

## LANGUAGE LEARNERS OF THE DIGITAL AGE: “LEARN TURKISH WORDS AND VERBS WITH FLASHCARDS FOR ANDROID”

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### ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, the use of digital technologies has become widespread and has become an integral part of life in every field. This has given rise to a new generation, Generation Z, who not only participate in life in the digital age but also grow, develop, and live with the profound effects of these technologies. Their career expectations and learning situations are markedly different from those of previous generations. As Generation Z enters the business world, the notion that decisions will be made by systems and artificial intelligence, thereby potentially reducing the challenges they face, becomes more prominent.

Although there has been no radical change between generations, significant educational advances have occurred. The changing world, economic conditions, and business life have required individuals not to stay in a fixed place in terms of education but to improve themselves and progress cumulatively. The number of individuals who attend university after compulsory education and then obtain master's and doctorate degrees for better job opportunities is increasing as Generation Z comes. The most important reason for this is that business areas prefer individuals who are equipped in every field. The new generation in the digital age is the first to grow up with digital technology.

Today, digital media is an essential tool for language learners of the digital generation. It contains unlimited and very different materials for teaching/learning both language and grammar. A more important feature of digital media is that it attracts students' attention with its applications used in language teaching. This research explains generational theories and language learners of the digital age with the sample application "Learning Turkish Words and Verbs with Flashcards for Android."

**Keywords:** Digitalization, Generations, Turkish, Language Teaching, Digital Language Teaching Tools.

### Introduction

The 21st century is an age surrounded by technology, and we are immersed in technology in every field. We can define groups consisting of individuals who live in the same periods and have common characteristics with different generations. Generation classification in the 21st century is done as Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Y, Millennials, and Generation Z.

People's perceptions, expectations, priorities, perspectives on life, and behaviors change depending on the concept of time. The fact that people born in close periods have similar characteristics and each generation has different characteristics has led researchers to be interested in the concept of generation and the characteristics of generations.

Different definitions between disciplines are observed when the historical development of generation perception is examined. Academic studies on this subject vary according to the literature. The concept of generation that emerges due to inter-individual differences has enabled the emergence of important research areas in disciplines such as historical, sociological, psychology, and management science. Thus, from studies conducted worldwide, generational distinctions have been defined based on country and cultural differences, allowing classifications to be made according to cultural phenomena. The literature shows that these classifications and historical ranges differ according to social events and cultural influences. Generations with different characteristics living together and sharing their cultural riches and collective consciousness have brought about many problems and conflicts, especially communication problems (Joshi et al., 2011).

Although there has been no radical change between generations, significant progress has been made in education. The changing world, economic conditions, and business life have required individuals not to stay in a fixed place in terms of education but to improve themselves and progress cumulatively.

With the rapid development of technology, there have also been significant changes in the field of education. Language teaching, in particular, is being reshaped by the opportunities brought by the digital age. Traditional Turkish language teaching methods are based on printed materials such as textbooks, paper, and pencils. However, with the digital age's interactive media and software tools, students' language learning experiences are greatly enriched. For example, thanks to language learning applications, students can improve their vocabulary, reinforce grammar rules, and practice through interactive games.

In the digital age, interaction outside the classroom is also gaining importance. Virtual classroom environments effectively allow students to improve their language skills. Live lessons with video conferencing tools allow students to interact with each other and their teachers in real-time. Additionally, students are encouraged to improve their writing skills through online discussion forums and blogs.

With the widespread use of the Internet, various digital content and resources for Turkish language teaching have become easily accessible. Students can improve their language skills using online dictionaries, grammar resources, and media content. Additionally, accessing Turkish literature through digital libraries can make language learning more enjoyable.

The digital age allows for the customization of learning experiences. It is possible to offer customized learning programs and materials according to student's interests, language skills, and learning speed. In this way, each student can follow a learning path that suits his or her needs and learn a language more effectively.

