



## POSSIBILITIES OF PODCASTING TECHNOLOGY IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

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**Abstract:** This article explores various technologies that enhance communication competence, including online learning platforms, video conferencing, social networks, simulation and virtual reality, forums, mobile applications, gamification, and language learning tools, highlighting their role in developing effective communication skills in educational and professional contexts.

**Keywords:** communication competence, online learning platforms, video conferencing, virtual reality, mobile applications, gamification, language learning, social networks, professional communication, interactive tools.

In today's globalized society, students' competences in intercultural communication are important. Intercultural communication competence requires effective communication with representatives of different nationalities, religions and cultures, understanding them, respecting them and adjusting one's attitude. Today, the use of modern information technologies, in particular podcasting technology, is gaining importance in the formation of such competencies in students. Podcasting technology allows students to get acquainted with the thoughts, experiences and culture of authors and experts from different parts of the world. In the process, students gain new knowledge about a variety of topics in different languages, cultures, and social contexts. Through the use of podcasts, students' interest in language learning increases, and this in turn serves to build intercultural communication competence. The advantages of podcasting in the development of intercultural communication competence are manifested in the following:

- a) Audio-based learning: By listening to information through podcasts, language and cultural elements can be effectively learned. In this process, students get to know different accents, language expressions and cultural nuances.
- b) Diversity of topics: Podcasts have the ability to provide information on a variety of topics, including history, art, literature, ethnography, and the social sciences. It also guides students to cross-cultural understanding by discussing universal topics such as global issues, human rights, and gender equality.
- c) Skills and Competency Development: Regular use of podcasts develops students' skills such as listening, analysis and reasoning. These skills are important not only in language learning, but also in intercultural communication.
- d) Exchange of ideas and understanding of the diversity of opinions: Through podcasts, students get to know the opinions of representatives of different cultures and understand the diversity of cultures and worldviews. This increases their tolerance and interest in communicating in a multicultural environment.
- e) Developing logical and critical thinking skills in students: Critical thinking about the information presented in the podcasts and analysis of the topics studied develops logical thinking in students.
- f) This technology plays an important role in expanding students' worldview, respect for different cultures, and development of constructive communication skills with representatives of different nationalities and cultures. Therefore, the effective use of podcasting in the educational process is

important for the formation of intercultural communication competence [1].

Podcasting technology is a system for distributing audio or video files over the Internet and allowing users to subscribe to listen or view them. This technology basically allows creators to present their content online to a wide audience. Podcasts usually consist of several episodes and are updated around a specific topic or topic. Although they are mostly in audio format, there are also occasional video podcasts. Podcasting technology is distinguished by its effectiveness as a new type of information distribution and content creation tool. It gives students, educational institutions, experts, and creators the opportunity to present their knowledge and ideas to a wide audience. And podcasts provide users with an opportunity to get excellent and quick information on the topics they are interested in. Communication competence, that is, the ability to communicate effectively and accurately, is very important in today's education system and professional life [2]. Various modern technologies are widely used in the development of this competence.

Online learning platforms such as Coursera, edX, Khan Academy, and Udemy are effective tools for developing communication skills for students and professionals. These platforms allow users to communicate through video lessons, interactive sessions, forums and group work. Courses taught on such platforms, such as "Interpersonal Communication", "Leadership and Teamwork" or "Public Speaking", serve to improve communication skills. Video conferencing systems such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet and Skype play an important role in developing communication competence [3]. These platforms are especially helpful for distance learning or team communication in the workplace. Enables students or workers to exchange ideas, discuss and express their ideas clearly in real time. Also, through webinars, learners develop communication skills by presenting their lectures, asking questions and receiving answers.

Students and experts discuss various topics, learn new ideas and improve communication skills. Also, regular activity in social networks and building an online network helps to develop social communication skills. Simulation and virtual reality technologies create a more interactive and realistic environment for developing communication skills. For example, with **Virtual Reality (VR)** software, users can create hands-on communication experiences free of physical or mental stress. Through VR training, for example, customer communication, teamwork or presentation skills can be developed. Online forums and discussion platforms, such as Reddit, Quora, and Stack Exchange, allow users to freely express their opinions and exchange ideas with others [3]. By participating in these platforms, students and professionals develop the skills to communicate on various topics, express clear ideas, ask questions and discuss with each other.

Mobile applications such as Duolingo (for language learning) or Speaky, Tandem (for language communication) also help develop communication skills. Through these applications, users can converse in other languages and improve their language and intercultural communication competence. There is also the possibility of automatic communication through chatbots. By using these chats, users improve their communication skills. Gamification and interactive games are effective technologies in the development of communication competence. For example, through games, users learn to solve various problems, work with a team and communicate. Using games or gamification elements, students and professionals develop effective communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. Naturally, the way learners study any foreign language unconditionally involves their understanding and knowledge of their own language and culture (i.e., literature, geography, history, arts) [4]. In this regard, it is of utmost importance for teachers to teach their students to live and work in two cultures and act as mediators between two "cultural and linguistic contexts, using one's intercultural skills and attitudes". Thus, we can assume that the knowledge and skills of intercultural communication by means of ESP is a key component of international tourism specialists' training. Accordingly, the intercultural communication is a purposeful contact between culturally different people or groups of people, due to which the exchange of information, cultural and spiritual values takes place with consideration of the uniqueness and identity of each separate culture.

Language learning apps, such as Babbel, Memrise or Busuu, are important tools for developing communication skills. These apps teach users not only new words, but also proper language use and communication skills during language learning. Modern technologies are effective tools in the development of communication competence, they prepare pupils, students and professionals for effective communication. Communication skills can be further improved with the help of online platforms, video conferencing, social networks, VR, gamification and other technologies. Thus, modern technologies are an important tool for the

development of communication competence. In listening comprehension, the second or the foreign language listening has been relatively ignored for many years, within the applied of linguistics, today has come into its own [5]. Although still, somewhat neglected in the second language acquisition's researches, listening, now plays a more central role in language teaching, and speaking is the outcome of the listening process. When this knowledge is being developed, students will begin to speak, so listening has a crucial role in communication. Recently, many tests like the entrance exams, university leaving tests and others have begun to include the listening comprehension components, and acknowledgment that listening and speaking abilities are important aspects of language proficiency

The researchers claim that the use of podcasts for teaching students a foreign language for specific (professional) purposes allows to improve the teaching content, methods and organizational forms of educational process, to ensure a high scientific and methodological level of teaching, individual approach to learning and improve the effectiveness of supply of a new material. The findings demonstrated that students' pronunciation did not significantly improve, however, students responded positively to the podcasts assignment. The researchers suggest that podcasts have potential as a teaching tool, as far as student response and the ability for teacher feedback, however, direct instruction of pronunciation is necessary to impact this aspect of language learning.

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