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THE ROLE AND PLACE OF STUDENT-MADE PODCASTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Abstract. This article examines the problematic issues that arise when middle-level students create podcasts. In addition to highlighting some pedagogical aspects, the article describes the main advantages of using this format for mastering language skills. Proceeding from this, it is advisable to support the theoretical part - the practical one, which describes the results of the system of lessons and survey, which contribute to determining the place of podcasting in the methodology of teaching English.

Keywords: linguistics, teaching, English, listening, podcast, digital generation, student-centered approach.

Interactive and digital learning formats using the Internet and mobile devices: smartphones, tablets, laptops - have changed the traditional methods of conducting English lessons not only in terms of space and time, but also in terms of a variety of learning opportunities. This is important, especially nowadays, because in the digital age, students are no longer passive consumers of information, they now have numerous opportunities to actively create content and share it with others. The learning opportunities that have emerged in the digital age include a variety of learning approaches and tools that focus on learners and change traditional teaching concepts. The use of podcasts in the classroom and beyond is one such innovative tool that has generated increased interest in the field of language learning.

A podcast is a digital audio or video file that is created and then uploaded to an online platform so that other users can hear it. Based on this, the podcast is part of the paradigm of mobile language learning (MALL- Mobile assisted language learning). Using mobile devices gives students the opportunity to gain and master knowledge anytime and anywhere, alone or with other students. It is believed that the use of podcasts in teaching a foreign language contributes to the development and formation of motivation and involvement, cognition and independence of students [4, p. 26].

Podcasts are a form of person-centered learning that can be adapted to the individual needs of students and extend learning beyond the classroom. However, despite the fact that many studies have been conducted to examine the effectiveness of podcasts prepared by teachers (for example, the presentation of educational material through an audio or video file), there is a significant gap in research devoted to the study of podcasts created directly by students. This form of working with podcasts can also be actively used in the methodology of teaching English [3, p. 29]. Thus, the article explores the advantages and problems of podcasts created by students in language learning.

Audio podcasts have long been used in language learning as a unidirectional format for transmitting information - from teacher to students. Similarly, they have long been used in language learning in order to promote authentic listening practice, complementing textbooks and other teaching aids.

Podcasts provide language learners with a wide range of real-world situations that give them many opportunities to study speech, speaker, sentence structure, and lexical component [5, p. 483]. However, the idea of student-generated podcasts has only been gaining momentum in recent years, as teachers have begun to see the huge potential it offers more recently. Creating podcasts requires students to possess a number of skills, including information analysis, creating a plan, writing and editing a script, as well as constant development of auditory-pronunciation skills and speech. In addition, podcasts prepared by students are aimed at the formation and improvement of some personality-oriented qualities such as motivation and confidence. Motivation is important for any type of learning, because the student will not put strength and energy into his activity if he realizes that it does not bring the expected results. The better the level of language proficiency, the higher the level of motivation should be. Beginning students can achieve a basic level of communication skills in a relatively short period. However, as language skills develop, they usually feel that the process of improving these skills is significantly reduced, which leads to a loss of interest in learning. New multimedia applications, such as podcasting, open up opportunities for

innovative methodological developments that are student-oriented and can adapt learning to their needs.

So, using podcasts in education can increase intrinsic motivation. Unlike external motivation, which is aimed at good grades as a reward, internal motivation is important primarily for the student himself, and the more difficult and exciting the tasks, the more interesting it is to overcome them [2, p. 222].

In addition to the novelty factor, students may also feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility when creating their own podcasts. When students are invited to share their podcasts with others, they put more effort and attention to detail because they know that other students will hear their work. Podcasting can be a very powerful tool that helps improve student interaction in the classroom by developing the skills needed to achieve a common goal.

Podcasts can enhance students' reflexive processes by forcing them to identify, plan, and control their thinking and learning as they create them.

The deliberate multi-step process of creating a podcast also helps students develop an understanding of key aspects of the language they are learning that they often overlook. During a conversation, students usually have difficulty hearing their own pronunciation mistakes. Paralinguistic phenomena such as stuttering, pausing, changes in pitch, tempo and power of voice make communication authentic and natural, so students should know different intonation systems in a foreign language. When recording a podcast, students should practice and rehearse the script several times, because any skill becomes solid if they practice it constantly. In addition, listening to their own recordings helps students identify language errors, especially in pronunciation and grammar, and promotes self-improvement, and comparing their own work with the work of others can give students a valuable look at their own abilities and inspire them to do something new.

When creating podcasts, digital literacy skills are also acquired, which are necessary in modern society. Teachers should adapt their learning style to the needs of the digital generation and communicate in the language of their students [1, p. 285]. Today's schoolchildren, who were born after 2000, are often characterized as generation-Z, which thinks and processes information in a fundamentally different way. They differ from generation-Y in that they grew up on technology and have been involved in the digital space since childhood, so it is easier for them to work with this material.

