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BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: INTEGRATING AUTHENTIC PODCASTS INTO GRAMMAR LEARNING FOR NON-PHILOLOGICAL STUDENTS

Abstract. The article investigates the methodological potential of authentic podcasts as an effective tool for developing grammatical competence among non-philological students in the process of learning English. The relevance of the study is determined by the rapid development of digital technologies, the reduction of classroom hours devoted to foreign language instruction in higher education institutions, and the growing need for effective organization of students’ independent learning. The paper analyzes modern scientific approaches to the use of podcasts in foreign language teaching, including the constructivist approach, the theory of authentic materials, and the concept of informal lifelong learning. Special attention is paid to the role of authentic audio content in developing learners’ ability to perceive and use grammatical structures in a natural language environment.

The empirical basis of the study consisted of twelve English-language podcasts, including both educational and authentic resources devoted to science, technology, economics, and everyday communication. The analysis made it possible to identify the grammatical structures most frequently used in different types of podcasts, such as passive voice constructions, modal verbs, conditional sentences, tense forms, indirect speech, phrasal verbs, and complex syntactic

structures. On the basis of the obtained results, methodological recommendations for selecting podcasts according to students' language proficiency levels and professional needs were developed.

The article proposes a step-by-step model for working with podcasts, including the preparatory stage, first and second listening, transcript analysis, and the activation of grammatical structures in students' own speech production. Receptive, productive, and analytical types of exercises aimed at improving grammatical skills are also described in detail. Considerable attention is devoted to the organization of autonomous, classroom-based, and blended learning. The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of directly implementing the proposed methodological recommendations into the educational process of non-philological higher education institutions in order to increase the effectiveness of developing students' foreign language grammatical competence.

Keywords: authentic podcasts, grammatical competence, English language learning, digital technologies, non-philological students, listening comprehension, independent learning, blended learning, teaching methodology, authentic materials.

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ПОЗА МЕЖАМИ АУДИТОРІЇ: ІНТЕГРАЦІЯ АВТЕНТИЧНИХ ПОДКАСТІВ У НАВЧАННЯ ГРАМАТИКИ СТУДЕНТІВ НЕФІЛОЛОГІЧНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ

Анотація. У статті досліджено методичний потенціал автентичних подкастів як ефективного засобу формування граматичної компетентності студентів нефілологічних спеціальностей у процесі вивчення англійської

мови. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена активним розвитком цифрових технологій, скороченням аудиторного часу на вивчення іноземних мов у закладах вищої освіти та необхідністю організації результативної самостійної роботи студентів. У роботі проаналізовано сучасні наукові підходи до використання подкастів у навчанні іноземних мов, зокрема конструктивістський підхід, теорію автентичних матеріалів та концепцію неформального безперервного навчання. Особливу увагу приділено ролі автентичного аудіоконтенту у формуванні навичок сприйняття та використання граматичних структур у природному мовленнєвому середовищі.

Емпіричну основу дослідження становили дванадцять англомовних подкастів, серед яких освітні та автентичні ресурси на теми науки, технологій, економіки й повсякденного спілкування. У процесі аналізу було визначено найбільш характерні граматичні конструкції для різних типів подкастів, зокрема пасивний стан, модальні дієслова, умовні речення, часові форми дієслова, непряму мову, фразові дієслова та складнопідрядні конструкції. На основі отриманих результатів розроблено методичні рекомендації щодо добору подкастів відповідно до мовного рівня та професійних потреб студентів.

У статті запропоновано поетапну модель роботи з подкастами, що включає підготовчий етап, первинне та повторне прослуховування, аналіз транскрипту й активізацію граматичних структур у власному мовленні студентів. Окремо охарактеризовано рецептивні, продуктивні та аналітичні види вправ, спрямовані на розвиток граматичних навичок. Значну увагу приділено організації самостійної, аудиторної та змішаної форм навчання. Практична цінність дослідження полягає у можливості безпосереднього впровадження запропонованих методичних рекомендацій у навчальний процес закладів вищої освіти нефілологічного профілю для підвищення ефективності формування іншомовної граматичної компетентності студентів.

