

**LEARN LANGUAGES IN THE FASTEST, EASIEST AND  
MOST FUN WAY: BY LISTENING TO PODCASTS**

**Introduction.** The role of the foreign languages is growing because of integration of Ukraine into the European Union and the expansion of international contacts. Moreover, qualitative language training of students is impossible without the use of modern educational technologies. Modern technologies include the use of information and telecommunication technologies; work with computer training programs in foreign languages, remote technologies, and Internet resources usage.

In this regard, the current state of the Internet technologies development provides more opportunities (both for teachers and for students) for use at lessons and in unsupervised work of students such modern way of learning and teaching foreign languages as *podcasting*.

**Objectives.** The main aim of this article – to determine and analyze the podcast method in learning process, to emphasize its advantages, to highlight the importance of listening authentic speech, provide basic information about the most popular podcasts, and give advice how to choose the one you need.

**Presenting main material.** A podcast or generically netcast is an episodic series of digital audio or video files, which a user can download in order to listen to. It is often available for subscription, so that new episodes are automatically downloaded via web syndication to the user's own local computer, mobile application, or portable media player.

Ben Hammersley (the Guardian columnist and BBC journalist who invented it in early February 2004 while «padding out» an article for The Guardian newspaper) originally suggested the word as a portmanteau (linguistic blend of words) of «iPod» (a brand of media player) and «broadcast». Over 50 million people listen to podcasts each month.

Not all of the students learn the same way. We all have different styles. For some people, writing out sentences and visually reading words is an excellent form of language study. Others learn best with images and pictures. Outgoing learners love to chat and learn through conversations. But every language learner has something to gain from podcasts. In the practice of a foreign language teaching/learning the following types of podcasts are distinguished:

- ***Authentic podcasts*** – audio files recorded by native speakers that were not created specifically for needs of teaching a foreign language.

- ***Tutorial podcasts*** are audio files recorded by the teachers, usually for their students. The aim of these podcasts are to help students master different aspects of language and language skills.

- ***Students' podcasts*** are audio files recorded as a result of individual or group students' projects.

Regardless of which type of podcast you listen, there are some unique benefits that they all have for language learners due to their convenient format. These are:

- 1. Multitasking.** Podcasts go where you go, and they are hand-free. You can listen without sacrificing any other activities. Listening while you go ahead, keep working on project, driving around town or drinking coffee. The simple fact that you can learn and listen around the clock is a great asset. Podcasts provide a way for the language learning to suit your lifestyle.

- 2. Cultural knowledge.** The knowledge of any language comes with culture. Through the cultural peculiarities, you will often be taught about the countries and their cultures, characters of native people, their lifestyles and relationships, their ways of thinking, their attitude to the world. It is common for the hosts and guests of language podcasts to dive deep into discussions of culture.

- 3. Pronunciation.** By listening to languages, you will find that your pronunciation of words will have improved immensely – you will start to pick

up all the correct sounds. Listening to podcasts will familiarize you with the native way of pronouncing vocabulary, and over time – with plenty of extensive listening – this will become second nature to you. Catherine Downey, a tutor from Best Essays, explains: «When listening to language learning podcasts, you're not investing huge efforts to learn. You are just listening and creating impressions. You get an idea of proper pronunciation. You learn new words and phrases, which you can note down. In addition, these are not your traditional language lessons. Podcasts are engaging and fun. That's why they work» [1].

As a rule, podcasts have a certain theme and periodicity of the publication. You can select the main genres of podcasts: *audio-videos, music, technique, comedy podcast, audiobooks, educational podcasts, news, politics, radio shows and shows, sports*.

Besides, podcasts are divided according to their complexity of the language knowledge: *elementary – pre-intermediate – intermediate – upper-intermediate – advance levels*.

For most of the more commonly learned languages, you will have plenty of podcast options, so it is important to choose the right one. Here are some important tips to consider:

1. Pay attention to the level of content. Podcasts may target beginning, intermediate or advanced students.
2. Consider what topics are covered. Some podcasts focus more on cultural lessons, while others focus on grammar rules.
3. Consider how often new podcasts are posted.
4. Consider the length of each podcast. Episode lengths vary from a couple minutes each to about 30 minutes each. If you only have a couple of minutes each day, select a short podcast. However, if you have a long commute, longer podcasts can help fill it up with language learning.

Among the advantages of using podcasts in teaching a foreign language, we can distinguish the following:

- the ability to work with authentic, always new information in a foreign language for improvement students' comprehension skills and speech activity;
- stimulating independent students' work in out of lessons time; promotion of intercultural interaction on the Internet;
- dipping in the real native speakers' communication, familiarity with their individual peculiarities from voice to accent;
- motivation increase in mastering foreign languages, etc. [2].

