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## **DEVELOPING SPEAKING AND LISTENING THROUGH PODCASTS**

**Abstract.** This article is devoted to studying the effectiveness of using podcasts in teaching English to master's students. The paper explores the concept of podcasting, its origin, and its features in the context of foreign language education. The author emphasizes that podcasts are primarily an audio format containing authentic speech samples, which can be used to develop both receptive and productive skills. It is noted that podcasts allow learners to independently choose the topic, pace, and format of study, which contributes to increased motivation and learner autonomy. The experimental part of the study was conducted among 30 second-year master's students at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. The participants were divided into two groups: experimental and control, with 15 students in each. Over the course of four weeks, the students in the experimental group listened to English-language podcasts three times a week and completed tasks aimed at developing listening and speaking skills.

**Keywords:** podcasts, listening, speaking, master's students, digital technologies, ICT, language learning.

### **Introduction**

English as a global language is recognized as one of the most widely spoken in the world. Being an international language, it plays an important role in uniting people who speak different languages. Therefore, foreigners all over the world strive to learn English. Theoretically, learning English involves mastering four basic skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Since speaking and writing are aimed at creating a text, they are productive skills, and reading and listening are receptive skills, since they are associated with the perception of information. Both are important, but productive skills are considered fundamental, since they contribute to the active acquisition of the language. Thus, speaking can be called one of the most important skills in mastering the English language. Currently, there are a huge number of tools and methods for teaching listening and speaking skills. With the development of information technology and the Internet, new opportunities have appeared for learning English using the podcast service (Alfa, 2020). The term "podcasting" comes from iPod and broadcasting and is the process of creating and distributing audio and video files (podcasts) in the style of radio and television broadcasts on the Internet (Internet broadcasting). As a rule, podcasts have a specific topic and frequency of publication. Podcasts have become popular all over the world due to their varied content, easy access, and compact format. They allow people to receive information and share it (Alsmadi et al., 2020). Podcasts are mainly audio conversations between people without visual accompaniment. Over time, podcasts with visual content have also appeared, such as those of bloggers on YouTube. Abdulrahman et al. emphasize that podcasts are audio and video broadcasts available for downloading and playing on mobile devices. They have become a useful means of receiving news and knowledge. Unlike radio, podcasts allow the listener to independently select the content of interest to him. Initially, podcasts were created for information and entertainment, but soon found wide application in education. Numerous studies have proven the effectiveness of technology in teaching English. Podcasts are effective in developing speaking and listening skills in Indonesian students

because they contain authentic content, support autonomous learning, build confidence, and promote active learning (Odaryuk & Gamparzumov, 2020)..

The development of information and communication technologies in education opens up new opportunities for language teaching. Particular attention in the last decade has been paid to podcasts as a means of increasing motivation and developing communicative competence. The relevance of the study is due to the need to improve the effectiveness of language training for master's students in the context of the digital transformation of education (Anggraini & Hartati, 2022).

### **Materials and methods**

The study involved 30 second-year master's students of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University majoring in English (15 in the experimental group and 15 in the control group). The experiment lasted 4 weeks. Master's students in the experimental group listened to thematic English-language podcasts 3 times a week and completed assignments (summary writing, oral summary, debates). In the control group, traditional audio materials from the teaching and methodological kit were used.

The study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to ensure a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of podcast-based instruction in developing speaking and listening skills among master's students.

Questionnaires administered before and after the experiment served as the primary tool for evaluating changes in students' attitudes, motivation, and self-assessment of language skills. The pre-experimental questionnaire aimed to identify the baseline level of interest in podcasts, confidence in listening comprehension, and perceived speaking ability. The post-experimental questionnaire was designed to capture shifts in these indicators following four weeks of systematic exposure to podcast-based learning. The comparison of pre- and post-intervention data enabled the identification of changes in learners' motivation and self-perceived competence.

Analysis of oral responses was conducted throughout the experimental period during classroom activities, including oral summaries, discussions, and debates based on podcast content. This method allowed for the evaluation of students' speaking performance across several criteria, such as fluency, pronunciation, coherence, and argumentation. The oral responses of students in both experimental and control groups were comparatively analyzed to determine the impact of podcast integration on productive language skills.

