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## **RESEARCH OF THE AUDIO PUBLISHING INDUSTRY IN UKRAINE AND ABROAD**

### **ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ГАЛУЗІ АУДІОВИДАВНИЦТВА В УКРАЇНІ ТА ЗАКОРДОНОМ**

The study of foreign and domestic scientific research allowed us to conclude that mass digitalization and the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the spread of audio publishing and had a direct impact on the decrease in the frequency of buying printed books. The majority of domestic readers prefer free audiobooks, and also often interact with unlicensed content since the culture of buying digital and audiobooks is not developed in Ukraine. Unlicensed content slows down the development of the audio market, but it stimulates the population to become familiar with the literature and affects the growth of the readership. Children choose Ukrainian books more

often than adults. In general, the indicator of the number of Ukrainians who prefer Ukrainian-language literature is increasing.

The aspect of illegal distribution of content was considered both from the negative side — such resources worsen the state of the online publication market, and from the positive side — they stimulate the development of reading and contribute to the increase of the audience of listeners. Currently, there is an increase in the number of citizens who choose literature in the Ukrainian language. It was determined that children prefer Ukrainian-language works more often than adults. In addition, the types of reading of audio publications were highlighted, including professional, amateur, author's recordings, and automatic reading of works, and a drawback of audiobooks was identified — it is the author's way of reading, which sometimes does not meet the listener's expectations.

Popular foreign projects are Audible, Google Audiobooks, Librivox, Kobo Audiobooks, and Downpour. The largest sound library in the world is Audible. Characteristic features of foreign audio platforms are the high cost of publications, the popularity of subscription services, as well as the presence of monthly bonuses for the purchase of books. The number of platforms with audiobooks is actively increasing in Ukraine. Popular domestic projects are "ABUK", 4Read, "Likhtar", Lingart and Yakaboo. Each of the projects has its characteristics, and in general, they are mainly characterized by books in the Ukrainian language, synchronization of works on different devices, and the availability of free audio editions.

**Keywords:** audiobooks, promotion, social networks, advertising.

Опрацювання закордонних та вітчизняних наукових досліджень дозволило зробити висновок, що масова діджиталізація та пандемія COVID-19 сприяли поширенню аудіо-видавництва та мали прямий вплив на зменшення частоти купівлі друкованих книжок. Більшість вітчизняної читацької аудиторії надає перевагу безкоштовним аудіокнигам, а також часто взаємодіє з неліцензійним контентом, оскільки в Україні не розвинена культура купівлі цифрових та аудіокниг. Неліцензійний контент сповільнює розвиток аудіоринку, однак стимулює населення до знайомства з літературою та впливає на приріст читацької аудиторії. Діти частіше за дорослих обирають твори українською мовою. В цілому зростає показник кількості українців, які надають перевагу україномовній літературі.

Аспект незаконного поширення контенту був розглянутий як з негативного боку — такі ресурси погіршують стан ринку онлайн-видань, так і з позитивного — вони стимулюють розвиток читання, сприяють збільшенню аудиторії слухачів. Наразі відбувається приріст громадян, які обирають літературу українською мовою. Було визначено, що діти частіше за дорослих надають перевагу україномовним творам. Окрім цього, було

виділено види начитування аудіовидань, серед яких професійний, аматорський, авторський записи й автоматичне начитування творів, та визначено недолік аудіокниг — ним є манера начитування автора, яка іноді не виправдовує очікування слухача.

Популярними закордонними проєктами є Audible, Google Audiobooks, Librivox, Kobo Audiobooks і Downpour. Найбільшою звуковою бібліотекою у світі є Audible. Характерними особливостями закордонних аудіоплатформ є висока вартість видань, популярність сервісів за підпискою, а також наявність щомісячних бонусів на купівлю книжок. В Україні активно збільшується кількість платформ із аудіокнигами. Популярними вітчизняними проєктами є «АБУК», 4Read, «Ліхтар», Lingart та Yakaboo. Кожен з проєктів має свої особливості, а в цілому для них характерні переважно книги українською мовою, синхронізація творів на різних пристроях, наявність безкоштовних аудіовидань.

**Ключові слова:** аудіокниги, просування, соціальні мережі, реклама.

**Introduction.** Mass digitization, caused by the rapid development of the Internet and the increase in demand for the use of online resources, affects the habits, behavior, and needs of people, forms new approaches to the perception of books, and increases the demand for audio publications. At the same time, the development of audio publishing in the world shapes the culture of audio product consumption and demonstrates opportunities for the quality promotion of projects.

