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Topical Issues of Linguistics and Teaching Methods in Business and Professional Communication

WHY DON'T WE HEAR THE VOICE OF THE MODERN YOUTH?

Svetlana N. Popova (a) *
*Corresponding author

(a) Department of Foreign Languages, Economic faculty, RUDN University, Moscow, Russia, popova_sn@pfur.ru

Abstract

The article is devoted to the current issue concerning the modern youth. At present adolescents are demonstrating extreme individualism, unwillingness to cooperate and collaborate with their peers at lessons and life. They lack skills of comprehension, reflection, sympathy and compassion. As a result problems with the soft skills development arise more often. Students cannot fulfil conventional tasks at lessons, do not take part in conversations, ignore group projects. They prefer individual tasks and ways of learning. At the same time the modern society and the labour market are also changing. Interestingly, employers are more likely to hire a person with minimum individualistic behaviour, as international companies reach more success when they have strong and capable members working together as an integral organism. Using methods of observation, interview, experiment and findings from the field of neuropsychology the author proposes certain strategies that may help the youth to overcome the difficulties with communication and meet the demands of the future employers. Among the strategies are mental maps, 'disappearing text' technique, problematic quest situation, storytelling, 'Six thinking hats' technology and others.

Keywords: Adolescents, Generation Z, motivation, soft skills, storytelling

1. Introduction

Today's youth do not have the skills of self-presentation. Students often belittle their merits, announce an unsuccessful answer in advance, thereby setting themselves and the audience for a deliberately failed performance.

One of the possible reasons for this can be called the transition of secondary schools to distance learning in 2019. For two years students did not have the opportunity to participate in school events where it is required to perform on stage and recite poetry, overcoming fear of public presentation. Moreover, the youth was not able to defend their school projects in front of the jury, as it was done online in the years of the pandemic.

In the meantime, young people dream of high positions, successful business and material wealth, but do not take into account the importance and relevance of the ability to build clear and logical monologues, to convey their thoughts to the audience, to interact with it, to answer questions and respond to criticism adequately. What is more, they should be able to lead constructive dialogues, to reach consensus through negotiations.

2. Problem Statement

Young people of the present time prefer to delegate these responsibilities to older generations (X and Y) (Popova & Kiziria, 2017). Adolescents become helpless even at the first difficulties in communicating with classmates and group-mates.

It was also noticed that when the young people are offered to choose from a monologue or a dialogue form of presentation, they prefer a monologue statement, or, it happens, that one person prepares the dialogue for two participants alone (Vićević et al., 2021).

It was also noticed that the younger generation is not able to fulfil the task of matching the cues of the dialogue according to the logic and the given communicative situation. The task is estimated as a 'rather difficult' by the youth themselves.

3. Research Questions

Difficulties with the exercises that are aimed at development of cooperation skills, team work and collaboration could occur due to the lack of live communication experience. The reason for the modern trend to prefer monologues to dialogues is not the absence of a partner in the audience. It could be the unwillingness to cooperate and adapt to a different rhythm and style of work. The new mode of behaviour should have its grounding and triggers. In the article we are considering some of the possible reasons for it.

that help to communicate thoughts clearly. Students should be able to speak to group mates, to listen to the interlocutor, to build relationships in a team, to develop emotional intelligence, to establish contact and position themselves in the community.

4. Purpose of the Study

Such "harmless" features can later lead to serious violations in communication of young people with their peers and colleagues in the future. As a result, they may lack the experience of interpersonal relationship. There may be an increase of conflicts due to misunderstanding and inability to negotiate. To date, there are many master-classes and courses that teach you how to speak, listen, remember, analyse, speak out and be heard. However, all the soft skills can be and should be developed as part of the curriculum at schools and universities. Joint project activities, holding conferences, discussions, seminars contribute to the development of skills that help to communicate thoughts clearly. Students should be able to speak to group mates, to listen to the interlocutor, to build relationships in a team, to develop emotional intelligence, to establish contact and position themselves in the community.

5. Research Methods

A research in the field of neuropsychology has found out that the centres of speech in the brain are associated with the development of memory divisions (Owlcation, PSYCGEEK, 2021). The lack of speech practice reduces the amount of memorized information significantly, erudition and the general intellectual development of adolescents suffer.

Young people are increasingly experiencing problems with remembering new information, such as new lexical units. Students often complain about their inability to come up with their own examples to illustrate the differences of the word meaning (of modal verbs, for example.) (Langlois, 2020).

The authors' personal working experience helped to conduct the research and to draw conclusions. The period of close observation and analysis took about two years. The overall time of working with students of different ages and motivation comprises more than nineteen years. Active and passive observation, interview and experiment as the key methods of the research together with official surveys and state research grounds speak to the truth of the above presumption. Some of the meaningful results are going to be described further in the article.

