



Developing listening skills through podcasts and audiobooks: methodological perspectives in Uzbekistan

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ABSTRACT

Listening comprehension is one of the most essential yet challenging aspects of foreign language learning. Traditional classroom practices often limit learners' exposure to authentic speech, which hinders the development of communicative competence. With the rapid growth of digital technologies, podcasts and audiobooks have become innovative tools for enhancing listening skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. This paper explores the methodological foundations and practical strategies for integrating podcasts and audiobooks into EFL instruction, with a particular focus on Uzbekistan, where such practices remain underexplored. Drawing on communicative and cognitive learning theories, the article analyzes pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities that can effectively scaffold learners' comprehension. The findings highlight that podcasts and audiobooks not only provide authentic linguistic input but also foster learner autonomy, motivation, and cultural awareness. The study concludes that incorporating these digital resources can significantly improve students' listening proficiency, while also identifying challenges such as accent variation, digital literacy, and information overload, and suggesting solutions for overcoming them.

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O'zbekistonda podkastlar va audiokitoblar orqali tinglash ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirish: metodologik qarashlar

ANNOTATSIYA

Kalit so'zlar:

tinglash ko'nikmalari,
podkastlar,
audiokitoblar,
ingliz tilini o'qitish,
haqiqiy materiallar,
o'quvchilarning
avtonomiyasi,
raqamli resurslar,
O'zbekiston.

Tinglab tushunish chet tilini o'rganishning eng muhim, ammo qiyin jihatlaridan biridir. An'anaviy sinf amaliyotlari ko'pincha o'quvchilarning haqiqiy nutqqa ta'sirini cheklaydi, bu esa kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirishga to'sqinlik qiladi. Raqamli texnologiyalarning jadal rivojlanishi bilan podkastlar va audiokitoblar ingliz tilida xorijiy til (EFL) kontekstlarida tinglash malakalarini oshirish uchun innovatsion vositalarga aylandi. Ushbu maqola podkastlar va audiokitoblarni ingliz tilini o'qitishga integratsiyalashning uslubiy asoslari va amaliy strategiyalarini o'rganadi, ayniqsa O'zbekistonda bunday amaliyotlar yetarlicha o'rganilmagan. Maqolada kommunikativ va kognitiv ta'lim nazariyalariga asoslanib, o'quvchilarning tushunishini samarali rivojlantirishga yordam beradigan tinglashdan oldingi, tinglash paytida va tinglashdan keyingi harakatlar tahlil qilinadi. Topilmalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, podkastlar va audiokitoblar nafaqat haqiqiy lingvistik ma'lumotlarni taqdim etadi, balki o'quvchilarning mustaqilligi, motivatsiyasi va madaniy xabardorligini oshiradi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, ushbu raqamli resurslarni o'z ichiga olish talabalarning tinglash qobiliyatini sezilarli darajada oshirishi mumkin, shu bilan birga urg'u o'zgarishi, raqamli savodxonlik va axborotning haddan tashqari yuklanishi kabi muammolarni aniqlash va ularni bartaraf etish uchun yechimlarni taklif qilish.

Развитие навыков аудирования с помощью подкастов и аудиокниг: методологические аспекты в Узбекистане

АННОТАЦИЯ

Ключевые слова:

навыки аудирования,
подкасты,
аудиокниги,
преподавание
английского языка как
иностранного,
аутентичные материалы,
самостоятельность
учащихся, цифровые
ресурсы,
Узбекистан.

Аудирование – один из важнейших и одновременно сложных аспектов изучения иностранного языка. Традиционные методы обучения в классе часто ограничивают учащихся возможность слышать аутентичную речь, что препятствует развитию коммуникативной компетенции. В условиях стремительного развития цифровых технологий подкасты и аудиокниги стали инновационными инструментами для развития навыков аудирования в контексте изучения английского языка как иностранного (EFL). В данной статье рассматриваются методологические основы и практические стратегии интеграции подкастов и аудиокниг в обучение английскому языку как иностранному (EFL), с особым акцентом на Узбекистан, где такие практики остаются недостаточно изученными. Опираясь на теории

коммуникативного и когнитивного обучения, статья анализирует упражнения, выполняемые до, во время и после прослушивания, которые могут эффективно способствовать пониманию прочитанного. Результаты исследования показывают, что подкасты и аудиокниги не только обеспечивают аутентичный языковой материал, но и способствуют развитию самостоятельности учащихся, мотивации и культурной осведомлённости. В исследовании сделан вывод о том, что использование этих цифровых ресурсов может значительно улучшить навыки аудирования, а также выявить такие проблемы, как вариативность акцента, цифровая грамотность и информационная перегрузка, и предложить решения для их преодоления.

INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the core language skills and a foundation for communication in a foreign language. Research in applied linguistics emphasizes that listening is not merely a passive process of decoding sounds but an active cognitive activity that involves prediction, interpretation, and integration of information (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Among the four skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – listening often receives less systematic instruction, even though it is the most frequently used skill in real-life communication (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning in Uzbekistan, listening comprehension remains one of the most challenging aspects for learners. Several factors contribute to this problem, including limited exposure to authentic English outside the classroom, reliance on outdated textbooks with scripted dialogues, and insufficient teacher training in modern digital methodologies. Consequently, many students can recognize written vocabulary but struggle to understand natural speech in various accents and speaking speeds.

