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GENERATION Z STUDENTS' PREFERENCES IN LEARNING EFL IN KAZAKHSTAN: AN ONLINE SURVEY STUDY

This study analyses the preferences of Generation Z students (first-year students, aged 17-18) regarding the study of English as a foreign language at universities in Kazakhstan. The aim of this study is to identify the opinions of first-year students (aged 17-18), representatives of Generation Z, regarding their preferred methods of learning English as a foreign language, as well as to determine the factors that influence their interest and engagement in the educational process. Empirical basis: an online survey of 93 students, analysed using descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis of open-ended responses. Particular attention is paid to interest and academic engagement, the role of social media, preferences for interactive/visual formats, attitudes towards AI tools, as well as characteristics of learning behaviour – from time management and concentration to expectations regarding feedback. The results demonstrate enthusiasm for visual and interactive methods, social media and digital tools: students prefer short tasks and rapid feedback, which fits perfectly with their dynamic learning style. Attitudes towards AI are mixed – they recognise its benefits but fear a loss of autonomy and critical thinking. The conclusions emphasise that it is time to adapt English teaching to the digital habits of Zoomers. Practical value lies in recommendations for curricula and the integration of technology into language education.

Keywords: generation Z, language learning, students' preferences, Kazakhstani universities, social media in language learning, AI in education, language education in Kazakhstan.

Introduction

In the current context of digital transformation in education, the student body has changed significantly. At present, the majority of students in higher education institutions are Generation Z (born approximately between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s), while most teachers belong to the millennial generation. This intergenerational difference creates certain pedagogical challenges, as the values, cognitive characteristics and ways of interacting with information of these generations differ significantly.

Generation Z is characterised as the first generation of 'digital natives' who grew up with constant access to the internet, mobile devices and social networks. Representatives of this generation are characterised by high-speed information processing, a preference for visual and multimodal content, a focus on short formats for presenting material, a need for immediate feedback, and a habit of interactive communication. At the same time, researchers note a reduced attention span, a tendency towards fragmented perception of information, and high sensitivity to the pace of learning.

In contrast, millennials – a generation that grew up during the rise of digital technology – are more often oriented towards text-based learning formats, longer educational blocks, and traditional models of academic interaction. Despite their high digital adaptability, millennials' teaching practices often rely on methodological approaches formed in the pre-digital era. This can lead to a mismatch between the expectations of teachers and students, a decrease in the latter's motivation, and a reduction in their level of involvement in the learning process.

This problem is particularly relevant in the context of teaching English as a foreign language at a technical university. For first-year students, English language proficiency is not only an academic discipline, but also a tool for professional mobility, access to international sources of information,

and participation in global communication. In a rapidly changing digital environment, there is a need to adapt foreign language teaching methods to the characteristics of Generation Z.

Despite the existence of studies devoted to the educational characteristics of 'Zoomers,' the question of which methodological formats students themselves consider most effective in the process of learning a foreign language remains insufficiently studied, especially in the regional context of Kazakhstan and in the environment of a technical university.

The aim of this study is to identify the opinions of first-year students (aged 17-18), representatives of Generation Z, regarding their preferred methods of learning English as a foreign language, as well as to determine the factors that influence their interest and engagement in the educational process.

The study is based on the following hypothesis: the use of social networks, interactive and visual teaching methods, as well as AI tools, taking into account students' preferences in terms of time, concentration and speed of feedback, has a positive effect on their interest and involvement in the process of learning English.

To test the hypothesis, an empirical study will be conducted in the form of an online survey among first-year students at Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University who are studying English at the Elementary and Pre-Intermediate levels, followed by statistical analysis of the data obtained.

Thus, the study aims to refine pedagogical strategies for teaching English, taking into account the intergenerational characteristics and digital preferences of the modern student audience, which can contribute to improving the effectiveness of the educational process in higher education.

In accordance with the stated relevance of the research, the formulated objective and the proposed hypothesis, it is necessary to analyse existing scientific approaches and empirical data on this issue. A review of theoretical positions and the results of contemporary research will allow us to determine the degree to which the topic has been developed, identify existing scientific positions, and justify the conceptual basis of this study. In this regard, the following is an overview of the scientific literature devoted to key aspects of the issue under study.

The research presented by Yohanes Agung Wahyu Nugroho, Bonita Eka Dama Yanti and Felik Haryanto explore the multifaceted nature of Generation Z, analysing their unique characteristics in the areas of education, work and mental well-being. The authors view 'digital natives' as a category whose worldview is shaped by constant access to technology, a pragmatic attitude towards finance, and a desire for inclusivity. As members of this generation grew up in an era of rapid technological progress, their educational expectations are inextricably linked to technology [1].

