

UDC 373.091.31:811.111(045)

DOI https://doi.org/10.31392/NPU-nc.series5.2023.91.48

Khromchenko O.

PECULIARITIES OF TEACHING NEW GENERATIONS OF DIGITAL NATIVES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

The ultimate aim of the teachers is to enable students to become “proficient self-regulators”. The students should not be recipients of information, they are supposed to use academic resources to develop their high-level cognitive skills. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages an ultimate educational objective is to promote approaches and methods of modern language teaching which will strengthen independence of thought, judgment and action, combined with social skills and responsibility.

This paper explores teaching and learning technologies for new generations of digital natives that will promote their intrinsic motivation for learning the English language.

Digital natives are technology-savvy and highly literate with ICT due to early exposure to digital culture and technology. Scientists underline the most relevant characteristics of digital natives: cannot relate to manuals, are engaged in rapid ‘trial and error’ actions and prefer discovering via actions, experimentation and interaction rather than by reflection; are “intuitive learners”, they solve problems “intuitively”; prefer receiving information quickly and simultaneously from multiple multimedia and other sources at hand; prefer processing and interacting with pictures, graphics, sounds and video; knowledge is often acquired via fun activities, such as gaming, surfing the web or social networking. Taking into consideration the characteristics of digital natives, we as educational instructors must change our approaches to teaching, our methodology and content to appropriately cater for the needs of this new generation of technology-savvy young people.

The analysis of the results of the conducted research has shown that the most relevant methods and ways of teaching and learning from the viewpoint of our students, the representatives of digital natives are the use of technology and project work.

To foster the intrinsic motivation of the students to learn the English language we propose application of creative group projects in the language classes. The students are meant to solve real-life problems or carry out personally meaningful challenges. The project is followed by manageable step-by-step tasks to achieve real, practical outcomes. The project is aimed at creating and presenting a fairy tale.

The research perspectives are seen by us in the further development of the system of creative language activities with the use of technology for a new generation of students.

Key words: digital natives, generation Z, methods ways, technologies of teaching, project, project work.

(статтю подано мовою оригіналу)

The primary purpose of this article is to analyze teaching and learning technologies for new generations of digital natives to promote their intrinsic motivation for learning the English language; to explore the existence of a relationship between digital natives’ characteristics, their commitment to innovation.

Digital natives are children who have been exposed to the digital culture and technology, which has strongly influenced the way they interact with digital tools. Early exposure to technology like the Internet, computers, and mobile devices fundamentally changes the way digital natives learn and operate. They are considered to be inherently technology-savvy and highly literate with ICT (information and communication technology) and they gather information through their gadgets [7, p. 125].

Scientists (R. Mete, O. Zur, A. Walker) drew attention to the most relevant characteristics of digital natives: cannot relate to manuals, they are engaged in rapid ‘trial and error’ actions and prefer discovering via actions, experimentation and interaction rather than by reflection; are “intuitive learners”, they solve problems “intuitively”; prefer receiving information quickly and simultaneously from multiple multimedia and other sources at hand; prefer processing and interacting with pictures, graphics, sounds and video; knowledge is often acquired via fun activities, such as gaming, surfing the web or social networking [6, p. 51–53; 8].

We should understand that exposure to technology cannot be equated with the ability to make use of it. Research shows that not all young people are tech-savvy or have an interest to learn more. It may become a problem because computer and ICT skills have become more important than ever for labour market activity and social inclusion. The fundamental problem we are faced with was identified by M. Prensky “instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language” [4, p. 2].

Taking into account the characteristics of digital natives, university instructors and secondary school teachers should understand that digital natives may find traditional methods and techniques of teaching and learning boring, unappealing, and irrelevant. It is determined by the fact that they are accustomed to receiving information rapidly.

Digital natives are claimed to be multitasking, which means that they can perform several tasks at the same time. They can do homework while listening to iTunes, updating their Facebook profile and texting [7, p. 125].

O. Zur suggests viewing activities which are done sequentially by digital natives in an advanced manner, as more complex tasks. The author exploits the term “hopping” or “task-switching” when referring to digital natives’ multitasking habits.

We support the assertion that digital natives are different, they “see the instruction to sit and receive as archaic” [7] and therefore the way we teach them ought to be different as well.

Approaches to teaching, our methodology and content must change fundamentally and catch up to modern times so as to appropriately cater for the needs of this new generation of technology-savvy young people [Pritchard]. For the digital natives, the school, the university and library of today are no longer the only places to gain knowledge, knowledge no longer comes primarily from library books and the lecture podium. They are technologically adept and learn using tools such as Google, Google Scholar, Wikipedia, course websites, and text messaging. It enables learning to take place anytime anywhere via mobile devices [2].

