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**PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' LISTENING
AND SPEAKING PROFICIENCY VIA EDUCATIONAL PODCASTS.**

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ABSTRACT: The utilization of podcast technology significantly broadens the scope for enhancing students' abilities in listening and speaking, as compared to conventional pedagogical approaches in teaching these skills. By incorporating diverse podcasts, students are prompted to engage with a wide array of speech characteristics such as timbre, tempo, and intonation, thereby extending their auditory perceptual range and fostering the development of proficient listening skills. This article explores the pragmatic facets of cultivating students' listening and speaking skills through the integration of educational podcasts.

Keywords: podcast, classification of educational podcasts, listening skills, speaking skills, language learning.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary educators rigorously and comprehensively acquaint themselves with the potentialities of integrating internet technologies into the educational process. Upon the emergence of Web 2.0 social services, experts in linguistics, language teaching methodologies, and didactics ardently endorse the utilization of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the teaching of foreign languages. This endorsement translates into the organization of conferences and webinars, the development of didactic materials linked to online resources, and the creation of tasks involving internet-based content. Moreover, educational programs are being devised for the instruction of foreign languages.

Web 2.0 services encompass web-based software tools that facilitate collaborative interactions within groups. These encompass search engines, knowledge maps, social networks, blogs, bookmark storage services, video and photo repositories, and more. According to P. V. Sysoev, "Podcast social service represents a specific form of Web 2.0 social service, enabling the listening, creation, and dissemination of audio and video recordings" [3].

The term "podcast" originates from the English word 'podcasting,' whose popularity surged with the widespread adoption of Apple's portable media players, a company founded by Steve Jobs. The term 'podcasting' itself is a fusion of the words 'iPod' and 'broadcasting', denoting a distinct format for creating and distributing audio and video broadcasts over the World Wide Web [2]."

METHODS

As defined by the Macmillan dictionary [4], a podcast denotes a multimedia file accessible for download from the Internet and playable on both audio and video devices.

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E.Yu. Malushko articulates the term as follows: "A podcast represents an audio or video file disseminated freely over the Internet for widespread auditory or visual consumption" [1].

P.V. Sysoev characterizes a podcast as "an audio or video recording generated by any individual and accessible for auditory or visual consumption on the World Wide Web" [2]. According to this definition, it is discernible that authorship of a podcast may pertain to any individual.

Building upon the aforementioned definitions, it is pertinent to highlight the fundamental concept of a podcast, as explicated by L.I. Agafonova and Zh. S. Anikina. The authors offer the ensuing definition of podcast technology - "an audio or video file distributed over the Internet for playback on either a personal computer or mobile devices" [1].

It is widely acknowledged that the term "podcasting" was coined by the renowned American VJ and former MTV host, Adam Curry, in 2004. Subsequently, it was embraced into the New Oxford American Dictionary (Oxford Dictionary), and in 2005, it was adjudged the "Word of the Year". Post its initial coinage, the term's appearance prompted a surge in Google search results; starting from 24, then climbing to 526, and just three days later, escalating to 2750 - with the numbers doubling daily. Hence, Adam Curry is merited with the nomenclature of the founding father of podcasting.

RESULTS

The pedagogical potential of podcasting derives from its foundational technical and didactic attributes:

1. Authenticity: Podcasts represent authentic content designed for consumption at various language learning stages, thus significantly enhancing and diversifying English language lessons. A vast array of podcasts serves as didactic resources, inclusive of transcripts, supplementary texts, difficulty ratings, and pedagogical suggestions, as well as exercises for the given content, adaptable across different foreign language proficiency levels. Undoubtedly, the process of mastering a foreign language becomes more engaging, compelling, and efficacious when students encounter authentic contexts [8].

2. Relevance: Podcasting technology provides extensive opportunities for users to continually update their collection with fresh audio and video materials sourced from the internet. Subscribing to podcasts enables users to access daily audio and video content on their personal computers, featuring current information spanning diverse aspects of life, suitable for incorporation within English classes or beyond.

3. Media Literacy: The technical requisites for utilizing podcasts are remarkably straightforward. The instructor simply needs to download the requisite podcast in the suitable format onto a personal computer or other media. This skill embodies substantial motivational potential. When we, together with students, embark on exploring a new learning tool and afford them the opportunity to comprehend its technical intricacies, the allure of the tool and the adeptness in handling technological innovations motivate and propel students toward both independent and collaborative work [8].

4. Autonomy: Autonomy facilitates learning in accordance with individual learning necessities, pace, and proficiency level, constituting one of the principal advantages of the Internet as a learning platform. When students themselves delineate the conditions of their learning based on the principles of autonomous learning, the autonomous environment emerges as a catalyst for learning success, outstripping traditional communicative lessons and posing as a formidable competitor [6].

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5. **Multimodal Perception:** Podcast services regularly furnish learning materials for students, integrating auditory, visual, and textual components. This offers educators ample opportunities to incorporate multimodal learning materials within a single session, engaging various sensory channels concurrently. Consequently, this amplifies students' receptive capacities, serving as a pivotal facilitator for comprehending information in English, while stimulating both oral and written articulation on the subject [7].