The audiobook market in Ukrainian is quite young, but it quickly adapts to modern trends and is actively developing. There are more and more prose and poetic audio works, applications, and sites with audiobooks, video readings of books, and online recordings of Ukrainian poetry recitations. New platforms that distribute audiobooks are being created. Instead, society is developing a need to choose between them, and the projects are developing a need to form a quality strategy to create a unique positioning and effective promotion.

Audiobooks, in turn, appear on paid, free legal, and free illegal platforms. The number of Ukrainian-language audio publications is increasing on the literature market, and various forms of their creation are also appearing.

*The actuality of the topic* is due to the development of the market of audio publications and platforms for their sale and use.

*A review of the literature.* In the process of researching the objective assessment of the market, the works of such scientists as O. Pogribna, O. Lytvynenko, O. Yehorova, I. Volosevich, A. Shurenkova, S. Vodolazka,

and others were considered. The review of the literary assets of the researchers helped to analyze the audio publishing market and its trends, to reveal the features and characteristics of online libraries.

To obtain a comprehensive interpretation of audio processes, the article by S. Vodolazka "Audiobooks as an innovative way of popularizing books" [3] was analyzed and the concept of "audiobook" was elaborated. Synonymous with the term "audiobook" are concepts such as "audiobook", "audio electronic edition", and "audio version of a literary work" [8].

V. Vitenko, the author of a study on the technology of creating an electronic library, in his work describes the term "electronic library", which is synonymous with the definition of "online library", and gives it the following definition: it is a book platform on which the main processes are carried out using computers, and documents on machine media coexist with audio, audiovisual and other materials [2, p. 71].

In other studies characterizing the specificity, features, and relevance of audiobooks, the use of the term "audio publication" is also followed. O. Lytvynenko, the author of the work on the comparison of the assimilation of information from electronic and printed children's editions, considers it in the context of a certain type of literature and gives it the following definition: "audio productions of well-known fairy tales of domestic and foreign classics of children's literature" [6, p. 105].

*The purpose of the study* is to find out the current state of the audiobook market.

**Methods.** Among the available research methods, those that are available and help to obtain the maximum result in a short period were chosen, namely: analysis (study of the relevance of the work, the state of the audiobook market, the terminological base), comparative analysis (comparison of domestic and international audio projects), synthesis (the works of researchers were studied and conclusions were drawn), generalization (general conclusions were formed).

**The results.** Currently, audio art is as important a part of the cultural development of mankind as cinematography, theater, painting, and architecture. So, the world market of publishing products is still dominated by the paper editions that people are used to. However, the demand for listening to audiobooks is growing every year. For example, in the United States of America, the share of the population listening to audio publications increased from 14 % to 16 % from 2016 to 2019, respectively. On the other hand, the consumption of e-books decreased from 28 % to

25 % during the same period, and the reading of printed books remained at the same level and amounted to 65 % [15].

The appearance of such a format of books is quite logical: mass digitization is currently taking place, due to the rapid development of the Internet and the increase in demand for the use of online resources for education, recreation, and everyday activities. The term "digitalization" serves to define the digital transformation of society (transfer of information and content into a digital format). Digitization contributes to the emergence of an increasing number of users on various Internet platforms. According to the Statista service as of January 2021, the number of active Internet users reaches 4.66 billion people, which is 59.5 % of the global population [14]. This confirms the relevance of transforming any content into an online format. It is also worth noting that according to the graph (see figure 1), the share of active users of social networks in the world is 4.2 billion people.