Ключові слова: автентичні подкасти, граматична компетентність, англійська мова, цифрові технології, нефілологічні спеціальності, аудіювання, самостійна робота, змішане навчання, методика викладання, автентичні матеріали.

The Problem's statement. The fast development of digital technologies and online communication in the twenty-first century has drastically changed approaches to teaching foreign languages in higher education. One of the most significant consequences of these advancements has become the usage of podcasts as a teaching tool. This phenomenon has developed over the last 20 years from an

experimental approach to a crucial component of contemporary instructional methods.

Podcasting as a technology was developed in the early 2000s. Researchers in applied linguistics had already recognised its educational potential by 2004–2005. Indeed, as early as 2005, Kaplan-Leiserson noted that podcasts could serve as an additional means of revising learning material and contribute to the development of students' language skills. Subsequently, Ashton-Hay and Brookes (2006) substantiated the idea that podcasting encourages students to learn independently. This principle is particularly important for blended and distance learning. In his work "Podcasts in Language Learning", P. Panagiotidis [5] argues that podcasts are an effective and promising tool for foreign language learning, combining the flexibility of digital technologies with a real-life language environment.

We can therefore assume that the theoretical basis for the use of podcasts in foreign language teaching comprises several ideas. Firstly, the constructivist approach to learning asserts that learners are active creators of knowledge, rather than passive consumers. Secondly, the theory of authentic materials, which emphasises the importance of engaging with real, 'living' language outside the textbook. Thirdly, Rosell-Aguillar's work supports the idea of informal lifelong learning, which views podcasts as a means of self-development [2].

The analysis of the recent research works in the problem's field. Research in this field has been conducted on a systematic basis since 2010. Researchers have focused on investigating how podcasts influence various language skills, such as listening comprehension, vocabulary development, pronunciation improvement, and grammatical competence. Thus, Dubrova, Khalabuzar, and Shkola [1] conducted a critical analysis of digital tools for developing English phonetic skills, demonstrating that audio-based technologies and mobile applications effectively support pronunciation competence through exposure to authentic speech and opportunities for imitation. Their findings on the effectiveness of digital audio resources for developing language skills through listening are particularly relevant to our investigation of podcasts as tools for developing grammatical competence. Another important area of research has been the specific ways in which podcasts are used in non-language higher education institutions, where a foreign language serves as a tool for acquiring specialist knowledge rather than an end in itself.

Several factors determine the issue's relevance. The most important thing is that we notice a consistent trend in technical and other non-language universities towards reducing the number of foreign language lessons. This necessitates the development of effective methods for organizing students' independent study. However, traditional methods of teaching grammar, which

involve learning rules and completing formal exercises, are increasingly criticized for lagging behind real-life language use and failing to motivate learners.

As genuine audio content, podcasts offer a fundamentally different approach, giving learners access to a natural-language environment where grammatical structures are used in real-life contexts of everyday, professional, or academic communication. This is particularly important for students of technical disciplines, as they require not only an understanding of grammatical rules but also the ability to identify and reproduce elements of constructions used in scientific and technical discourse, such as the passive voice, modal verbs, and complex cause-and-effect sentences.

Despite the abundance of international literature on this issue, foreign language teaching methodologies in Ukraine have not yet been sufficiently developed to make targeted use of podcasts to develop students' grammatical competence in non-language-related fields. There are no systematic methodological guidelines that account for students' unique professional needs, their language proficiency, and the extent to which podcasts are suitable for traditional teaching. It is precisely this that determines the relevance and necessity of the proposed study.

The aim of the article. This article aims to develop and theoretically justify methodological recommendations for using authentic podcasts to develop students' grammatical competence in technical disciplines. To achieve this aim, the following tasks are carried out: examining the potential of different types of podcasts in the context of foreign language learning; developing criteria for selecting podcasts in accordance with students' proficiency levels and professional needs; proposing a step-by-step model for working with podcasts both in class and independently; and creating a system of receptive, productive, and analytical tasks for targeted study.