Listening testing was used to objectively assess the development of receptive skills. Standardized listening tasks were administered before and after the experiment, with results measured on a 10-point scale. The tests evaluated students' ability to comprehend authentic English speech, identify key information, and interpret meaning in context. This approach provided measurable evidence of improvement in listening comprehension as a result of regular exposure to podcast materials.

Finally, statistical data processing was applied to analyze the collected data and ensure the reliability of the results. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize questionnaire responses and test scores, while comparative analysis of pre- and post-experimental results allowed for the identification of significant changes. The performance of the experimental and control groups was also compared to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data ensured a robust and evidence-based evaluation of the proposed teaching methodology.

### **Results and discussion**

Podcasts provide an opportunity to optimize the learning process due to the creativity of both the teacher and the graduate students. The use of podcasts in the learning process

contributes to the comprehensive development of students. Graduate students can act in various roles when working with podcasts: as recipients, when they listen to a podcast and complete tasks compiled by the teacher to understand what they heard; and as creators within the framework of a productive approach, when they independently create and post their “author’s” podcast on the Internet (Odinokaya & Nesvetova, 2017).

Working with a podcast, when graduate students act as recipients, is absolutely no different from the traditional form of organizing the formation of listening skills and also includes three stages: before, during and after listening.

The results of the graduate students' survey showed the following:

**Figure 1**  
*Level of Interest and Confidence*

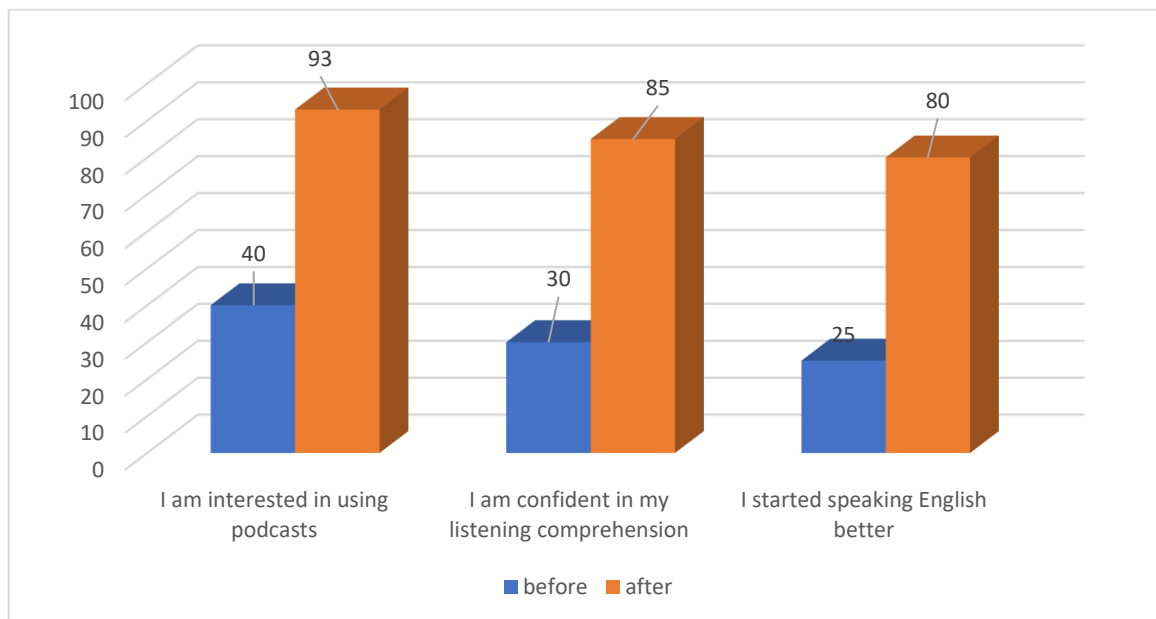


Figure 1 shows the change in respondents' attitudes and skills before and after using podcasts in learning English. After the introduction of podcasts, interest in them increased significantly: if before using them only about 40% of respondents showed interest, then after - already 93%. This indicates high involvement and a positive perception of this format of learning. Students' confidence in perceiving English speech by ear also increased significantly: before using podcasts, about 30% of participants expressed confidence, and after - about 85%. This suggests that regular listening to podcasts helps develop listening. In addition, the use of podcasts had a positive effect on speaking English: if before only about 25% of respondents believed that they spoke well, then after - already about 80%. Thus, podcasts have a complex positive effect on learning English, increasing both the interest and practical skills of students (Camelia et al., 2021).