### **Content of the Concept of Generation**

The concept of generation is a set of individuals forming age groups of approximately twenty to twenty-five years. The words generation or generation are also used instead of generation. Turkish Language Association Dictionary of Philosophical Terms defines the concept of generation as a group of people who were born in approximately the same years, had the conditions of the same age, therefore experienced similar troubles and destinies, and were obliged to similar duties (<https://sozluk.gov.tr/>). In other words, generation refers to a structure that is similar in many aspects (years of birth, the society in which one was born and the cultural climate of that society, the economic, political, legal, and social movements and understandings, value judgments, behavior, and attitude patterns prevailing in the relevant year intervals). In this context, each generation has different qualities and criteria for evaluating events and facts, as well as positive and negative sides (Keleş, 2011: 131).

In Turkish culture, the concept of generation is expressed as a group of individuals united in new ways, with a new understanding and a new sense of life, and who were separated by clear lines in the past. These explanations show us that generations are groups of individuals who live in the same periods and have common characteristics. When grouping different generation groups, looking only from an age perspective is not a sufficient phenomenon to explain generation differences and their relationships with other generations. In order to make sense of the perspectives and working styles of different generations and to ensure the construction of a healthy cultural structure, defining the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the community that makes up the generations should also be used to classify them (Zemke et al., 2013; 4). Working styles shaped by momentous events, social trends, and organizational cultures arise from generational differences. However, each generation develops its unique perspective on right and wrong in that job and creates its rights and wrongs accordingly (ERC Report, 2011). This situation affects the organizational culture and forms the basis of cultural differences and communication problems between generations working together in organizations.

On average, a new generation is born every twenty years and has typical desires, needs, motivations, and actions. The concept of generation and its classification are the subject of different interdisciplinary research today. Additionally, the classification and perception of generations varies from culture to culture. In this research, generation concepts will be explained through the concepts of Traditional, Baby Boom, X, Y, Millennium, and Z Generation. Each generation has its characteristics, values, judgments, attitudes, strengths, and weaknesses. However, it should not be forgotten that there are stereotypical expressions when explaining each generation. Moreover, while defining generations within a group, we cannot state that everyone has every characteristic (Lower, 2008).

### **Method**

To show the function of WEB 2.0 tools in the language teaching process of language learners of the digital age: "In this research, which aims to provide information about Learn Turkish Words and Verbs with Flashcards for Android and to teach language to the digital generation with this application, the document analysis method was used. *Document review* is a technique that includes the analysis of materials containing information about the phenomena targeted to be investigated (Şimşek and Yıldırım, 2016). "Document analysis is a systematic method used to examine and evaluate all documents, including printed and electronic materials. Like other methods used in qualitative research, document analysis requires examining and interpreting data to derive meaning, create an understanding of the subject, and develop empirical knowledge." (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; cited in Kırıl, 2020: 173).

## Generation Theories

Generation theory and generation reality are pretty old. They have been discussed in different parts of the world and have been the subject of scientific research. Examinations are made on age groups, taking into account social, psychological, economic, and geographical factors, and results are to be obtained with scientific data on these groups' perspectives on life, their reactions, expectations, and perceptions of life.

Each country's generation development is different. Generational characteristics are affected by countries' socio-cultural characteristics and development levels. For this reason, countries should carry out generation studies by considering their social characteristics.

## Traditionalists Generation

The traditionalist generation includes individuals born between 1900 and 1945. This generation, consisting of loyal, consistent, and harmonious individuals, was born during World War II. It emerged during World War II and consists of individuals who obey the rules (Kyles, 2005, 54). This generation, also known as the Silent Generation or War Generation, was caused by unemployment worldwide, causing people to save money and live a simple life (Demirkaya, Akdemir, Karaman, and Atan, 2015, 188).

The psychology of parents who lived in this period of high social disintegration and who raised the silent generation was greatly affected. This generation, which experienced the crush of destruction and the happiness of the Republic, gave great responsibility to the generation it raised. The post-1920 generation is called the "Republic Generation" in Turkey.

