

USING PODCASTS AND VIDEO NEWS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES.

Badalova Luiza Kholmamatovna (a senior teacher of the “Foreign languages” department of Karshi state technical university, Uzbekistan)

Abstract

Modern technologies offer broad opportunities for updating methods of teaching foreign languages. This article explores the role of podcasts and video news as authentic media resources in developing foreign language communicative competence. It outlines the didactic features of these media types, their advantages, methodological approaches for use at different stages of learning, and offers practical recommendations for their integration into the educational process. The importance of podcasts and video news as tools for forming intercultural, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competences is emphasized.

Keywords: podcasts, video news, authentic materials, foreign language competence, intercultural learning, media pedagogy, educational technologies.

Introduction

The development of digital technologies in the 21st century has had a significant impact on the education system in general and foreign language teaching methodology in particular. Teachers increasingly turn to media resources as tools for creating an authentic language environment and developing students' communicative skills. Among the most accessible and effective media formats are podcasts and video news, which allow learners to hear natural speech, reflect on current events and cultural realities, and engage in discussion—thus immersing them in real-world language use.

Theoretical foundations of media use in language teaching

The methodological relevance of using podcasts and video news is based on the principles of communicative, sociocultural, and competency-based approaches. According to Michael Byram's concept of intercultural communicative competence, language education should aim not only to teach linguistic forms but

also to foster the ability to interact with representatives of other cultures. In this context, authentic media texts act as carriers of sociocultural information, developing critical thinking, media literacy, and contextual interpretation skills.

Types of Podcasts and Video News in Language Teaching

Types of Podcasts:

- **Educational podcasts** (e.g., “6 Minute English” by BBC);
- **Authentic interviews and conversations** (e.g., TEDTalks Daily);
- **Student-created podcasts**;
- **Local thematic podcasts** (focused on culture, history, lifestyle of the target country).

Video News:

- **Short news clips** (e.g., CNN10, Euronews);
- **Special educational news editions** with subtitles;
- **Interviews and documentary fragments**;
- **Social video platforms** (e.g., YouTube educational channels, subtitled TikTok content).

Integration into the Competency-Based Approach

Within the competency-based framework, media resources support the development of:

- **Linguistic competence** (vocabulary, grammar, phonetics);
- **Communicative competence** (interaction, spoken production);
- **Intercultural competence** (understanding social norms and cultural contexts);
- **Media literacy** (critical evaluation and interpretation of content).

Project-Based Learning with Podcasts and Videos

Project-based learning is a highly effective method involving students in the creation of their own media content:

- Writing and recording mini-podcasts on chosen topics;
- Producing video reports with interviews;

- Analyzing and comparing news from different countries;
- Preparing for and performing in a mock “radio broadcast” or “news segment.”

This approach enhances both linguistic skills and key 21st-century competencies: critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and digital literacy.

Podcasts and video news: Comparative features and didactic potential

Podcasts are digital audio files that can be streamed online or downloaded. They cover a wide range of topics—from news and interviews to science and everyday life. Their advantages include the possibility of repeated listening, availability of transcripts, and flexibility in use both in-class and for independent study.

Video news combines audio with visual context, which enhances comprehension, especially at the beginner and intermediate levels. These resources provide students with access to current information and broaden their knowledge of the target culture and society.

Common didactic functions of these media include:

- Developing listening and visual comprehension skills;
- Expanding vocabulary;
- Improving phonetic competence;
- Teaching intonation, rhythm, and accents;
- Enhancing sociocultural awareness.

Methodological approaches to using podcasts and video news

The effective use of podcasts and video news requires a well-organized methodological framework consisting of three stages:

1. Pre-listening/viewing stage:

- Motivating students to engage with the material;
- Activating relevant lexical and grammatical structures;
- Predicting content based on title, image, or keywords.

2. While-listening/viewing stage:

- First listening/viewing for general understanding;
- Repeated listening/viewing for detailed comprehension;
- Task completion (e.g., multiple choice, gap-filling, sequencing events).

3. Post-listening/viewing stage:

- Discussing the content;
- Analyzing linguistic and cultural features;
- Creating students' own media products (e.g., mini-podcasts, news summaries).

Practical implementation in the classroom

Podcasts and video news can be integrated into various thematic units. For example:

- **Topic: “Health and Lifestyle”** — podcasts with health tips, interviews with doctors, video news on medical breakthroughs.
- **Topic: “Environment”** — reports on climate change, podcasts on environmental protection.
- **Topic: “Culture and Traditions”** — podcasts about holidays, news on cultural events.

Example task: Students listen to a podcast episode on digital security, create a content outline, identify the speaker's viewpoint, and express their own opinion on the issue.

Advantages of using podcasts and video news

- Relevance of topics and authentic language use;
- Accessibility and diversity of resources;
- Increased motivation and engagement;
- Development of learner autonomy;
- Formation of media competence.

Challenges and ways to overcome them

Challenges:

- Fast speech and varied accents;

- Insufficient language proficiency for comprehension;
- Limited classroom time.

Solutions:

- Use of subtitles and transcripts;
- Selecting materials appropriate to learners' level;
- Assigning media work as homework (e.g., flipped classroom model).

Conclusion

Podcasts and video news are powerful tools in the foreign language teacher's repertoire. Their systematic use contributes not only to the development of linguistic skills but also to the formation of intercultural and media competence—essential for successful communication in the modern world. Integrating such resources into the curriculum makes learning more dynamic, relevant, and responsive to students' real-life needs.

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