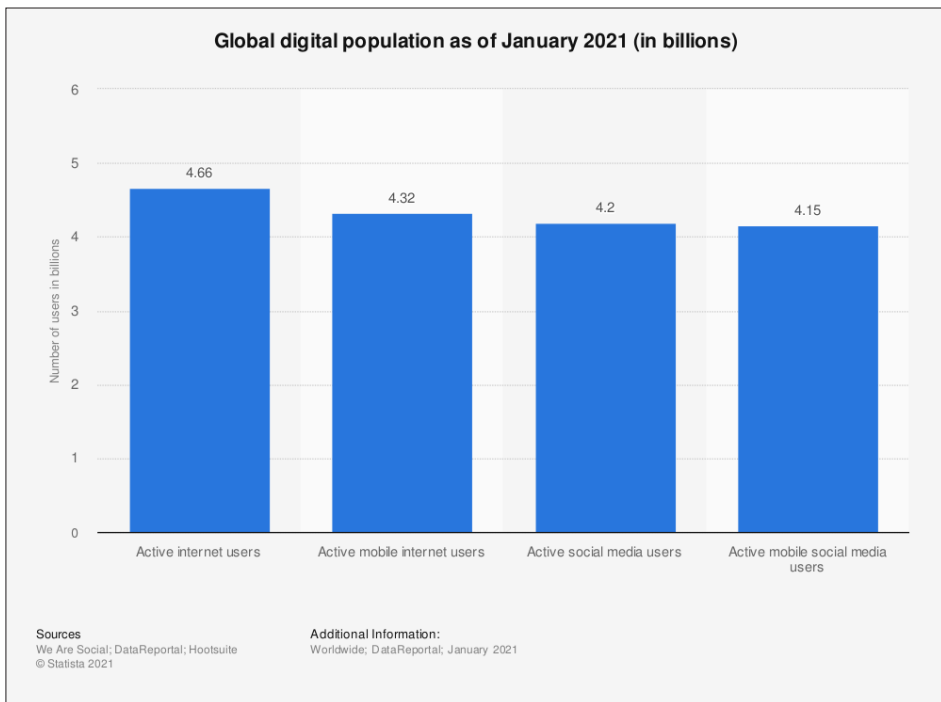


Figure 1. Graph of the world's digital population

This suggests that social networks are relevant platforms for promoting goods and services and increasing brand awareness among the target audience.

To study the current state of the audiobook market, an all-Ukrainian sociological study "Reading in the context of media consumption and life design" was developed, and conducted by Info Sapiens LLC at the request of the state institution "Ukrainian Book Institute" in 2020 [4]. Currently, the main share of the market is occupied by printed publications — this is evidenced by the data of the mentioned study: "67 % of the population read printed books during the year." Audiobooks in Ukraine occupy 15 % of the market, and correspond to the percentage of audio publications in the USA, even though their appearance in Ukraine took place much later than in Germany and the USA. It is also worth noting that the publication of audio versions of electronic works on the Internet contributed to the expansion and popularization of audiobooks among the population [7].

The publishing market was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which, although it contributed to the emergence of greater interest in audiobooks due to the search for new types of leisure, at the same time caused a financial crisis, which affected the decrease in the frequency of book purchases. In 2020, only 1 % of the population under the age of 60 bought audiobooks [4]. Due to the pandemic, families' spending on leisure activities has decreased, and priority has been given to basic areas of meeting needs.x

In addition, the level of anxiety increased, accordingly, the accumulation of funds became a priority. In this regard, a significant share of the audience that preferred audiobooks switched to free platforms or began to consume unlicensed content.

The aspect of illegal distribution of content is acute in the category of electronic literature. Currently, chatbots and non-licensed resources that provide the opportunity to download the necessary publication for free are very popular. They contain both e-books and audio editions (the share of which is much smaller). Such resources worsen the state of the online publishing market, but there is also a positive side of unlicensed content — the free format stimulates the development of reading, and contributes to the increase of the audience since accessibility allows you to choose a book that will be to your liking without losing money. This shows that the free format is a priority for most users. There is also a category of people who, after reading an e-book or listening to an audiobook, buy the printed format

of the publication, provided that they liked it. Interestingly, unlicensed content is usually used by those who are not active readers. Instead, the test results show that "active readers more often defend the position that content should be paid for" [4].

This indicates that the culture of purchasing online products is currently not developed in Ukraine — this trend was caused by the active distribution of unlicensed materials, primarily cinematography, during many previous years. Accordingly, this stimulates the emergence of new illegally downloaded works and negatively affects the development of audiobooks in general.

The question of language in the modern information space is quite acute. During the period of independence of the Ukrainian state, which is about 30 years, only in recent years, the number of Ukrainian-language literature in bookstores has been actively increasing and its sales are growing. Previously, Russian-language publications dominated the market. Oksana Zabuzhko, a Ukrainian writer, commented on this aspect as follows: "There was an expansion of imported books from Russia. Before the war, Ukraine accounted for 40 % of the Russian market. That is, 40 % of Russians earned from books in our country" [10]. Accordingly, the Ukrainian-language publishing market had no opportunities for further development, which is why we are observing this process only now, long after the country gained independence.