The common perception of this generation is to preserve what exists to exist. That is why they stuck to the rules. However, they did not favor radical changes in the traditions of the years and sometimes opposed them. The technological device that this generation has is the radio. It is a generation that started to develop in almost every field with the Republic and is proud of it. While the state tries to reach every part of the country, education and awareness also come to the fore in this period. (Yalçın et al., 2013, 140-141).

Traditionalist Generation II. In World War II's destructive atmosphere, he struggled to survive above all else. It is essential to examine other generations after this generation. The "Cold War" period began when the world was divided into Western civilization, the Eastern Bloc, the Islamic world, and the Third World. During this period, pop culture expanded its sphere of influence with the support of the media (Senbir, 2004, 22-23).

## Baby Boomers

They are children of the Cold War period born after the war between 1945 and 1965. This generation, also called the Sandwich Generation, is a generation that is prone to spending and having fun, feeling the longing for growth, prosperity, goods, and services. In the communist bloc, anti-Western policies maintained their validity throughout this generation. The baby boom generation is the generation that was born and grew up in the East-West opposition and created the 68 generations (Kupperschmidt, 2000, 69; Senbir, 2004, 23-24).

The most important feature that brings this generation to a different point among all generations is that they are the architects of the legendary 68 generation. The 68 generation is the first generation that grew up with television and realized that television is an effective means of communication. This awareness made it easier for them to move the movement, which started at a local level, to a global dimension through television (Benlisoy, 2008, 31; cited in Altuntuğ, 2012, 205). Baby boomers do not face problems like their parents. They grew up during a period of significant economic growth and prosperity. They attach great importance to youth, health, personal satisfaction, and wealth (Clausing, Kurts, Prendeville, and Walt, 2003, 373).

This generation grew up in a period of continued economic and educational growth and was educated in the traditional system with well-prepared teachers and rigorous academic standards. They graduated in primary school based on their ability to share and work together. At university, they studied humanities. It is a workaholic generation that is willing to work. (Kupperschmidt, 2000, 68-69). One-quarter of this generation with high education levels has undergraduate and graduate degrees (Crumpacker and Crumpacker, 2007, 353).

## Generation X

Generation X, born between 1965 and 1977, is also called the Lost Generation. This generation, living with anxiety about the future, is more focused on working, making a career, and making money. For Türkiye, this generation is defined as "Transition Period Children."

This generation was introduced to technology and incorporated it into their lives at a late age. These individuals, raised by the Silent Generation and the Baby Boom Generation, have developed their ability to take

responsibility and work productively individually due to the education they received and the reflections of the conditions experienced by the educators. Raised by generations that grew up with problems, these individuals also have strong problem-solving skills. Their perspective on life is result-oriented rather than process-oriented. (Yalçın et al., 2013, 150).

They are the first generation to have a personal computer and the internet. Members of the generation are resourceful and independent. This independence has been taken to new dimensions with technological progress. Education is necessary for this generation (Clausing et al., 2003, 373; Crumpacker and Crumpacker, 2007, 354; Kupperschmidt, 2000, 69). This generation, which has witnessed essential changes in Turkey and the world, has witnessed the spread of television in Turkey, the transition to color television, and the emergence of the computer (Yalçın et al., 2013, 148-149).

### **Generation Y**

This is the generation born between 1977 and 1994. This generation, also known as the Future Generation, Digital Generation, Copy Boom, Net Generation, and Indigos, is called the "Post-80 Generation" in Turkey. Generation Y children are good with technology, individual, comfortable, and the children of a world that is beginning to globalize. It is also the generation in which the reflections of the contented and idealistic spirits of their older brothers and sisters, the Xs, continue. (Demirkaya et al., 2015, 189; Senbir, 2004, 25).

Individuals of this age do not see computers and other electronic devices as technology because they have been in them and have had them since they were born. Generation Y sees higher education as expensive. Employees of this generation work in workplaces with high-quality education and several educated people, but they need better communication and problem-solving skills (Crumpacker and Crumpacker, 2007, 354).