6. **Technological Mobility:** The portability of the technical resources employed enables access to podcast materials within the classroom and beyond the educational setting at any given time, thereby broadening the scope of the learning environment. Accessing podcasts outside the classroom fosters the chance for learning during leisure hours and the opportunity to refine individual receptive skills, tailoring comprehension of intricate audio content to one's unique perceptual attributes. Consequently, this eliminates the burden of perceiving listening as an arduous obligation or a task of elevated complexity [8].

7. **Versatility:** Owing to the adaptable nature of podcasting, it can be harnessed to foster various forms of language expression. Beyond conventional listening skills, it remains pertinent for refining both oral and written language competencies. Furthermore, podcasts serve as a conduit for disseminating insights into the linguistic and cultural richness of the targeted language, all within a convenient learning environment for participants [7].

8. **Effectiveness:** Employing pre-existing materials constitutes one dimension of utilizing podcasts in educational settings, while the creation and subsequent sharing of original podcasts represent another facet. Through the lens of productivity, podcasting emerges as a substantial catalyst for foreign language acquisition within an activity-oriented framework. By authoring and disseminating audio or video content online, students engage with cutting-edge information technology in a real-world context [4].

9. **Interactivity:** In the current phase of internet evolution, interactivity stands as a cornerstone of the Web 2.0 paradigm. This framework suggests that not only is consumption pivotal, where users passively engage with information through listening, reading, or viewing, but also active interaction with other individuals on the internet is fundamental.

DISCUSSION

The incorporation of podcasting in foreign language instruction, typified by its extensive potential for collaborative interaction, exerts a pronounced influence on the interactivity of the educational process [7].

Consequently, educational podcasts tailored for foreign language education offer a means to address several methodological challenges, encompassing the cultivation of auditory comprehension abilities, refinement of auditory pronunciation skills, enrichment of lexical repertoire, reinforcement of grammatical aptitude, and enhancement of oral and written expression.

The substantial pedagogical potential of podcasts and their efficacy in English language instruction can be deduced through empirical investigations.

Presently, the scope of podcasting extends beyond amateur radio. Despite the ease of podcast creation, podcasting platforms host official podcasts from terrestrial radio, television channels, and prominent corporations. These encompass the latest news bulletins, narratives addressing promotions, or revelations of new service offerings.

Diverse types of podcasts are currently available, each distinguished by unique attributes. Prior to delving into podcasts geared towards foreign language education within social platforms,

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it is critical to underscore their universal classification framework, as outlined by L.I. Agafonova and Zh.S. Anikina, encapsulating all facets of the social server and delineating six podcast typologies [3].

1. The authors delineate podcasts into standalone (constructed using offline software) and integrated (fabricated within a specific site) categories based on the technical platform used.
2. Podcasts are classified into audio and video podcasts based on their multimedia format.
3. Based on the number of contributors, podcasts are categorized as individual or collective.
4. Within the genre classification, podcasts are stratified into educational, entertaining, and socio-political domains. G. Stanley further proposes a taxonomy based on authorship:
 - Authentic Podcasts: These comprise recordings of native speakers, serving as valuable resources for listening. They encompass non-linguistically oriented podcasts, alongside educational materials tailored for foreign language learners.
 - Teacher Podcasts: Podcasts crafted by educators primarily for their internal use, affording students access to exclusive material.
 - Student Podcasts: Created by students, often with assistance from educators, offering insights into diverse cultures and the lives of students across different countries.
 - Methodical (Educator) Podcasts: Intended for teachers' professional development, self-improvement, and the exchange of methodological information.

Further, Yu.P. Agel delineates various types of podcasts pertinent to foreign language instruction, which can be subcategorized based on the instructor's objectives:

- Podcasts for Lexical Instruction: Featuring explanations and illustrative examples of word meanings, phrases, or idioms within the language.
- Listening Skills Development Podcasts: Comprising listening tasks aimed at enhancing auditory comprehension.
- Full Foreign Language Instruction Podcasts: Designed to conduct an entire foreign language lesson [6].

From a pedagogical standpoint, these points serve to underscore the relevance of integrating internet technologies within the English language education framework. This integration effectively fosters the development of all forms of speech activities, particularly listening. Moreover, the assimilation of internet technologies and podcasts within English language education underscores the adaptability and agility of the contemporary education system in promptly embracing innovative technologies.

CONCLUSION

Hence, the burgeoning information technology of "podcasting" exhibits substantial promise not only within the broad educational sphere but also specifically for the pedagogy of teaching English as a second language. The seamless capacity to download podcasts onto mp3 players and iPods facilitates an uninterrupted English language learning experience, extending beyond the confines of the classroom to diverse environments. The availability of user-friendly audio recording software further simplifies the process of podcast generation. The prospect of disseminating podcasts online serves as a compelling impetus for English language acquisition. Moreover, engagement with podcasts enables students to cultivate proficiency in lexical and grammatical aspects. This technological framework engenders a shift towards student-centered English language instruction. Additionally, educators, leveraging podcast technology, can attain

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enhanced outcomes in enhancing students' listening abilities, surpassing the efficacy of conventional methodologies.

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