The empirical basis of the study consisted of 12 podcasts: 7 educational (specially created for studying English grammar) and 5 authentic (on various topics, including science, technology, and economics) that contained grammatically rich speech.

Analysis of the selected podcasts also revealed which grammatical structures are most common in different types of content:

Science and technology podcasts **(Science Friday, TED Talks):**

• Passive voice to describe experiments and processes: “The experiment was conducted...”, “Data were collected...”

• Present perfect to describe achievements: “Scientists have discovered...”, “Researchers have developed...”

• Modal verbs to express possibility: “This could lead to...”, “It might explain...”

• Complex sentences to explain cause-and-effect relationships

Economic podcasts **(Planet Money, Freakonomics):**

• Conditionals for discussing hypothetical situations: "If the Fed raises rates...", "What would happen if..."

• Future tense for predictions: "The market will likely...", "Economists are going to..."

• Gerunds and infinitives in financial terminology: "investing in," "to maximize profits."

News podcasts **(The Daily):**

• Indirect speech to convey statements: "He said that...," "Officials claimed..."

• Different grammar constructions to build narrative: Past Simple for main events, Past Continuous for background, Past Perfect for backstory

• Passive voice in journalistic style: "It was reported that...", "The decision was made..."

Conversational podcasts (**Stuff You Should Know, All Ears English):**

• Phrasal verbs in informal contexts: "figure out," "come up with"

• Different types of question structures

• Contracted forms and colloquial constructions

• Present perfect vs. past simple in natural contexts

This understanding allows us to purposefully select podcasts for studying specific grammatical topics in accordance with the needs of students of certain specialties.

After analyzing all the material, we have developed methodological recommendations for using podcasts to develop students' grammatical competence in non-philological specialties.

1. Principles for selecting podcasts for grammar learning

The effectiveness of using podcasts directly depends on how well they are selected. Teachers and students are advised to use the following criteria:

Appropriateness for the level of language proficiency. For students at the A2-B1 level, it is advisable to choose educational podcasts with clear articulation and moderate speech tempo (for example, "English Grammar Podcast" by Espresso English, "Grammar Girl Quick and Dirty Tips"). Students at the B2-C1 level are recommended authentic podcasts with a natural pace of speech, where grammatical structures are used in a real context ("The Daily by The New York Times", "Stuff You Should Know").

Thematic relevance. Podcasts should align with students' professional interests.

For students of technical specialties, "TED Talks", "Technology and Science Friday" are suitable; for economists, "Planet Money" and "Freakonomics

Radio"; for medical professionals, "The Naked Scientists" and "This Podcast Will Kill You".

Structure and predictability. Podcasts with a regular format and consistent structure help students develop active listening skills and predict grammatical structures in specific communicative situations.

Availability of transcripts. In the early stages of work, it is critically important to check comprehension through written text and analyze grammatical structures visually.

2. Stages of working with a podcast to learn grammatical structures

Stage 1: Pre-listening

Before the first listening, the teacher or student independently:

- familiarize themselves with the topic of the episode and key vocabulary;
- identify the target grammatical structures that will be focused on (e.g., the use of the present perfect tense to talk about achievements, the past continuous tense to describe processes);
- formulate expectations regarding the context of use of these structures.

Stage 2: First listening – general understanding

Students listen to the podcast without stopping, focusing on the general meaning. The tasks for this stage are: 1) to understand the main idea; 2) to identify the communicative situation; 3) to identify the tone and style of speech.

Stage 3: Second listening – focus on grammar

Students listen to the same fragment with a specific task: 1) write down examples of the use of a particular grammatical construction; 2) pay attention to the context of its use; 3) note related marker words (time expressions, linking words).

Recommended task: create a table "Grammatical structure – Example from the podcast – Context of use."