Generation Y in Turkey has developed in parallel with the world and is accompanied by global developments. In Turkey, as in the rest of the world, members of this generation attach importance to factors such as trying new things, success, and earning money. This versatile generation has quickly come to the fore in family and business life. While this generation obtains information cheaply and effortlessly thanks to technology, it has made the position of educators difficult, and "information has begun to lose its sanctity." The role of educators has turned into a position of guiding, guiding, and leading rather than teaching (Yalçın et al., 2013, 153).

### **Millennials**

These are children born between 1994 and 2003. They are the first interactive generation, which is also called the "Digital Generation" in Turkey. This generation is not only intertwined with technology but also with technological, individualistic, and fastidious global citizens.

Millennial children mainly connect to the internet to download games. They use their own coded language of abbreviations. Millennial children prefer to correspond rather than talk, even if they sit beside each other. Most of these children are sensitive about nature and are reactive to the brands of institutions that harm nature. Millennials, the older brothers and sisters of the Z babies, are the most interactive and international generation to date. (Senbir, 2004, 58-59).

### **Generation Z**

Generation Z, the first cohort of the 21st century, born in 2003 and later, exhibits a unique set of characteristics. Their reliance on the internet is striking, a trait that sets them apart from previous generations. They are avid followers of technological advancements, engaging in uninterrupted communication through various channels such as mobile phones and social networking sites. This generation is not only vocal about their desires but also enjoys continuous and enhanced access to information.

After 2000, technology progressed and reached its peak worldwide. The main feature that distinguishes Generation Z, which emerged in this period, from other generations is that they are very ambitious. Another difference from other generations is that they can receive information very quickly, analyze it, and comment on the subject (Mishra et al., 2012: 97).

Generation Z is at the very center of the internet. This generation uses technology very well and is younger than other generations. In particular, they can perform their daily tasks quickly and easily and perform many tasks simultaneously, which puts them one step ahead of other generations.

Generation Z individuals, who see the time they spend away from the internet and social media as a waste, are speedy in speaking, learning, thinking, growing, and consuming. These individuals have much higher IQ, self-

confidence, and ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously than previous generations. Therefore, the education methods of previous generations need to be improved for this generation's individuals. When a school-age individual Z does not do his homework, his reason is "I got sick, I couldn't do it." not, "My internet connection was broken, I couldn't do it." this has changed too. The abundance of opportunities offered by technology, lack of concentration and carelessness, and the fact that they do not care about the concept of authority compared to other generations show that different education models should be developed for the individuals of this generation (Oyman, Orkun and Turan, 2013, 80-81; Saniyer, 2015, 33).

In today's world, factors such as technology, evolving social values, changing career perceptions, and shifting education and working conditions necessitate a multidimensional evaluation of generations. The field of education has witnessed a rapid increase in generation studies, particularly in light of the profound influence of technological advancements on the lifestyles of different generations. It is crucial for educators and researchers to understand and adapt to these changes, as they significantly impact education and students.

### **Language Learners of the Digital Age: “Learn Turkish Words and Verbs with Flashcards for Android”**

Changing world conditions and technology making its presence felt in every field, as well as the increase in the level of welfare and lifespan of people, cause generations to stay in business life for a long time and to stay in business life even after retirement. There are members of different generations in institutions, including the silent Generation, baby boom generation, Generation X, and Generation Y, most of whom are retired (Becerikli, 2013: 6). While some of Generation Z are actively involved in business life, some of them are looking for a job.

Members of the traditional Generation represent the oldest group in today's business life. The work values of this Generation in business life are their respect for authority, the importance they attach to honesty, and their ability to postpone satisfaction rather than reach it immediately. The Baby Boom generation, like the employees of the Silent Generation, experienced the poverty periods and hardships of the post-war period. Members of this Generation have turned to jobs where they feel more valuable in their careers. They have excellent knowledge of business life. However, they expect their thoughts and decisions to be approved and appreciated by generations X and Y (Erden Ayhün, 2013: 104).

