DIGITAL NATIVES EVOLUTION. ORIGIN AND PROSPECTS OF 3D-GEN LEARNERS

ABSTRACT

The author describes a new type of learners originating from Prensky´s digital natives or children born after the 1980s. The newly coined concept of 3D-Gen learners (Gen 3D) that the author proposes is viewed through the prism of Generation Z (Gen Z), born in the 1990s-2000s, and Generation Y (Gen Y) or millennials, providing theoretical and practical support for the need for a new concept. According to the author, 3D-Gen learners can be defined as children aged 7 to 11, who were at a concrete operational stage of cognitive development as per Piaget´s classification when they coincided with the Pokémon Go popularity in 2016 or with any posterior mainstream or educational AR, VR, MR or XR game. Regardless of the type of educational establishment or its funds, education in the twenty-first century tends to be more immersive, ubiquitous, interactive, engaging and experiential than education at the end of the twentieth century in general and in second-language acquisition in particular. This paper analyses the academic literature on and practical techniques for dealing with technologically minded students in the second-language classroom who receive computer-assisted language learning, mobile-assisted language learning and technology-enhanced language learning. This paper reconsiders the relations between such dual-coding-theory elements as imagens (non-verbal, imaginal codes) and logogens (verbal-related codes) by taking a step forward from 2D-based systems to an immersive learning experience where physical and digital elements are equally important for home-based, office-based or school-based second-language training.

Keywords: 3D-Gen learners, digital natives, Generation Y, Generation Z, dual-coding theory, 21st-century classroom.