Stage 4: Working with the transcript

At this stage, students: 1) verify what they have heard using the transcript; 2) analyze the written grammatical structures; 3) identify new or complex cases of familiar structures; 4) compare their assumptions about the rules with actual usage in speech.

Stage 5: Activating grammatical structures

Students use the identified constructions in their own speech:

1) compose sentences based on their professional experience, using the same grammatical models; 2) create short monologues (1-2 minutes) on the topic of the podcast with the mandatory use of target structures; 3) record their own audio responses, imitating the style and intonation of the speakers. For our students we suggested the developed scheme of the stages (Figure 1)

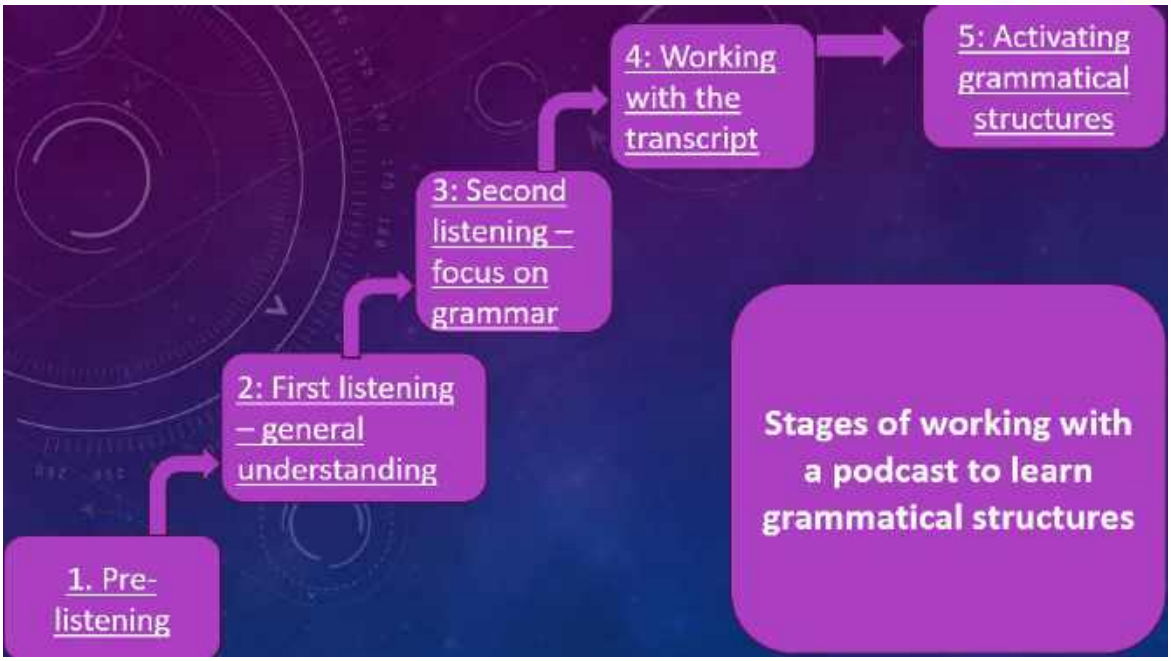

Figure 1. Stages of working with a podcast to learn grammatical structures

3. Types of tasks for working with podcasts

Receptive tasks:

- Grammatical listening: count the number of times a particular grammatical form is used (for example, how many times modal verbs are used).
- Contextual analysis: determine why the speaker chose this particular grammatical construction in a specific situation.
- Comparative analysis: compare the use of two similar grammatical structures in different contexts of the podcast.

Productive tasks:

- Grammatical reconstruction: after listening to a fragment, reproduce the main ideas using the same grammatical constructions.
- Transformation exercises: retell what you have heard, changing the grammatical form (from active to passive, from direct to indirect speech).
- Create your own micro-podcast (30-60 seconds) on a professional topic, using the grammatical structures you have learned.