The life characteristics of Generation According to the Baby Boom generation, are the independent Generation, loves autonomy, is technically skilled, and tries to create a work-life balance in addition to being self-confident (Kerse, 2016: 6). Generation Y has high expectations from life, is seen as the youngest Generation, the one with the best relationship with media and communication, the essential freedom, and the most consumerist Generation compared to other generations (Acıhoğlu, 2015: 40-47). Therefore, they need to be part of a team and work with a team. They are individuals who take care to use existing technology in the best way possible in their work and who can multitask with high adaptability. Since Generation Y wants to continue their development in business life, their motivation can be kept high with various projects, training programs, and personalized career plans. They want to rise to the top in a short time, thinking that they can learn quickly and get used to it quickly. Members of this Generation want to establish their own businesses where they can use their talents, highlight their creativity, and freely evaluate their ideas, instead of the rules set by others.

Generation Z's career expectations are different from those of previous generations. With its entry into business life, the view that systems and artificial intelligence will make decisions effectively, and therefore, members of this Generation will face fewer problems, comes to the fore. The most distinctive feature of this Generation is its ability to adapt quickly to new developments and speed.

The digital Generation has advanced knowledge and skills regarding information technologies compared to previous generations and can use multiple media effectively with all their possibilities (McMahon and Possipil, 2005, 422). Individuals' ability to do more than one job at the same time has improved. Generation Z students do homework and engage in different activities at the same time. This Generation uses screen-based information technology products in every field, including their daily lives, and they have advanced visual literacy skills compared to previous generations (Prensky, 2001b, 5).

Generation Z individuals generally express themselves through social media and use information technology to obtain information. They manage their own data using web technologies instead of libraries, integrate the information they find from other sources with their own, and share this information with others. Therefore, individuals in the digital age now acquire and share information digitally.

Learners of the digital age are bored with written texts. While we generally prefer multimedia materials such as pictures, sounds, animations, and videos to obtain information, speed, visuality, and entertainment are at the



forefront of accessing information (Günüç, 2011, 5; Karabulut, 2015, 17; Prensky, 2001a, 2; Şahin, 2009). 162; Veen, 2007, 3). This Generation prefers to research and learn through digital resources. They research their homework online through internet resources.

Students of this Generation can access information faster and more, thanks to the opportunities of technology, compared to previous generations. In this age where access to information is more significant than in the past, the reliability of the information source is also an important issue. Students should evaluate every information they obtain from a critical perspective. Students who can criticize also learn to think analytically and blend instead of relying on the first source they access.

Another feature related to the digital age learner is the right to intellectual property (Lozenzo and Dziuban, 2006, 9). Students should be informed about copyright, as they can get all the information they need from the Internet through digital resources. They should be warned to act by scientific research and ethical rules.

Generation Z learners can generally learn on their own in online environments. For this reason, they design personalized learning experiences according to individual needs and preferences. Generation Z students learn through trial and error (Günüç, 2011, 2). In summary, Generation Z students prefer collaborative, active, and personalized learning in line with their individual needs and preferences.

Students prefer to avoid traditional teaching methods; they prefer parallel learning and reading random sections in texts, i.e., they do not like to read in a linear order. Digital natives have different ways of searching, using, and creating information. When learners of the digital age are hungry for information, they use the Internet as their guide instead of asking an expert. Instead of going to libraries, they prefer digital libraries. The perspective of digital-age learners towards libraries, which provide a quiet study environment and information resources, has also changed.

The exemplary behavior of digital-age learners is that they export the knowledge they have acquired and try to increase it by sharing it. Generation Z learners convey many events in their daily lives to the outside world through social media. For this reason, learning has become an activity aimed at exporting.