According to Hülya Düzenli, Generation Z (born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s) are the first 'digital natives' for whom the internet and mobile technologies are a natural habitat. Their main educational characteristics include:

- Short attention spans and a habit of obtaining information quickly.
- A preference for visual forms of learning over text-based ones.
- High technical competence, which often exceeds the skills of their teachers.
- A need for instant feedback, answers, and rewards.

Hülya Düzenli classifies educational recommendations into five main categories: speed, motivation, content, learning environment, and active learning.

For Generation Z, the pace of interaction is critical. Instant feedback is the most frequently repeated recommendation in education. Students expect faster guidance and responses from instructors than previous generations. Teaching Gen Z is inextricably linked to their social values: they find environments that support inclusive and multicultural education more useful. It is necessary to move from rigid hierarchical models to a more democratic, technology-driven and flexible environment [2].

The study by Goran Ćurić, Nikola Papac and Božana Prusina revealed that Generation Z as 'digital natives' and 'the one-click generation,' whose knowledge comes almost entirely from digital sources. Their attention is selective and short-lived; they tend to quickly filter out information and lose interest if the content does not seem relevant to them.

According to the article, the education system and business environment must adapt to the 'hyper-networked' nature of this generation's lives. The key to their successful learning lies in combining technology (digital environment, gamification) with a deeply human approach (empathic mentoring, personalisation) [3].

Elizabeth Frissell's article 'The Dangers of Social Media and the Stoic Solution' (2020) is a philosophical and critical analysis of the influence of influencer culture on Generation Z. The author argues that the 'media monopolies' of the 20th century have been replaced by a new power – opinion leaders who shape the values and behavioural patterns of young people through digital platforms.

The article examines education in the context of life values and proposes 'stoic pedagogy' as a method of self-help:

- Conflict of values: The author notes that the desire to meet the standards of influencers (buying branded items, chasing external glamour) distracts resources. Money and time that could be spent on education and career development are spent on impulsive consumption for the sake of social approval.

- Rejection of traditional sources of knowledge: Generation Z rejects old forms of media, considering them 'depressing,' and is completely transitioning to a digital environment where information is presented in an entertaining way [4].

The research by Cain C.C., Morgan Bryant, etc. is devoted to the development of a conceptual model Academic Technology Framework, which aims to bridge the gap between the teaching methods of professors and the educational expectations of Generation Z students.

The authors define zoomers as 'true digital natives' who do not remember a world without smartphones and instant access to information. Zoomers are more likely to attend college and less likely to drop out than millennials. For them, Google is the primary source of information, and the professor is only secondary. This fundamentally changes the traditional dynamics of learning.

The article argues that teaching Generation Z requires a shift away from the traditional 'lecture' format in favour of a technology-rich, flexible, and practice-oriented environment where technology is not an add-on to the process but an integral part of it [5].

The research paper by Philipp and Sulkovsky is devoted to the transformation of the professional environment under the influence of artificial intelligence and the peculiarities of Generation Z's adaptation to these changes.

The authors argue that learning for Zoomers should balance high technology with human involvement (high-tech yet high-touch). An important task in education is to preserve the individuality of the learner. Programmes should encourage the use of AI as a draft that requires mandatory editing to express one's own 'voice' and authorship [6].

The article by Carissa Ullman is a practical guide for higher education institutions on adapting to the needs of Generation Z. Unlike millennials, Gen Zers are defined by the author not simply as 'digital nomads' but as 'digital innates' whose perception of the world and education has been shaped by global instability and economic decline.

According to sources, higher education is currently 'behind the times'. To successfully educate Generation Z, institutions must move to a partnership model of learning and link each academic task to the development of real-life skills, as well as ensure a balance between modern digital portals and in-depth personal mentoring.

Zoomers are 'difficult customers' for universities, but their desire for self-fulfilment and responsibility makes them some of the most promising students, if the educational institution is willing to adapt to their pace and values [7].

Brenda van Wijk examines the technological preferences of a new generation of students and analyses how well higher education is prepared to meet their needs.

The key concept of the article is "phygital" – the concept of using technology to bridge the gap between the digital and physical worlds to create a unique interactive experience. Students of this generation do not see a clear difference between physical and virtual space. They prefer to navigate

all aspects of their lives, including study and research, exclusively using smartphones and mobile devices.