Analytical tasks:

- Grammar diary: weekly recording of interesting grammatical structures from podcasts with an explanation of the context in which they are used.
- Creating grammar cards: based on the examples they hear; students formulate their own rules for using structures.

4. Organizational forms of work

Independent work by students

Podcasts are ideal for autonomous learning. It is recommended to:

- set up a regular listening schedule (e.g., 15-20 minutes 3 times a week);
- create a personal playlist of podcasts of varying levels of difficulty;
- use mobile apps with playback speed control (for beginners – reduced speed 0.75x, for advanced learners – normal or accelerated).

Classroom work

Podcast excerpts (3-5 minutes) are used as:

- a basis for grammatical discussions: why was this particular form used?
- material for collective analysis of complex cases of grammar usage;
- a stimulus for pair or group work with subsequent discussion of the identified structures.

Blended learning

Students listen to the podcast at home on their own and complete basic tasks, and in class, they:

- discuss complex grammatical points;
- share examples they have found;
- practically activate structures in communication exercises**.**

5. Recommendations for integrating podcasts into the curriculum

For teachers:

- Create a bank of podcasts structured by grammatical topics and levels of difficulty.
- Develop a system of criteria for evaluating students' work with podcasts (content comprehension – 30%, identification of grammatical structures – 40%, application in their own speech – 30%).
- Combine work with podcasts with traditional grammar exercises to reinforce the rules.
- Encourage students to keep a "podcaster's grammar diary" where they record interesting examples of grammar usage.

For students:

- Start with short educational podcasts (5-7 minutes) and gradually move on to authentic ones lasting 20-30 minutes.
- Do not try to understand every word; focus on key grammatical structures and the general meaning.
- Use the replay function for difficult passages.
- Combine podcasts with other resources: after listening, read articles on the same topic to reinforce grammatical patterns in a written context.

6. Example of practical application

Let us look at a method for using podcasts to study the Perfect tense.

Topic: Present Perfect vs Past Simple

Podcast: "6 Minute English" (BBC) **–** episode about scientific discoveries

Target audience: technical students, level B1

Procedure:

1. Preliminary task: students review the rules for using the Present Perfect and Past Simple.

2. First listening: general understanding – what scientific discoveries are being discussed?

3. Second listening: task – write down at least 5 examples of the Present Perfect and 5 examples of the Past Simple.

4. Working with the transcript: students check their notes and analyze the context:

- Present Perfect: “Scientists have discovered...” (the result is important now)
- Past Simple: “Marie Curie won the Nobel Prize in 1903” (specific date in the past)

5. Grammar analysis: why is the Present Perfect used in one sentence and the Past Simple in another? Students formulate the rule in their own words.

6. Productive task: students write their own 1-minute monologue about achievements in their field, consciously using both tenses.

7. Technical recommendations

Recommended platforms and apps:

- Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts – for listening
- Podcast Addict (Android), Overcast (iOS) – with speed control
- Otter.ai – for automatic transcription if no official transcript is available
- Notion or Evernote – for keeping a grammar journal

Useful features:

- Bookmarks for marking interesting grammar points
- Speed control (0.5x – 2x)
- Sleep timer for regular evening listening

Thus, the analysis of the functionalities of six well-known podcast listening services revealed that listening statistics, offline mode, bookmark generation, and playback speed control are essential for efficient grammar learning. Comprehensive methodological recommendations for using podcasts to develop grammatical competence have been developed, including principles for selecting podcasts, a five-step model for working with podcasts, a system of receptive, productive, and analytical tasks, and recommendations for organizing independent, classroom, and blended learning. A correlation has been established between podcast type and the grammatical structures that predominate in it, enabling targeted selection of podcasts for studying specific grammatical topics.

As the conclusion, we’d like to underline that the practical significance of the study lies in the fact that the developed methodological recommendations can be directly implemented in the educational process at higher educational

institutions of non-philological profile as a component of students' independent work or as a supplement to classroom activities.

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