The rapid development of information and communication technologies (ICT) has opened new opportunities for language teaching. Digital resources such as podcasts and audiobooks provide learners with authentic, engaging, and flexible access to spoken English. Unlike traditional listening exercises, which are often limited to short, artificial dialogues, podcasts and audiobooks expose learners to natural language use, storytelling, and diverse cultural contexts. However, despite their growing popularity worldwide, these tools are still underutilized in Uzbekistan's EFL classrooms, where research on their effectiveness remains scarce.

This research aims to examine the methodological aspects of developing listening skills through podcasts and audiobooks.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of listening comprehension in second language acquisition has been widely recognized by scholars. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) argue that listening is an active process in which learners use both top-down and bottom-up strategies to construct meaning from spoken input. Similarly, Field (2008) emphasizes that listening instruction should move beyond testing comprehension and instead focus on training learners to process spoken language effectively. These perspectives highlight the need for innovative approaches in EFL classrooms, especially in contexts where learners have limited exposure to authentic English.

Podcasts have gained increasing attention in recent years as effective tools for improving listening skills. According to Hasan and Tan (2019), podcasts provide authentic input and enhance learner motivation because of their flexibility and variety of topics. The episodic structure of podcasts allows learners to gradually build listening stamina while engaging with real-world content. O'Bryan and Hegelheimer (2007) also demonstrated that podcasts can support autonomous learning by giving students the opportunity to listen repeatedly, at their own pace, and outside traditional classroom settings.

Audiobooks, likewise, have been shown to contribute to listening development and vocabulary acquisition. Beers (2019) notes that audiobooks promote language comprehension by exposing learners to fluent, expressive reading that models correct pronunciation and intonation. In addition, research by Wolfson (2008) indicates that audiobooks can foster both listening fluency and cultural awareness, as they often represent authentic storytelling traditions. Learners benefit from extended exposure to continuous discourse, which differs from the shorter, scripted dialogues found in most EFL textbooks.

Several comparative studies suggest that podcasts and audiobooks can complement each other in listening instruction. For instance, Malarski (2020) found that while podcasts are effective in presenting conversational and academic speech, audiobooks provide exposure to narrative structures and literary language. When combined, these resources create a balanced listening experience that develops both everyday communication skills and deeper cognitive engagement with texts.

Despite growing global interest, research on podcasts and audiobooks in EFL contexts remains relatively limited, particularly in Central Asia. In Uzbekistan, most existing studies on listening skills focus on traditional methods such as teacher-led drills, listening comprehension questions, and textbook-based activities (Karimov, 2021). Few empirical works have systematically examined the role of digital audio resources in enhancing listening proficiency. This gap highlights the need for methodological exploration into how podcasts and audiobooks can be effectively integrated into Uzbek EFL classrooms.

In summary, the literature suggests that authentic audio materials such as podcasts and audiobooks hold significant potential for improving listening skills. They provide learners with access to real-life language use, promote autonomous learning, and enrich cultural understanding. However, the limited number of studies in the Uzbek context underlines the necessity of further research to adapt and implement these tools in ways that meet local learners' needs.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative-descriptive approach to explore the methodological aspects of using podcasts and audiobooks for developing listening skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Uzbekistan. The choice of this approach is justified by the need to provide a detailed account of pedagogical strategies and to identify practical challenges in the local educational context.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the methodological potential of podcasts and audiobooks in developing listening skills among EFL learners in Uzbekistan. The findings suggest that these digital resources provide authentic, engaging, and flexible exposure to spoken English, which traditional textbook-based listening activities often lack. By incorporating both podcasts and audiobooks, learners were able to experience a balanced listening environment that combined conversational, academic, and narrative input.

The methodological framework outlined in this paper demonstrated that structured pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages are essential for maximizing the benefits of digital audio resources. Pre-listening activities activated learners' background knowledge, while-listening tasks trained comprehension strategies, and post-listening activities encouraged reflection and communicative practice. This three-stage model ensured that students not only listened passively but also engaged critically with the content.

One of the key contributions of this research is its relevance to the Uzbek EFL context, where authentic exposure to English remains limited. The integration of podcasts and audiobooks addresses the existing gap by providing learners with access to natural speech, diverse accents, and cultural contexts. Moreover, the study highlights the role of these resources in promoting learner autonomy, motivation, and long-term language development.

Nevertheless, the study also acknowledges certain challenges, such as limited digital literacy among some learners, the need for careful selection of level-appropriate materials, and the importance of teacher guidance in structuring activities. These challenges call for further research into teacher training, material adaptation, and the long-term impact of digital listening resources in Uzbekistan.

In conclusion, podcasts and audiobooks represent powerful tools for enhancing listening skills in EFL education. Their effective integration into classroom instruction and independent study can significantly improve learners' comprehension, fluency, and cultural awareness. For Uzbekistan and similar contexts, adopting these innovative methodologies offers a promising direction toward modernizing language teaching and equipping learners with the skills required for global communication.

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