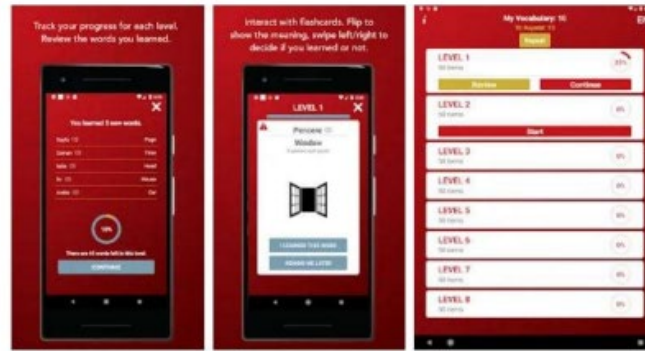
With the Learn Turkish Words and Verbs with Flashcards application, users can learn how words are used in daily life and listen to how words are pronounced. The application, which includes words of different types, such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs, has different learning levels, and users can choose activities appropriate to their level (Kökçü, 2023).

With the development of technology, language learning has become more accessible and fun. Learning a language, primarily via mobile devices, offers the opportunity to practice anytime, anywhere. Many applications can be used on Android devices for those who want to learn Turkish. Among these, applications that focus on learning words and verbs using flashcards are popular and effective. When the advantages of language teaching with flashcards are examined:

- Repetition and Remembering: Flashcards effectively repeat words and verbs and make them permanent in memory. Constantly repeating words and their meanings helps them become more easily remembered.
- Attractive Visuals: Flashcards are often presented with visual content, so they help learn the meaning of words and verbs more effectively.
- Customizable: Flashcard applications allow users to create their word lists and edit them as they wish. This allows users to learn words that match their personal interests.
- Independence of Time and Place: Thanks to mobile applications, learning Turkish with flashcards is possible anytime and anywhere. This allows users to manage the language learning process flexibly.

Flashcards Apps for Android:

- User-Friendly Interface: Most flashcard applications have an easy and understandable interface. Users can easily find words and verbs and track their studies.
- Lessons and Categories: Applications usually present words by dividing them into categories. For example, essential Turkish words may be divided into categories such as travel and food.
- Progress Tracking: Users can track their learning progress through the application and thus see which areas they need to practice more.
- Voice Pronunciation: Some applications allow users to listen to the correct pronunciation of words. This is useful for improving speaking skills.faydalıdır.



**Figure 1: Learn Turkish Words and Verbs with Flashcards for Android. It offers advanced content as well as essential Turkish words and verbs.**

- Flashcards supported with visual and audio content are available.
- It allows you to create and edit your word and verb lists.
- It makes the learning process fun with games and quizzes.

Thanks to mobile devices, learning Turkish words and verbs using flashcards has become an easy and effective process. Such applications, which can be used on Android devices, enrich the language learning experience with their customizable features and user-friendly interfaces. Anyone who wants to learn Turkish can benefit from these advantages by trying flashcard applications.

### Conclusion, Discussion, and Recommendations

Learners of the digital age differ in many respects compared to previous generations. Since they were born and raised in the age of technology, technology has always been at the forefront of language learning environments. In other words, digital technologies have become indispensable for learners of this age. This generation wants to benefit from digital technologies in almost every aspect. While other generations only benefit from libraries and books as sources of information, Generation Z learners want to use multimedia materials such as sound, animation, visual materials, and videos as information sources, and speed and visuality are at the forefront.

Language learners of the digital age can access information in a shorter time than previous generations. In this context, the information must be reliable. Today's learners need to learn to find information and evaluate it from a critical perspective. Students with such a perspective need to learn and apply the information they have accessed as a result of detailed research, not just benefit from every source they access.

The use of Web 2.0 tools makes language teaching more interactive, entertaining, and student-focused. With these tools, students can direct their learning processes and improve their language skills more quickly. Using digital materials and applications in teaching Turkish improves students' language learning processes and helps teachers renew their teaching methodologies.

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