Mahmoud points out that Generation Z is more sensitive to amotivation than Generation X and Generation Y. Extrinsic regulation-material is a valid source of overall motivation for Generation Z only [3, p. 193]. In the present article we focus upon the scientists’ suggestion that the three newest generations commonly identified in demographic literature are as follows: Generation X (1965–1981), Generation Y (1982–1999) and Generation Z (2000–2012) [3, p. 194].

J. Twenge and S. Campbell claim that there are essential differences across generations in the way age groups connect events, people and experiences. Scientists emphasize that people belonging to the same generation share and experience similar historical, social and cultural events, which influence the development of their attitudes and values. Exploring generation differences in value, N. Schullery highlighted that each generational group has different values and characteristics that exert a direct impact on attitudes and behaviours. As a result, teachers need to detect and understand the generational difference, which may predict motivation to study in general and to learn the English language in particular. Accordingly, if students are not motivated to learn a foreign language, this will significantly affect the success of the process of study. The ultimate aim of each teacher is to understand and cater to the needs of Generation Xers in terms of their learning styles, values, attitudes and goals. R. Pritchard and E. Ashwood defined motivation as the “process used to allocate energy to maximise the satisfaction of needs” [5, p. 6]. Thus, motivation generates a desire within a student to dedicate their abilities to learning. In the literature the phenomenon of motivation is presented, on the one hand, as a process (J. Cooper, J. Donahoe), and, on the other hand, as an individual’s internal characteristics (F. Herzberg, A. Maslow).

Unlike the motivation theories mentioned above, self-determination theory can be employed to identify a range of motivations and their various results. The proponents of SDT highlight the following types of motivation: amotivation, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The scientists imply that the greatest self-determined and autonomous form of motivation is intrinsic motivation, the least self-determined and controlled form of motivation is external.

Amotivated students lack the longing and determination to study. In contrast, motivated learners easily identify a clear purpose of their studies. Motivated students experience both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation [3, p. 196–197].

Students learning to speak English may have different reasons for wanting to study English. Some students can learn English because it is on the curriculum; for others studying the language reflects some kind of choice. The purposes students have for learning will have an effect on what it is they want and need to learn and as a result will influence what they are taught.

The scientists (D. Laurillard, B. Tomlinson) underline that the ultimate aim of the teachers is to enable students to become “proficient self-regulators”. The students should not be recipients of information. In broad, they are supposed to use academic resources to develop their high-level cognitive skills. Different students have different reasons for education. In broad terms the forms of “motivation” or “orientation” of students to study are classified as intrinsic: focusing on the content or process of learning itself aimed at developing a deep understanding of the subject and a sense of self efficacy in relation to that; extrinsic: focusing on the rewards that result from academic study in terms of vocational or social advantage. These broad types of motivation are elaborated further by scientists as four categories of academic or personal, and vocational or social forms of motivation. Intrinsic academic orientation refers to the study of the subject for its own sake, for the intellectual challenge. Most students have a mix of orientations, and for many the focus is not the subject, but the other advantages of education. A variety of factors combines may contribute to a high level of motivation: attitudes to the target language and to speakers of the language; long-term and short-term goals the students strive for; self-esteem they want to earn and the need to achieve it; intrinsic interest, pleasure, challenge of the task; emotional engagement; group dynamic: competitive, collaborative or individualistic; teacher’s attitudes. As teachers we should always keep in mind that teachers may play a central role in motivating their learners to study.

The effective educational practices that are considered to motivate language learners and to engage them in their studies: set a personal example with your own behaviour; create a pleasant, stress-free atmosphere in the classroom; present the task properly; develop a good relationship with the learners; increase the learner’s linguistic self-confidence; make the language classes interesting; use collaborative learning techniques; promote learner’s autonomy; personalise the learning process; increase the learners’ goal-orientedness; familiarise learners with the target language culture.

Different students respond to various stimuli, such as pictures, sounds, music, movement. Experience and research have shown that some types of activities stimulate students into learning more than other things do. We may conclude that styles of learning of the students are to be taken into account when elaborating language-learning

materials and organising a language learning process in general. The scientists (J. Scrivener, B. Tomlinson) mention the following styles of learning of students: visual: learners prefer to see the language written down; auditory: learners prefer to hear the language; kinaesthetic learners prefer to do something physical; studial: learners like to pay conscious attention to the linguistic features and want to be correct; experiential: learners like to use the language and are more concerned with communication than with correctness; analytic: learners prefer to focus on discrete bits of the language and to learn them one by one; global: learners are happy to respond to whole chunks of language at a time and to pick up from them whatever language they can; dependent: learners prefer to learn from a teacher and from a book; independent: learners are happy to learn from their own experience of the language and to use autonomous learning strategies.