Currently, Ukrainian-language literature is actively spreading, and citizens increasingly prefer it. A significant part of Ukrainians, namely 32 %, choose literature in their native language. In 2018, this figure was 24 %.

On the other hand, the audience that prefers Russian-language literature continues to make up 27 %. It is interesting that among children, the percentage of those who choose a Ukrainian-language book (when there is a similar one in Russian) is significantly higher — it is 56 %; and the percentage of those who prefer Russian literature is 21 %. It is worth noting that children usually listen to audio versions of books on smartphones [4].

Audiobooks appeared relatively recently (as mentioned earlier, in the 20th century), and did not immediately gain a large audience and popularity. Accordingly, they were not in particular demand, and as a result, were not significantly influenced by pro-Russian views, unlike printed works. That is why currently 67 % of audiobook listeners choose Ukrainian-language audio editions.

The trend towards the distribution of audiobooks led to the appearance of various forms of their creation. The following types of reading audio editions are distinguished [7, p. 88]:

1) a professional recording, which involves voicing the work by professional readers: announcers, actors, etc.;

2) amateur recording — dubbing of books by amateurs who want to create an audio work; it is appropriate to note that the amateur recording is not characterized by low sounding quality;

3) author's recording — it involves the reading of the book by its author, which allows you to strengthen the text and give a special emotional color to the work, even though the author is not a speaker;

4) automatic voicing — this function is characterized by the reading of the text by an electronic announcer and is relevant only in the English-speaking area.

Accordingly, audiobooks have different features of reading — and it also happens that the reader prefers a printed book instead of an audio version, because the narrator's reading manner, voice, or intonation do not correspond to the listener's ideas and are difficult to perceive.

So, audiobooks are a relevant book format that is constantly developing. They do not devalue the literary assets of printed publications, but on the contrary — supplement them and stimulate the development of the industry. Most of the readership prefers free audiobooks, as it tends to use unlicensed content. Also, currently, a significant percentage of consumers use Ukrainian-language audio editions, which stimulates the spread of domestic content. The disadvantage of this publication format is the author's reading style, which may not meet the listener's expectations.

The demand for audiobooks is increasing, both in Ukraine and abroad. Accordingly, there are more and more resources with audiobook formats. On the Internet, there are foreign language sites with both unlicensed audio content and legal ones — free or paid. According to Techradar, the most popular online resources devoted to audiobooks are Audible, Google Audiobooks, Librivox, Kobo Audiobooks, and Downpour [16]. Both classic works and current novelties, read by actors and recorded in high quality, are available on them. In the process of work, we worked out and analyzed each of the mentioned online resources.

The largest audio library in the world is Audible, a subsidiary of Amazon, a service that contains audiobooks, podcasts, audio shows, and magazines in English and has more than 200,000 unique titles.



The number of visitors to the site for April 2021 is more than 24 million people, 79 % of whom are residents of the United States [13]. The service provides a free 30-day period for using the library. Audible is characterized by a high level of customer orientation: if the listener does not like the purchased audiobook, he can exchange it for another one for free. In addition, the service offers users a monthly bonus that can be spent on the purchase of project products. Audible is available on iOS, OS X, Android, Windows, and Amazon Alexa [16].

Among the thematic sections present on the platform, it is worth highlighting history, humor, and linguistics — they are rarely found in audio formats.

Audible also has audiobooks on personal development, health, education, fiction, and more. Before buying books, users can listen to a fragment to choose the desired option, and after canceling the subscription, they can continue using previously purchased materials. In addition, each book can be downloaded and listened to offline, speeded up, and automatically turned off thanks to the timer. A significant advantage of the Audible online library is the synchronization of audiobooks on all platforms — this facilitates user interaction with the content and creates a positive impression of the resource as a whole. The cost of a subscription to Audible is about UAH 220 per month for the basic package of services and UAH 420 for the "Premium" package (not sure if I should use that word). Packages have different limits on the number of downloaded audiobooks: basic — 5 books per month, "Premium" — 10.