**Figure 2**  
*Listening test results on a scale of 0 to 10*

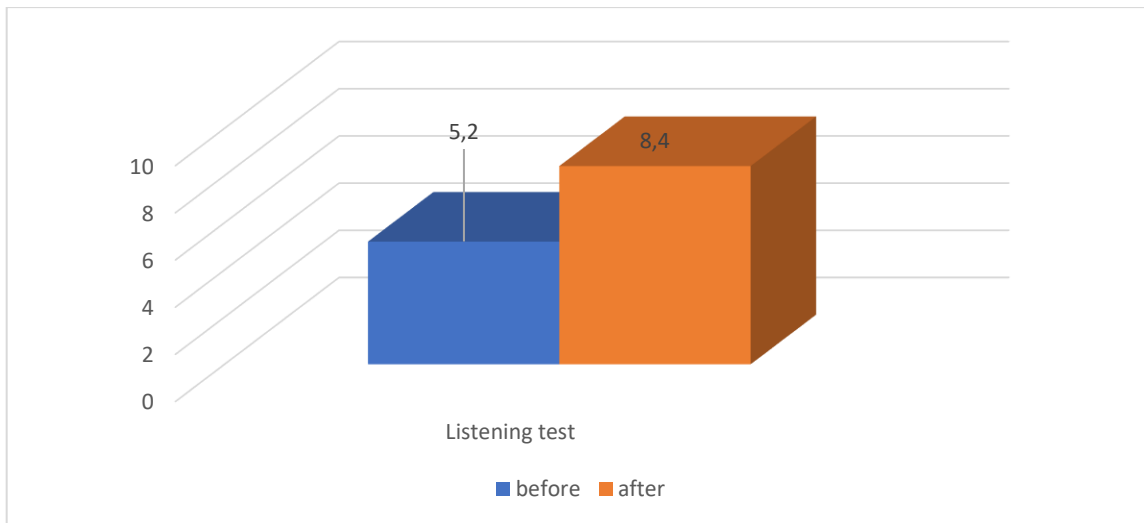


Figure 2 illustrates the listening test results before and after using podcasts. On a scale of 0 to 10, the average score before working with podcasts was 5.2, while after it was 8.4. This means a significant increase in the level of listening comprehension of English speech. An increase of almost 3.2 points indicates that podcasts had a noticeable positive impact on the development of listening skills. Thus, it can be concluded that listening to authentic materials contributes to a more effective perception of English speech (Kolker, 2002).