6. Findings

6.1. Strategies

The following strategies can help learners to master a large amount of information successfully while expanding vocabulary: compiling mental maps to capturing new lexical items; "disappearing text" technique when working with texts for retelling and dialogues; studying grammar by the inductive method.

The motivation of students to studying and academic tasks is extremely low today. It is necessary to diversify the content of classes, fill them with authentic and updated information.

As part of teaching English, it is proposed to introduce elements of work with well-known podcasts, such as tedtalks.com, breakingnewsenglish.com, flo-joe.com, listenaminute.com. Many of them already have a set of basic exercises that help to reinforce new vocabulary, check understanding of what

the students read and hear. With the help of suggestive questions they help to form and argue an individual point of view on the facts and events presented.

It is also necessary to train the ability to use the information received in life, to find and extract from educational content the knowledge that can and should be applied to reality.

To do this, it is recommended to create conditions for a problematic quest situation with elements of gamification; stimulate the search for scattered facts that need to be connected into a single whole in order to complete the task and receive encouragement (Mindy, 2016).

6.2. Storytelling

Another technique to strengthen motivation is storytelling. It is extremely popular nowadays and is appreciated all over the world. Stories are very familiar to the humanity as their form has been modified from fairy-tales, legends and sagas that our ancestors used in order to pass the experience of one generation to another. Usual life reality is interpreted there in such a way that it is no longer banal and boring to talk about and, most importantly, it is introduced as someone else's experience. This particular feature makes it possible for the listeners to draw parallels with their own lives without being hurt or humiliated. That is why the message of such a story is more likely to rich the mind of the listener than that of a direct critical remark. That is why storytelling is becoming more and more popular in teaching.

This technique proves to be effective in different countries and with different generations. With the help of a good story it is possible to touch upon a great variety of topics. At the same time, as it is understandable to masses of people, it helps to create a common energetic and intellectual outcome that is able to bring different nationalities together and to create a sense of community and mutual thinking. There is no unique pattern of a good story, but, in order to make it more appealing, it is advisable to invent a story that is:

- **Entertaining:** to attract the attention of the masses and to support the feeling of anticipation till the end.
- **Educational:** as they should add to the reader's or listener's experience and open new horizons to them.
- **Universal:** in order to rich as many minds and souls as possible.
- **Organized:** as they are supposed to follow a certain algorithm or a laconic plot development in order to convey the message.
- **Appealing:** as a really good story or, at least, the message of it is remembered for the whole life. (Decker, 2021).

6.3. Demand and supply

We need to admit that it is becoming more difficult to develop communicative skills and to boost motivation of the modern youth nowadays. Computerization of the society, coronavirus isolation and social networking have made the youth less creative, they are becoming more indifferent to other people's problems, demonstrate less empathy and tend to avoid live-communication (Malyuga, 2016).

Interestingly, the situation at the labor market requires people with the opposite set of characteristics. The majority of human resources managers are looking for real team-players and avoid

employing individualists. They believe that employees should be ready to collaborate to achieve better results. Patrick Lencioni (2020), a modern business management researcher, has named three main features each employee should possess to collaborate in a team for more effective work.

"Humbleness" is the first feature, as every modern member of staff should be able to take into consideration the interests of the other team mates. The second important characteristic is "being hungry" to achieve something beyond the given task due to natural curiosity and inner motivation. Finally, it is important to be "emotionally smart" in order to demonstrate empathy and to be able to collaborate for getting a better result. "It is when you delegate responsibilities or step back in an argument, because you realize that the person is better than you at a certain activity or sphere and letting him do it will be better for the company, for the business, etc." (Lencioni, 2020).

It is obvious that the employers are looking for the qualities the modern youth are lacking. One of the most obvious reasons for such a deficit is total computerization of all the spheres of modern life and going online at the time of the pandemic.

6.4. Six Thinking Hats Technology

In order to annihilate the tendency for individualism and to train collaborative skills we suggest using the thinking technique of 6 hats at the lessons. What is Six Thinking Hats? This is a technique worked out by a philosopher and psychologist Edward de Bono to help individuals and teams look at problems and situations from a variety of perspectives. The essence of the task is to imagine yourself an expert of a particular kind when dealing with a problem.

If you are wearing a black hat – think about risks and possible problems of the issue under consideration. When you change for a yellow hat, you point of view should shift to positive sides of the question, prospects and plans. If you change for the white hat, your sphere of interests should become pure facts and numbers etc.

In essence, the six hats direct you on '**how to think**' rather than '**what to think**', which means it can be applied universally. As identified by De Bono it simplifies thinking by maintaining focus on one element at a time and allowing a change in thinking while minimising conflict between members in a group. By defining the perspective for a group, the benefits are a reduction of negative conflict and encouraged co-operation.

7. Conclusion

All of the above strategies are primarily aimed at strengthening the motivation for academic knowledge and learning activities. Only modern, dynamic and interesting lesson content is able to attract the attention of young people, optimize the learning process and make the voice of young people sound more confident.

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