The second most popular international project that develops the direction of audiobooks is Google Audiobooks — an audiobook service owned by Google and a component of the Google Play product line. It provides a quick transaction — from the application store immediately to the consumer, without the need to download an additional application. The service does not require a monthly payment, and the user can purchase the desired audiobooks at any time and forever. In addition, a positive aspect of Google Audiobooks is the interaction with audiobooks on different platforms: Android, iOS, or in the browser. Like the Audible service, Google Audiobooks can synchronize what has been listened to on all devices with the Android operating system. It is interesting that in the USA they plan to add synchronization to Android Auto, an application that allows a smartphone to display information on a car display. The disadvantage of the project is the cost of the books:

the price of one audiobook on this platform is higher than a monthly subscription to Audible. For example, the cost of "Fire and Fury" ("Fire and fury" — a book about the activities of Donald Trump during the presidential campaign) by Michael Wolff is about UAH 565, and the audiobooks by Stephen King — UAH 1,200 each. However, Google Audiobooks often has discounts and at a "special" price, for example, an audiobook by Stephen King can be purchased for UAH 280. The service also offers a -50 % discount on the purchase of the first book. The platform has a "Family Library" function, which allows you to distribute purchased books to a certain group of people. Google Audiobooks, like Audible, have an audio mute timer, pre-listening, and speed-up of the narrator's reading. A feature of the platform is the interaction with Google Assistant, accordingly, users can switch to a new chapter, pause playback, or select other audiobooks using voice commands [16].

The third in the ranking of the most popular online resources with audiobooks is Librivox — an application with free audiobooks, which contains more than 15 thousand works in different languages of the world. The audiobooks in the app are in the public domain (the copyright on them has already expired or did not exist at all) and are read, edited, and distributed by volunteers. Due to copyright restrictions, the library is dominated by classical works, but despite this, the service includes a large part of popular science and religious literature. Works in Librivox can be listened to online and audiobooks can be downloaded. You can view them by genre sorting, author, and the title. The advantage of Librivox is that many audiobooks are available in several languages, so you can choose the most appropriate option for yourself or test your knowledge of a foreign language.

The next international audiobook project included in the ranking of the most popular is Kobo Audiobooks, which positions itself as the cheapest audiobook subscription service. Audiobooks are available in nine languages: English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Dutch, Portuguese, Brazilian, and Japanese. The disadvantage is the limitation in listening platforms — the application is only available for Android systems. In addition, listening to audiobooks is possible only in the USA, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, which significantly limits the circle of consumers. Among the advantages of the service, it is worth highlighting the following functions that make the process of listening to books more comfortable:

- 1) audiobook recommendations based on user preferences;
- 2) setting reading parameters (adjusting text size and background color, night mode);
- 3) easy-to-use application;
- 4) book shutdown timer;
- 5) synchronization with other devices;
- 6) reviews of books.

A subscription to Kobo Audiobooks is cheaper than a subscription to its competitor Audible — and is about UAH 270 per month. When canceling the subscription, purchased books remain available for listening. Also, the service, like Google Audiobooks, offers customers bonuses every month that can be spent on the purchase of audiobooks.

Last in the leaderboard among popular foreign platforms for listening to audiobooks is Downpour, a service that contains more than 80,000 audiobooks of modern fiction, science, and classical literature. The application has the following characteristics:

- 1) a list of wishes and preferences;
- 2) the ability to add notes and bookmarks;
- 3) synchronization;
- 4) sleep timer;
- 5) adjustment of playback speed;
- 6) use in offline mode.

A feature of Downpour is the function of renting audiobooks, which is not available in other services. The lease includes the use of audiobooks for a fixed price without a monthly payment for 30 and 60 days. It is worth adding that the monthly payment at Downpour is average according to the price policy in the audio platform market, it is about UAH 360. However, unlike competitors, the Downpour application does not have a free trial period — this is a drawback of the service. You can listen to audiobooks of the project both on iOS and Android devices, as well as on laptops and computers, at the same time. And in addition to listening on the website, audio works can also be turned on in the application, which is simple and completely understandable to use.

So, among the world's popular online platforms dedicated to audiobooks, there are leaders such as Audible, Google Audiobooks, Librivox, Kobo Audiobooks, and Downpour. In the process of analysis, each of the services was considered, and their characteristic features were investigated.

Ukraine, like the world leaders, is rapidly developing in the field of audio publishing: new editions appear, the list of literary audio projects is replenished, and readers often prefer audio content. There are enough domestic services where you can listen to audiobooks, so choosing the right one is not a problem. A modern consumer can find the literature of different genres and areas in Ukrainian online libraries and interact with it in an application, online on a website, or offline on a computer or smartphone. Usually, domestic services with audiobooks contain editions in Ukrainian. However, some of them also have works in foreign languages: English and Russian. In Ukraine, there are platforms with audio versions of works where you can listen to and sometimes download works for free. There are also paid services where you can buy a specific book or a subscription for a certain period.