To support the theoretical part of the article with evidence of all the above, we conducted a survey and a system of lessons on creating podcasts among students in grades 7-8 attending an English language course at an additional education institution

in Ishim. The main purpose of the study was to study students' perception of the educational value of the podcast creation process. The program, according to which training is conducted at this institution, is aimed at the comprehensive formation of a communicative component with an emphasis on the personality of the student, therefore it is advisable to introduce a constant practice of creating podcasts, which will solve these tasks and give the learning process novelty. Before conducting the survey, a system of lessons on the topic "Daily routines and activities" was tested with a group of students, during each lesson, students worked with a teacher on the above topic, and as a control, each student was asked to create a podcast where they would talk about their daily routine. Each student demonstrated the created podcast at the final lesson, and other students had to ask two questions about what they had listened to. As a result, there was an active interest of each student both in the podcast production process and in the process of listening to it, which is very rarely observed during listening to an audio recording according to the methodological manual. When creating the podcast, students used their mobile phones and audio and video editing programs such as Nero Video, Super Sound, Audio Lab and others.

To assess the perception of the new method, an online survey was conducted on the Google platform. 10 students aged 13 to 15 took part in the survey.

As for the content of the survey, the first part included general questions about age, gender, and the general use of technology (how often a student uses a phone, computer; how much time a day he spends on social networks; what social media accounts a student has; does he like that new technologies have been actively introduced in schools, etc.) The second part of the survey focused on the question of how high the level of acceptance and interest in podcast creation activities is. The survey collected both quantitative and qualitative data and included both choice and detailed answer questions.

The survey gathered information about students' digital competence, their attitude to computers and digital technologies, their confidence in them, as well as the perceived learning benefits of creating podcasts. Of the 10 participants, almost all (100%) had social media accounts, with VK (100%) and Instagram (60%) being the most popular networks. The absolute majority of students (100%) also indicated that they are confident in using digital technologies, and indicated that they have a positive attitude towards new learning technologies. However, none of the students involved in this study had ever experienced the process of creating podcasts as part of a general education program before, and many of them needed constant guidance throughout the process. This novelty factor caused most students to feel uneasy about not

knowing the technology. Moreover, many students were not sure that they would be able to record their speech in English at the proper level.

In addition, the majority of students (80%) found creating podcasts to be a time-consuming process. This was confirmed in the detailed answer questions, where some comments related to mixed feelings about the difficulty of the tasks, but at the same time, they pointed out that when creating a podcast one more time, they would know how to work, which would help them avoid some difficulties. Another notable factor that emerged when listening to recordings in the classroom was that the students did not like the sound of their recorded voice. To assess the group's attitude to this problem, a question was included on this issue, and 70% of the students indicated that they did not like the sound of their voice on the recording. This is not surprising. The recorded sound is different because it is more isolated, and most people do not listen to the recording of their voice enough, so it takes practice to get used to it. The more often people hear their own voice, the more they get used to it, and it would be interesting to see how students answer this question after completing several podcast assignments over a longer period of time.

The survey results show that in addition to increasing confidence in technology, the experience of creating podcasts can also increase students' self-confidence in those moments when they are afraid to speak English in class. In the survey, 70% of respondents said that less self-confident students benefit from podcast assignments.

In the end, despite students' initial caution about using podcasting technology, 90% agreed that creating their own podcasts is a valuable and interesting learning experience.

Based on this study, the following conclusions can be drawn. Assignments aimed at creating their own podcast by students open up great prospects for the development of language training skills due to the cognitive processes involved in their creation. In addition, podcasting can be a valuable means for students to express thoughts and ideas, share points of view and views. Despite the high potential, it is important to recognize that the introduction of new technologies can be a difficult task for both teachers and students. Teachers should be well versed in technology in order to give adequate recommendations on the use of new technologies and arouse the interest of students.

As the results of this study confirm, the digital generation has a lot of experience in consuming digital content, but they are not so good at creating it. Thus, teachers should be prepared to offer guidance and support to students. In this case, the task was simple (thanks to advances in free audio recording software), but the students still needed support and guidance from the teacher. Fortunately, the survey results show

that students can overcome obstacles relatively quickly if they are given proper support. Therefore, it is important that teachers strive to reduce fear and normalize the attitude of students towards the use of technology in the classroom.

Finally, it is important to note that when including podcast creation tasks in the educational program, the emphasis should be based on the real goals and learning outcomes and not on the podcasting environment itself. Podcasting is not a panacea for all problems, it should be considered as one of the many different digital learning tools. Thus, podcasts created by students offer a very flexible and interesting option for students and teachers to interact in the digital age.

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