### **Popular language learning podcasts**

***The English We Speak.*** This is BBC's advance-level podcast for English language learners. BBC has a long and successful history of providing English language learning resources. With this podcast, you can focus on building idioms and expressions. When you know your grammar and you developed a relatively strong vocabulary, that is the aspect you should focus on. The podcast will give you a light conversation that involves one popular idiom. You will get new conversations to listen to each week. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>

***How Stuff Works.*** <https://www.stuffmedia.com/>

***Smart People Talk.*** These sites for advance-level students. They propose podcasts on professional themes and talks of famous outstanding people.

<https://www.smartpeoplepodcast.com/>

***6 Minute English.*** It's another one of BBC's podcasts. This one is more of an intermediate level. You get 6-minute episodes of daily situations that expose you to English language. The topics are cool. In addition to learning English, you will gain some general knowledge, too.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/>

***Learn English.*** If you want an English language learning podcast for beginners, this is the one. The vocabulary is simple and you will get free support material. The best method for learning is to download the transcript of an episode and read it as you listen to the podcast. <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/>

***Voice of America.*** It is an English language news and information service that provides a series of multi-genre programmes in English. In the audio section there is 1) a weekly global news programme; 2) a science documentary strand; 3) programmes about the history of America and American cultural life and 4) a series on American English idioms. All the programmes are narrated in English spoken at a slower speed than normal. Voice of America is a great addition to the language student's arsenal of learning tools as it adds variety to structured lessons and conversation-based tuition. As with conventional radio programmes, each podcast is divided into segments and uses music and sound effects to provide a rich audio experience.  
<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/z/4729>

***Audio English.*** This site is a real treasury of podcasts.  
<https://www.audioenglish.org/>

***Radiolingua.*** You can choose to learn different languages during your coffee break. Radiolingua offers podcasts and other learning materials in German, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, and French. The relaxed vibe of the podcasts will help you learn with no stress involved. <https://radiolingua.com/>

***Deutsche Welle.*** Offering brilliant language learning podcasts in German, Deutsche Welle is a little pocket of the internet packed full of resources for German learners. From news to motoring, fitness to football, there is something to suit everyone. If you're a beginner, try the Warum Nicht? or Radio D series to get you started. If you are more advanced Kultur.21 is worth checking out for its range of international topics, and is often presented in video format. The Deutsch Lernen section of the website is also worth a look for its huge range of materials for all levels. <https://www.dw.com/de/media-center/podcasts/s-100976>

***Learn French by Podcast.*** It offers nearly 200 thematic episodes. Most podcasts by Learn French by Podcast focus on current events, and each podcast introduces key vocabulary words related to the theme. Listening to these French podcasts based around current events won't only give you listening practice and

teach you more vocabulary, it will also help prepare you to hold conversations about issues that are currently relevant. <https://learnfrenchbypodcast.com/>

**Survival Phrases.** At this website, you'll find a collection of travel phrases in 27 languages, including Hebrew, Greek, German, Arabic, Portuguese, and many others. If you are learning a language because you want to travel to a specific country, then you will definitely find these language learning podcasts helpful. <https://www.survivalphrases.com/>

**News in Slow.** When you are trying to learn a language, the tutors usually recommend you to listen to the news. The news is presented in clear, grammatically correct language. The presenters do not use slang or overly intellectual language. They use words everyone can understand. Sometimes, however, it is difficult to keep track with them. With this podcast, available in French, Spanish, Italian and German, you will listen to current news in slower presentations. <https://www.newsinslow.com/>

**Business English Pod.** Here you will find 500 lessons covering essential Business English language and skills. [www.businessenglishpod.com](http://www.businessenglishpod.com)

**Listen and learn.** Listen, learn and teach English with pie: the podcast site for learners and teachers of English. <https://www.podcastsinenglish.com/>

**Grammar girl.** It provides audio lessons about grammar rules for beginners. <https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl>

### **Podcasts for foreign students**

**Ukrainian lessons.** This website for foreign students who learn Ukrainian. Here you will find good-quality and useful Ukrainian lessons online. You can also enjoy learning Ukrainian listening to almost 100 episodes of the Ukrainian Lessons Podcast, as well as check articles on our Blog to learn Vocabulary, Grammar, and Songs. <https://www.ukrainianlessons.com/>

**Ukrainian as a foreign language.** <http://www.ukma.edu.ua/eng/ufl/>  
«Українська для іноземців».  
<https://www.facebook.com/ukrainian.for.foreigners/>

«Мовакаст». <http://movacast.wordpress.com>

**Conclusions.** In the era of visual and audio content podcasts become so popular. When it comes to learning and teaching foreign languages podcasts can be the most important educational element due to their authentic and cultural value. You are in public transport and it is too noisy for you to read English or Ukrainian book? Scrolling down the Twitter feed is a waste of time? You have not got enough money practice languages travelling? So, learn any language in the fastest, easiest and most fun way: by listening to Podcasts!

#### REFERENCES

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3. The Top 15 Language Learning Podcasts for Curious Multilingual Minds: <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/language-podcasts/>