17 online libraries are popular among consumers [1]. In addition to them, there are also many YouTube channels with audiobooks from domestic authors. In the process of work, a selection of leading platforms with audiobooks was found [9], which includes 5 online libraries: "ABUK", 4Read, "Likhtar", Lingart, and the object of our research — the platform "Listen". In the process of work, all platforms were worked out (except for the object of research, the analysis of which was carried out in the practical section of the diploma project).

The portal, which positions itself as the "first Ukrainian audiobook store", is called "ABUK". This application contains audiobooks, podcasts, and lectures in Ukrainian, as well as educational materials for preparing for Final state certification and External independent evaluation. Audiobooks include many works by modern authors, as well as children's and classic literature. Access to the "ABUK" service is free, but you have to pay for books. The price of one is from UAH 29 ("A Handful of Warmth for Mom", Sashko Dermanskyi) to UAH 225 ("Formation", Michelle Obama). In addition to paid books, the application includes several free ones, such as "One Hundred Thousand" by Ivan Karpenko-Kary or "On the Field of Blood" by Lesya Ukrainka. Podcasts are also free. The "ABUK" application is available in the AppStore and Google Play. You can listen to audiobooks both online and offline, having previously downloaded them to the application. During the comprehensive analysis of the "ABUK" service, the following features were revealed:

- 1) availability of thematic selections;
- 2) the opportunity to listen to a fragment of the book before buying it;
- 3) device synchronization;
- 4) availability of reviews of books;
- 5) publication of annotations to works and information about authors.

It is worth noting that the online library "ABUK" is regularly updated. There are currently more than 300 audiobooks available in it, and at least 10 new works are added every month. The service actively cooperates with publishing houses and authors: the selections include chapters from "Stary Lev Publishing House" and "Our Format", as well as works read by authors, such as "Boarding" by Serhiy Zhadan or "Happy Naked People" by Kateryna Babkina. As the creators of the project note, the portal contains "professional audio versions of classical and best modern works of Ukrainian and world literature" [12].

The next domestic project in the field of audio publishing is 4Read — a site with free audiobooks, which contains Ukrainian-language works of domestic and foreign literature. The service includes 19 categories corresponding to book genres: detective stories, biographies, novels, fairy tales, etc. It is impossible to download a book from the 4Read online library, as well as to listen offline — the site does not have an application and functions only as an online platform. Another drawback is that the site has a lot of advertising, which distracts and makes it difficult to use the resource. Among the advantages, it is worth highlighting the presence of a large collection of works that are available to listeners for free, the ability to sort audiobooks by popularity and novelty, as well as the ability to leave reviews and ratings for each book. The creators of the project information that "the materials are taken from publicly available sources [...] (they) are provided [...] exclusively for familiarization and expansion of the readership" [17].

Another popular project is the online library "Likhtar" — a platform for people with visual impairments, which contains only free books in the Ukrainian language. Despite the special positioning, the site can be used by everyone. However, for the blind, the platform contains a special set of functions: voice playback, control using keys, and a simple interface; for those who see poorly, special color solutions are thought out [19]. The following categories are available in the Lihtar online library: fiction, children's literature, music, education for children, and radio.

Each of them contains 30–40 audio works. The library's collection is currently small, but it is steadily enriched, according to its creators, "through direct communication with the authors" [11]. Writers often support the project and provide books for publication, and announcers voice and edit audio works for free.

An unusual platform with audiobooks is Lingart — an application that allows you to listen to and read works at the same time. Currently, the library houses books in Ukrainian and English, but the creators of the project plan to create a multilingual space. Books in the application are paid: their cost varies from UAH 56 to UAH 140 per book. Most modern literature is available, such as the novel "Klavka" by Maryna Hrymych. Currently, there are not many audiobooks on the portal — about 30, but the creators of the project continue to work on the development of the library.

Lingart has a special approach to audio content — it is supplemented with text materials that can be read in parallel with listening — such a reading format, as noted on the project page, "improves understanding and memorability by 3–4 times" [5]. For the creators of the application, comfort while listening to books is important, so in addition to synchronizing audio materials with text, they added the ability to turn on music and connect special effects, and in the future, they plan to add the ability to create notes, reviews, and share quotes with other users. You can download the application from AppStore and Google Play.