In order to find out the weak points of language teaching and possible relevant methods of teaching among students-future teachers, testing in the form of questionnaire was carried out. The third-year students of Odessa National I. I. Mechnikov University, faculty of Romance-Germanic philology, English language department, took part. We conducted interviews with 104 students. They were asked to respond to questions using a 5-point scale, from excellent (5) to poor (1). It contained the following questions:

1. What is good for students but is not done enough? The options for answers were: pairwork and groupwork; authentic materials; technology; extensive reading; projects.

2. Which methods of teaching and learning do you prefer? The suggested answers were: workshops; creative tasks; lectures; discussions; question and answer sessions.

The questionnaire aims to explore the most relevant methods and ways of teaching and learning from the viewpoint of our students, the representatives of digital natives. According to the obtained results, the types of activities that students lack in the language classroom are the use of technology and project work 28% and 27%, respectively. The results of the interview indicate that the methods of teaching and learning they prefer are creative tasks (42%).

The survey provided some useful insights into the problem of applying teaching and learning technologies for new generations of digital natives. In the present article we propose application of a participatory creative project in the English language classes as one of the teaching and learning technologies applicable to the new generation of digital natives.

Nik Peachey defined Project-based Learning as a student-centered form of learning that involves students spending sustained periods of study time exploring and attempting to solve real-life problems or carry out personally meaningful challenges. N. Tims and R. Sved point out the most substantial benefits of Project-based Learning: active engagement, real-world relevance, 21-st century skills, autonomy. Despite the enumerated advantages of application project work into the process of learning and teaching English, Project-based Learning has the so called barriers/weak points: covering syllabus and integrating target language, time constraints, language level, group dynamics, reflection and feedback, assessment.

In the present article we want to show the ways how to simplify the process of setting up the project work in the English language classroom and make this process more engaging for the students. We propose carrying out creative group projects at each lesson. The output of these projects done by the students should contribute to the overall project. By the term 'the overall' project we imply the final result that the students will achieve and then can be made in the form of a presentation. These projects are to take about 20–25 minutes and students are supposed to work in small groups of 3–4 students. Usually such projects occur closer to the end of the lesson and should be closely-related to the topic of the lesson. The aim of these projects conducted at each lesson is to practise language and skills from the lesson. We would like to underline that the output of each project taken separately must help the students achieve the aim, to complete and make the presentation of the project on the given topic.

We propose an application of the creative group project "Will the Tenses Agree?" for the first year students at their English Grammar classes in Odessa National Mechnikov University, the faculty of Romance-Germanic Philology. The project is followed by manageable step-by-step tasks to achieve real, practical outcomes. The project is aimed at creating and presenting a fairy tale. The special course under the title "Agreement Between the Tenses of Verbs" has been introduced into the curriculum as an option.

For the Project Blocks, they function as the constituents of the overall projects, the tasks can be:

1. decide on the type of a fairy tale and a name for it; add adjectives to the nouns to create a title. Students can make notes about the style of the fairy tale. They should consider the place of action/events;

2. think of the spatial continuum of the fairy tale; say where the events may take place; think about the protagonist, the antagonist, your story may involve imaginary creatures and magic; give them names;

3. agree on the appearance of the characters, share your favourite characters from fairy tales;

4. organise your fair tale in terms of plot. Contemplate the time continuum of the fairy tale;

5. design a cover for your fairy tale;

6. proofread and edit: make final changes and corrections, watch carefully for spelling, punctuation and grammar; agree on the harmony of tenses in the fairy tale;

7. agree on the general information to include in the introduction to a fairy tale;

8. present your fairy tale;

9. think about your project work. Complete the following sentences: Now I know how to ... write and ask questions about the past; invent creative details; do a role-play presentation. I really enjoyed... inventing a fairy tale; writing the plot; talking about our fairy tale.

The last Project Block involves students reflecting on the process of doing the project, whether they liked to work collaboratively, and find this kind of activity an creative one.

To bring the paper to a close, we summarise the main points here: to promote digital natives' intrinsic motivation for learning the English language educational instructors are to introduce creative activities combined with the use of technology in the language classroom.

The research perspectives are seen by us in the further development and application of the system of creative language activities with the use of technology for students as digital natives.

Bibliography:

1. Bagur-Femenías L., Buil-Fabrega M., Aznar J. P. Teaching digital natives to acquire competences for sustainable development. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*. Vol. 21, No. 6, 2020. P. 1053–1069
2. Cleveland S., Jackson B. C., Dawson M. Microblogging in higher education: Digital natives, knowledge, creation, social engineering, and intelligence analysis of educational tweets. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, Vol. 13, No. 1–2, 2016. P. 62–80.
3. Mahmoud A., Fuxman L., Mohr I., D. Reisel W. “We aren’t your reincarnation!” workplace motivation across X, Y and Z generations. *International Journal of Manpower*. Vol. 42. No. 1, 2021. P. 193–209.
4. Prensky M. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants Part 1. *On the Horizon*, Vol. 9. No. 5, 2001. P. 1–6.
5. Pritchard R., Ashwood E. *Managing Motivation: A Manager’s Guide to Diagnosing and Improving Motivation*. New York : Routledge, 2008. 190 p.
6. Riegel C., Mete R. Educational Technologies for K-12 Learners:
7. What Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants Can Teach One Another. *Educational Planning*. Vol. 24. 2017. P. 49–58.
8. Sadiku N. M. O., Shadare A. E., Musa S. M. Digital Natives. *International Journals of Advanced Research in Computer Science and Software Engineering*. Vol. 7. No 7, 2017. P. 125–126.
9. Zur O., Walker A. On Digital Immigrants and Digital Natives: How the Digital Divide Affects Families, Educational Institutions, and the Workplace. *Zur Institute. Innovative Resources and Online Continuing Education*. URL: <https://www.zurinstitute.com/resources/digital-divide/>

References:

1. Bagur-Femenías L., Buil-Fabrega M., Aznar J.P. Teaching digital natives to acquire competences for sustainable development. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*. Vol. 21 No. 6, 2020. P. 1053–1069.
2. Cleveland S., Jackson B. C., Dawson M. Microblogging in higher education: Digital natives, knowledge, creation, social engineering, and intelligence analysis of educational tweets. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, Vol. 13, No. 1–2, 2016. P. 62–80.
3. Mahmoud A., Fuxman L., Mohr I., D. Reisel W. “We aren’t your reincarnation!” workplace motivation across X, Y and Z generations. *International Journal of Manpower*. Vol. 42. No. 1, 2021. P. 193–209.
4. Prensky M. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants Part 1. *On the Horizon*, Vol. 9. No. 5, 2001. P. 1–6.
5. Pritchard R., Ashwood E. *Managing Motivation: A Manager’s Guide to Diagnosing and Improving Motivation*. New York : Routledge. 2008. 190 p.
6. Riegel C., Mete R. Educational Technologies for K-12 Learners: What Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants Can Teach One Another. *Educational Planning*. Vol. 24. 2017. P. 49–58.
7. Sadiku N. M. O., Shadare A. E., Musa S. M. Digital Natives. *International Journals of Advanced Research in Computer Science and Software Engineering*. Vol. 7. No 7, 2017. P. 125–126.
8. Zur O., Walker A. On Digital Immigrants and Digital Natives: How the Digital Divide Affects Families, Educational Institutions, and the Workplace. *Zur Institute. Innovative Resources and Online Continuing Education*. <https://www.zurinstitute.com/resources/digital-divide>

Хромченко О. В. Особливості навчання представників покоління цифрових аборигенів на заняттях з англійської мови

У статті досліджуються технології викладання та навчання для нових поколінь цифрових аборигенів, які сприятимуть їхній внутрішній мотивації до вивчення англійської мови. Завдяки ранньому знайомству з цифровою культурою та технологіями, представники нового покоління гарно розуміються на техніці та мають високу грамотність у сфері ІКТ.

Науковці визначають найважливіші характеристики цифрових аборигенів: в ході отримання знань спираються не лише на навчальні посібники, залучені до швидких дій методом проб і помилок, віддають перевагу відкриттю через дії, експерименти та взаємодію, а не шляхом роздумів; є «інтуїтивними учнями», вирішують проблеми «інтуїтивно»; надають перевагу швидкому й одночасному отриманню інформації з кількох підручних мультимедійних джерел; надають перевагу обробці та взаємодії з картинками, графікою, звуками та відео; знання часто здобуваються під час інтерактивних занять з використанням ігрових технологій навчання, тобто гейміфікації.

Беручи до уваги психологічні характеристики вихідців із цифрових технологій, ми, як педагоги, маємо змінити наші підходи до викладання, нашу методологію та зміст, щоб належним чином задовольнити потреби цього нового покоління молодих людей.

Аналіз результатів проведеного нами дослідження показали, що найактуальнішими методами та способами викладання та навчання з точки зору наших студентів, представників цифрових аборигенів, є використання технологій та проектна форма роботи.

Для розвитку внутрішньої мотивації студентів до вивчення англійської мови ми пропонуємо використовувати творчі групові проекти на мовних заняттях. Студенти спрямовані на вирішення питань, що пов’язані з реальним життям, або виконання індивідуальних завдань. Проект супроводжується керованими покроковими завданнями для досягнення реальних практичних результатів. Запропонований нами проект передбачає створення та презентацію казки.

Перспективи дослідження вбачаються нами в подальшому розвитку системи творчих завдань з використанням новітніх освітніх технологій для нового покоління учнів.

Ключові слова: цифрові аборигени, засоби, методи, технології навчання, внутрішня мотивація, проект, проектна робота.