economic Development

TO:        Ken Tobi
LSUAM | Col of HSE | University Lab School | CC00164

FROM:      Alex Cohen
Chairman, Institutional Review Board

DATE:      19-Jan-2023

REF:       IRB#AM-21-0004

TITLE:     Storying History: A Narrative Study on the use of Podcasts
and Podcasting in Secondary Social Studies Classrooms

SUBMISSION TYPE: Initial Application

Review Type:  Exempt

Risk Factor:  Minimal

Review Date:  19-Jan-2023

Status:      Approved

Approval Date:  19-Jan-2023

Approval Expiration Date:  18-Jun-2026

Exempt Category:  1

Requesting Waiver of Informed Consent:  No

Re-review Frequency:  Three Years

Number of Subjects Approved:  6

LSU Proposal Number:

By:         Alex Cohen, Chairman

Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU’s Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects.
2. Prior approval of any changes in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report) prior to the approval expiration date, upon receipt by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually began); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 5 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
8. SPECIAL NOTE: When enrolling more than one recipient, make sure you use bio. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.

*All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU’s Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/research.

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Appendix B. Interview Protocol

1. Do you teach Secondary (6-12) Social Studies?
   a. Yes.
   b. No.

2. Have you ever used podcasts and/or podcasting in your classroom?
   a. Yes.
   b. No.

3. Was your experience positive, negative, or a combination of both?
   a. Positive
   b. Negative
   c. Both

4. If you answered ‘Yes’ to question #2, would you be interested in participating in a series of in-depth interviews about your experience using podcasts and/or podcasting?
   a. Yes.
   b. No.

5. If you agree to participate in the research, please provide your name, email address, grade level taught and subject.
   a. Name: ______________________________
   b. Email: ______________________________
   c. Grade Level(s): _______________________
   d. Subject: _____________________________

If you have any questions about the study before giving your consent to participate, please contact Elizabeth Shoenberger via email at eshoenberger@lsu.edu.

Please note: All correspondence and research data will be kept securely to ensure confidentiality of participants. Participation in this study is voluntary and subjects may change their mind and withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they may otherwise be entitled.
Appendix C. Interest Survey

Interview #1: Content
- Start by telling me about yourself. How long have you been teaching, what did you study, why?
- What is it about History that made you want to teach it?
- Please tell me about your curriculum. Be as detailed as possible.
- What are the limitations to the curriculum?
- How do you think students perceive social studies and why?
- Describe your perfect or dream history lesson. Please be as detailed as possible. This can include anything and everything you wish.
- How do you define 'success' when teaching social studies? Be as detailed as possible.
- How might you engage your students in learning history using technology?
- In what ways do you learn new content knowledge? Please be as detailed as possible.
- How do you think teaching and learning of history has changed in the Internet Age? Please be as detailed as possible.

Interview #2: Technology
- Start by telling me what you know about educational technology. Be as detailed as possible.
- How might technology be used in your ideal history classroom?
- Please tell me what you know about Podcasts and Podcasting. Please begin as far back as you can remember and include as many details as possible.
- What podcasts have you listened to?
- What do you like and dislike about podcasts?
- Tell me about a time you listened to a Podcast to learn a new topic?
- How do you think they could be used in history classrooms?
- Please tell me about how you would use or did use this technology to expand beyond the mandated curriculum?
- How do you define 'success' when using podcasts or podcasting in your classroom? Be as detailed as possible.
- How do you think technology has impacted social studies education in the Internet Age? Please be as detailed as possible.

Interview #3: Pedagogy
- Describe what you consider to be the best practices of using technology in a history classroom. Please be as detailed as possible.
- How has your pedagogy changed, if at all, in the Internet Age? Please be as detailed as possible.
- How do you define 'success' when technology is used in a pedagogically sound way?
- Describe a time you used or thought about using a podcast or podcasting in your classroom. Please be as detailed as possible.
- What pedagogical aspects drew you to podcasts and or podcasting? Be as detailed as possible.
- How did you build the lesson? What was your process? Please be as detailed as possible.
- What skills did you hope the students would learn?
- What did you feel worked the best or did not, why?
- Why did you choose this over other types of technology?
- How did the podcasts and/or podcasting impact your students’ knowledge of history?
Works Cited


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Vita

Elizabeth Ann Shoenberger, born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, worked as a secondary social studies teacher for eleven years in Louisiana after receiving her Master of Art in Teaching from Louisiana State University. She began to realize how much her students responded to various forms of educational technology and decided to enter the Department of Education at Louisiana State University. She plans to receive her Doctorate in August 2024 and she will continue working as an IT Project Manager with hopes of also helping to teach future generations of teachers.