

THE TECHNIQUES FOR USING PODCASTS TO DEVELOP LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract. *This article examines pedagogical techniques for integrating podcasts into foreign language instruction to foster listening comprehension and speaking proficiency. Drawing on empirical research and pedagogical frameworks, it proposes strategies for designing, implementing, and evaluating podcast-based activities in language classrooms. The study highlights the potential of podcasts to provide authentic, flexible, and learner-centered input, and offers practical recommendations for teachers. The findings suggest that systematic use of podcasts supports both receptive (listening) and productive (speaking) skills development.*

Keywords: *podcasts; listening comprehension; speaking skills; foreign language teaching; digital pedagogy; autonomous learning*

INTRODUCTION.

In recent years, the use of digital technologies in foreign language pedagogy has expanded dramatically. Among these, podcasts have emerged as a particularly promising medium for language learning. Several studies indicate that podcasts offer authentic input, exposure to varied accents and speech rates, and opportunities for repeated listening, making them well-suited for developing listening comprehension.

In the context of “lingvodidaktika” (language didactics), integrating podcasts aligns with modern trends emphasizing learner autonomy, authentic materials, and blended learning. This article outlines a methodology for using podcasts in foreign-language classes, describes practical techniques, and discusses empirical evidence on their effectiveness.

This article is a theoretical empirical synthesis, drawing on peer-reviewed studies, systematic literature reviews, and action research. Key sources include:

1. Empirical studies in which podcasts were used to teach listening and speaking
2. Systematic reviews of podcast use in listening pedagogy
3. Theoretical and pedagogical discussions on the affordances of podcasting technology in language teaching

Based on these sources, I identify and analyze nine pedagogical techniques (see Results), classify them by skill focus (listening, speaking, or both), and discuss practical implementation and potential challenges.

From the literature, the following techniques emerge as effective for using podcasts to develop listening and speaking skills:

1. Extensive listening outside class
 - o Encourage learners to regularly listen to podcasts on topics of personal interest, for instance through assignments or listening logs. In a study by Gönülal (2020), EFL learners spent about one hour per week listening to podcasts or vodcasts, resulting in significant gains in listening proficiency, pronunciation, and vocabulary.
 - o This autonomous, on-demand listening supports learner motivation and input-rich exposure.

2. Controlled listening in class with scaffolding

o Teachers select podcast episodes and scaffold listening via pre listening tasks (e.g., prediction, vocabulary pre-teach), while allowing students to pause, rewind, and replay difficult parts. This control helps learners process authentic speech at their own pace.

o Such scaffolding reduces comprehension load and builds listening confidence.

3. Metacognitive listening journals / logs

o Learners keep listening journals where they reflect on comprehension difficulties, strategies (e.g., note-taking, predicting), and new vocabulary. In Gönülal's study, listening logs were used to track progress and self-evaluate

o Metacognitive reflection deepens listening awareness and supports strategy development.

The integration of podcasts into foreign language teaching offers a multifaceted approach to enhancing both listening and speaking skills. Unlike traditional classroom audio materials, podcasts provide authentic, real-world language input that encompasses natural speech patterns, idiomatic expressions, and culturally relevant content. This authentic exposure is particularly crucial for developing listening comprehension, as learners encounter the variability inherent in natural speech, such as variations in accent, intonation, pace, and register. Research indicates that students exposed to such authentic audio sources demonstrate improved comprehension of spoken language in varied contexts, as compared to those who rely solely on textbook dialogues or teacher-led listening exercises [1][2]

Podcasts also contribute significantly to learner autonomy. The on-demand and portable nature of podcast content allows students to control when, where, and how they engage with language input. This flexibility aligns with principles of learner-centered pedagogy, where learners take responsibility for their own learning process [3][4]. Autonomous listening not only increases exposure time but also encourages students to self-monitor comprehension, practice repetition, and revisit challenging segments independently. [1].

Beyond passive listening, podcasts can be leveraged to develop speaking skills through structured follow-up activities. Shadowing, for instance, involves learners repeating words, phrases, and sentences immediately after or simultaneously with the speaker, thereby reinforcing pronunciation, rhythm, stress patterns, and intonation [5]. This technique has been shown to improve both fluency and pronunciation accuracy, as it engages motor memory and auditory feedback simultaneously.

The production of learner-created podcasts is another powerful approach that bridges listening and speaking skills. When learners create their own audio content, they engage in planning, drafting, recording, and self-evaluating their spoken output. This process enhances their ability to organize thoughts in the target language, apply appropriate linguistic structures, and adopt clear articulation and intonation patterns [6]. Research by Suseno (2024) indicates that learner-produced podcasts contribute to higher levels of language retention and confidence in speaking, as students actively apply knowledge gained through listening in a self-directed and meaningful manner [2].

From a pedagogical perspective, podcasts offer opportunities for both skill integration and differentiated instruction. Teachers can select episodes aligned with learners' proficiency levels, interests, and cultural backgrounds, thereby ensuring engagement and comprehension [7]. For lower-level learners, shorter and slower-paced podcasts with familiar vocabulary can provide manageable input, while advanced learners can benefit from longer, more complex episodes featuring diverse accents and idiomatic expressions

A crucial advantage of podcasts lies in their potential to cultivate metacognitive listening strategies. By keeping listening journals or logs, students reflect on comprehension difficulties, note strategies used, and track progress over time [9]. Such metacognitive engagement encourages learners to identify patterns of misunderstanding, anticipate challenges. For instance, a student who notices recurring difficulties with fast speech may adopt techniques such as pausing, segmenting, or shadowing to enhance comprehension.

The assessment of skills developed through podcasts also presents unique considerations. However, assessing speaking skills resulting from podcast-based activities, such as shadowing, role-play, or learner-produced podcasts, requires more nuanced evaluation tools that consider fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and

pragmatic competence [6].

Conclusion

Podcasts offer a flexible, authentic, and engaging medium for improving both listening and speaking skills in foreign-language education. The nine techniques identified in this article — ranging from extensive out of class listening to student produced podcasts — provide a pedagogically sound framework for integrating podcasts in language teaching. Empirical studies (e.g., Gönülal, 2020; Bella, 2024; Suseno, 2024; Lutfi et al., 2024) strongly support their effectiveness.

However, effective implementation requires thoughtful design: selecting appropriate content, scaffolding the listening process, combining listening with productive speaking tasks, and supporting learner autonomy.

Future research could explore longitudinal effects of podcast use, compare different genres (narrative vs conversational), and examine how peer interaction (e.g., collaborative podcast creation) impacts speaking development

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