**Figure 3**  
*Speaking Skills Development Results on a Scale from 0 to 10*

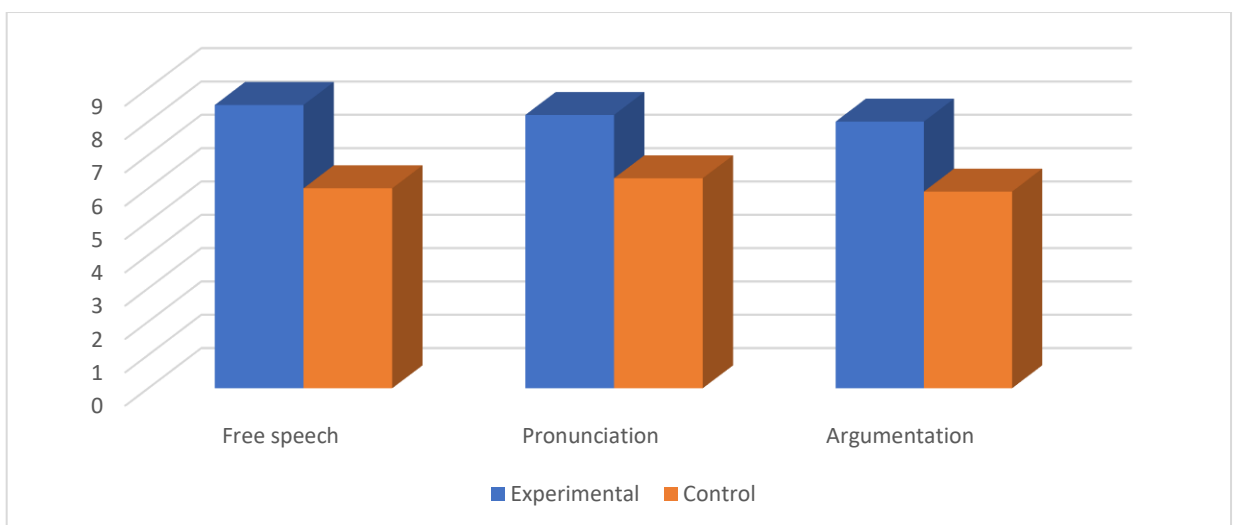


Figure 3 compares the results of the two groups, the experimental and the control, in three aspects of oral speech: fluency, pronunciation, and argumentation. The assessment was conducted on a scale from 0 to 10. In all three categories, the experimental group showed higher results compared to the control group. In fluency, the experimental group scored about 8.5

points, while the control group scored about 6. This indicates a higher ability to freely express their thoughts in those who participated in the experiment (probably associated with the use of podcasts or other methods) (Dewaele, 2019).

In pronunciation, the experimental group scored about 8.2 points, while the control group scored 6.3. This shows that the pronunciation work in the experimental group was more effective. As for argumentation, there is also a noticeable difference: about 8 points for the experimental group versus 5.9 for the control group. This indicates that students from the experimental group were better at formulating and justifying their thoughts.

Overall, these diagrams demonstrate a clear advantage of the experimental group in all indicators, which indicates a positive impact of the teaching method used in it (Ediyani et al., 2020).

The use of podcasts had a positive impact on master's students in the process of learning English. Firstly, podcasts significantly increased interest in the learning process, making it more exciting and motivating. Authentic audio materials contributed to engagement and allowed students to immerse themselves in a real language environment. Secondly, regular listening to podcasts improved listening skills. Master's students became more confident in understanding English speech at a natural pace and with various accents, which is especially important for successful communication in an academic and professional environment. Thirdly, listening and analyzing podcasts contributed to the development of oral speech. Students began to speak more freely, expressively and competently. Pronunciation improved, vocabulary expanded, and the ability to logically construct arguments and formulate thoughts increased. As a result, podcasts became an effective tool for the comprehensive development of master's degree students' communication skills (Giawa, 2022).

### **Conclusions**

The study confirmed the high efficiency of using podcasts in teaching English to master's degree students. In the context of digitalization of education and the rapid development of information technology, podcasts are becoming one of the most relevant and accessible tools for developing language competence. They allow integrating learning into the daily life of students, creating conditions for continuous, autonomous and conscious language learning.

An analysis of the experimental work results showed that listening to podcasts contributes to the development of several key skills at once. Firstly, receptive skills, especially listening, improve significantly. Master's degree students begin to better perceive speech by ear, understand various accents and features of live conversational English, which is especially important for future specialists in the field of linguistics and intercultural communication. Secondly, podcasts have a positive effect on productive skills - speaking, pronunciation, argumentation. Working with podcasts, especially in combination with oral summarizing tasks, participating in debates or creating your own podcasts, develops fluency, expands vocabulary and improves the logic and coherence of statements.

In addition to language skills, podcasts help increase learning motivation. Master's students show greater interest in classes, become more active, begin to realize the value of authentic materials and their application in real life. This allows for more personalized and adaptive learning. A comparative analysis of the control and experimental groups also demonstrated a significant superiority of the latter in all assessment criteria. This indicates that traditional approaches are inferior to modern digital formats in terms of engagement and effectiveness of material acquisition.

Thus, we can conclude that podcasts are a powerful tool not only for improving individual language skills, but also for developing general communicative competence. Their use in educational practice of the Master's degree program is appropriate and necessary in the conditions of the modern digital educational environment.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

### Author Contributions

Meruert Akbergenova, Marina Zhambylkyzy, and Nurettin Demir contributed equally to this work. All authors were involved in the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results. All authors participated in writing, reviewing, and editing the manuscript and approved the final version for publication.

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