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The Role of New Technology in Teaching through Proverbs in Primary School

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Abstract

In the context of a digital age that covers all sectors of modern life, access to and use of technology by „digital native" students has been an area of much speculation. After being popularized firstly by Prensky (2001), the term „digital natives" started to represent the generation born after 1980. Since then, it was noticed that these young people share a common global culture defined less by age than by their experience on digital technology. It is clear that new technologies have become an important dimension in education at all its levels, providing the opportunity to bring it closer and closer to our usual support. What is also required is more in-depth investigation of the technology practices of these „digital natives" to understand how they are transforming their social and academic lives and, more importantly, how they are shaping technology to suit their lives and needs. It is also interesting to find out how technologies can be used to teach proverbs in primary school. Dilemmas such as the existence or non-existence of a relationship between pedagogy and folklore, how strong it is, what factors influence it and how much, have led over time to a number of serious controversies between specialists. Clearly, proverbs had, and have an influence on teaching people. This paper follows the importance of technologies use in education in relation with the necessity to teach proverbs in an attractive way to understand the importance of tradition and values of a nation.

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1. Introduction

An idea that has gained currency is that the generation born after 1980 grew up with access to new technologies and the Internet and is therefore inherently technology-savvy (Margaryan et al, 2009).This generation has been termed Digital Natives, Millenials or Net Generation and they have grown up surrounded by technology and are characterized by their ability for multitask, their dependence on technology to maintain social contact, their openness to share content, and their ability to rapidly understand and adopt new technologies (Oblinger, Oblinger, 2005; Prensky, 2001; Dede, 2005). The followers of this idea claim that, not only does this generation have sophisticated skills in using digital technologies, but also that, through their exposure to these technologies, they have developed radically new cognitive capacities and learning styles (Prensky, 2001).The spread of new technology around the globe has occurred at a rapid pace. This expansion has changed lives for millions of people with new technology providing social media communication capabilities and instant access to a vast range of information and entertainment services. It is important for us not to lose sight of the usefulness of the folklore values which could now be emphasized in an optimal way in education through the new technologies. This will link the new to the old, or in other words, what nowadays immediately captures the students' attention to the age-old teachings of proverbs. Dilemmas such as the existence or non-existence of a relationship between pedagogy and folklore, how strong it is, what factors influence it and how much, have led over time to a number of serious controversies between specialists. Clearly, proverbs had, and have an influence on teaching people. There is a very strong link between folklore and pedagogy. This has always been the case. Similarly, folklore is linked with literature, and related with all high creation from all nations. Folklore means school – it was the only type of education before the actual schools – and after formal education appeared, it still remains an immortal source of inspiration. We can examine the links between folklore and pedagogy in two aspects: one that represents the value of folklore, as teaching material, and the other of ideas of education, which forms the core beliefs of each group of people about education (Stoian, 1978).

1.1. Primary School students - Digital Natives

The term "digital natives", popularized by Prensky (2001), represent the generation born after 1980 when a technological disparity between the youth of the time and their parent and teachers has emerged. It was noticed that these young people share a common global culture defined less by age than by their experience on digital technology. Additionally, Prensky introduced also the concept of „digital immigrants" defining those who were not born into the digital world and which will never be able to master the use of technology to support engaging education.

The variance of technological experience of digital natives (Prensky, 2007) has induced changes in the interaction with information technologies and has affected the ways they relate with one another, other people and institutions. In the academic environment, an attempt to bridge the supposed gap between digital natives and digital immigrants prompted arguments for radical changes in education teaching approaches and professional development.

The lack of empirical data and tests didn't impact the development of the literature describing the characteristics of digital natives. These characteristics can be outlined as: a high level of digital aptitude, the ability to multitask, literacy in multiple media, constant connectivity, the need for speed in delivery of information, a culture of sharing information and a unique attitude towards education (Barnes et. al., 2007; Prensky, 2004; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Dede, 2005).

Lately, a number of technology-specific classroom implementation studies have emerged from educational digital games, simulations, podcasting, to the use of blogs, wikis, social networking services and even virtual worlds. It is still unclear whether the motivation for these implementations of new technologies in the classroom stems from the needs and abilities of the students or simply the emergence or availability of the technology.