In the process of research, the main platforms with audiobooks published in the selection from Studway [24] were developed. However, another popular resource was found — Yakaboo. This is an online store that, in addition to electronic and printed editions, sells audiobooks. The platform has about 1,000 audiobooks in various languages, while Russian-language editions predominate. The advantage is the presence of a significant number of sections with different literature: on Yakaboo you can find professional audiobooks, children's, artistic, educational, and even religious literature. The site offers such functions as sorting and selecting books by parameters (publisher, language) to make it easier to find the required publication. Despite the paid format, the online bookstore Yakaboo often uses promotions and discounts and gives promotional codes for purchases, which is an absolute advantage. Also, the prices in the bookstore are not high. For example, the audiobook "Rabbit and the Bear" can be purchased for UAH 3, and English-language stories for UAH 10.

Therefore, the list of literary audio projects is being actively replenished in Ukraine. To carry out a comprehensive analysis of the competitive environment, the following services with audiobooks were considered: "ABUK", 4Read, "Likhtar", Lingart and Yakaboo, and their features were analyzed.

**Conclusions.** The study examined the current state of the audiobook market, which is an important part of the cultural development of humanity, and analyzed the reasons for the relevance of this format, the main of which is mass digitization. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was revealed — it contributed to the popularization of audio publications and at the same time influenced the decrease in the frequency of book purchases. In the process of analysis, it was found that currently the culture of purchasing online products is not developed in Ukraine, and a significant part of the readership prefers free audiobooks, as it has a habit of using unlicensed content. The aspect of illegal distribution of content was considered both from the negative side — such resources worsen the state of the online publication market, and from the positive side — they stimulate the development of reading and contribute to the increase of the audience of listeners. Currently, there is an increase in the number of citizens who choose literature in the Ukrainian language. It was determined that children prefer Ukrainian-language works more often than adults. In addition, the types of reading of audio publications were highlighted, including professional, amateur, author's recordings, and automatic reading of works, and a drawback of audiobooks was identified — it is the author's way of reading, which sometimes does not meet the listener's expectations.

Popular foreign online platforms devoted to audiobooks were analyzed. These include Audible, Google Audiobooks, Librivox, Kobo Audiobooks, and Downpour. Each of the services was considered and their characteristic features were highlighted. Audible is the largest sound library in the world, the audience of which is mainly residents of the United States; it has a trial period and is available for use on different devices. Google Audiobooks is an audiobook service that does not require a monthly payment: you can purchase works once and for all. Its disadvantage is the high cost of publications. Librivox is an app with free audiobooks in many languages around the world, featuring works in the public domain. Kobo Audiobooks is an audiobook subscription service available only in 5 countries. It is characterized by the presence of monthly bonuses for

the purchase of books, and its drawback is interaction only with Android systems. Downpour is a platform that combines modern fiction, science, and classic literature, and also differs from competitors in the possibility of renting audiobooks.

To analyze the competitive environment in the market of audio publications in Ukraine, such projects with audiobooks as "ABUK", 4Read, "Likhhtar", Lingart and Yakaboo were considered and their features were highlighted. "ABUK" is a Ukrainian online bookstore, which contains not only audiobooks but also podcasts, lectures, and materials for preparing for the DPA and external examinations. It is dominated by works of modern literature, which are usually read by professional announcers, and occasionally by book authors. Significant advantages of the service are the function of synchronizing books on different devices, the ability to listen to an excerpt of a book before purchase, and the availability of audiobook reviews. 4Read is a site that contains a large collection of free audiobooks of domestic and foreign literature, the content of which is exclusively Ukrainian. The disadvantage of the portal is the significant amount of advertising and the lack of an application. "Lichtar" is a library for people with visual impairments, which includes special functions for both blind and partially sighted people. Among its content, there are audiobooks only in the Ukrainian language. In addition to audiobooks, you can listen to music and radio on the portal. "Lingart" is an atypical audio platform, the audio content of which is supplemented with text materials — they can be read in parallel with listening. The books in the library are paid for, and the works are available in two languages — Ukrainian and English. Yakaboo is an online audiobook store that includes editions in various languages. The advantage of the portal is the availability of publications of a wide thematic spectrum, as well as a significant number of promotions and discounts for consumers.

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