According to the author, academic staff and support services at higher education institutions often feel overwhelmed and unprepared for the demands of “figital students”. To bridge this gap, it is necessary to rethink curricula, integrate mobile technologies as a primary learning tool, and transition to a student-centred model where technology facilitates deep learning and critical thinking [8].

Dr. Hernando Jr Bernal addresses the need to transform the education system in the face of rapid technological progress and generational change among students. According to the source, Generation Z grew up at a time when the internet and technological advances were just beginning to grow rapidly. Unlike the next generation (Alpha), for whom technology is an innate part of life, Generation Z caught the moment when these technologies were new, and teachers taught them how to use them [9].

For effective teaching of zoomers, Bernal suggests moving away from rote memorisation of facts and implementing three key tactics: facilitated learning, learning integration, and soft skills training: In a world of instant answers, it is critical to teach perseverance, the ability to manage impulsivity, and an understanding of ‘why’ we learn, not just ‘what.’

Analysis of the article shows that teaching Generation Z requires an evolution in teaching style: a shift from content delivery to the development of higher-order cognitive skills. It is important to use students' innate technological knowledge to create curricula based on research and collaboration [10].

The research work by Hala Shaker Hammad is a comprehensive study of how Generation Z perceives the educational process. The study is based on a survey of 139 students and 29 teachers at a private university in Egypt.

The article highlights several fundamental requirements that Zoomers have for the learning process. About 50% of students consider multimedia elements to be critical for understanding the material. 59% of Zoomers prefer to learn through YouTube videos. Presenting information in small segments (chunks) rather than long lectures is recognised as an effective method. 59% of students expect detailed and constructive feedback that will help them understand their strengths and areas for growth [11].

The main conclusion of the article is that higher education should move away from traditional lecture methods towards a student-centred, flexible and technology-rich model. Universities should prepare zoomers for professions that do not yet exist, focusing on the development of critical thinking, curiosity and practical skills [12].

Szabó Cs. M., Bartal O. and Nagy B. define modern students as ‘digital natives’ whose values and problem-solving methods differ fundamentally from those of previous generations. At the same time, despite their natural proficiency with gadgets, they may have difficulty with in-depth understanding of texts, online ethics, and filtering fake news.

The article emphasises that although Generation Z is technologically advanced, their educational needs remain deeply practical. What matters to them is not technology itself, but how it helps them gain real skills for the labour market. At the same time, the digital environment creates risks for deep learning, which requires educators to implement strategies that support concentration and critical analysis [13].

An analysis of scientific sources shows that contemporary pedagogical literature provides a fairly detailed description of the cognitive, motivational, and digital characteristics of Generation Z, as well as justifying the need to adapt educational practices to their learning preferences. Researchers emphasise the importance of high interactivity, visualisation of educational content, the use of digital platforms, gamification and rapid feedback in the learning process. At the same time, most existing studies are general in nature and focus primarily on foreign educational contexts.

At the same time, there remains insufficient research on how Generation Z students in Kazakhstan perceive the process of learning English as a foreign language, what formats and platforms they consider most effective, and what role they believe digital technologies and social

networks play in language learning. There is a particularly limited number of empirical studies based on direct surveys of first-year students aged 17-18 who are in the early stages of higher and post-secondary education.

In this regard, the present study aims to obtain empirical data on the preferences of Generation Z students in learning English as a foreign language through an online survey. The following section describes the research methods, including sample characteristics, instruments, data collection procedures, and methods of analysis.

Materials and methods

This study is combined in nature and includes theoretical and empirical methods of cognition. The study was conducted within the framework of a quantitative descriptive design with elements of qualitative analysis and is based on an online survey of students.

The following theoretical methods were used:

- Analysis and synthesis of scientific literature on the problems of teaching foreign languages to Generation Z;

- Comparative analysis of studies devoted to the characteristics of Generation Z in the educational process;

- Generalisation of theoretical propositions related to digital learning, motivation and preferences of learners.

The theoretical analysis made it possible to identify the key characteristics of Generation Z as learners, as well as to reveal the insufficient study of their learning preferences in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in Kazakhstan.

Research participants

The empirical study was conducted among first-year students at Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University who are studying English as a foreign language as part of the compulsory curriculum.

The study involved students aged 17-18, belonging to Generation Z, with Elementary, Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate English language proficiency (A1-B1 according to CEFR).

Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. All respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before the survey began.

The main tool for collecting empirical data was an online questionnaire developed by the authors of the study. The questionnaire included:

- Closed questions using a five-point Likert scale;

- Multiple-choice questions;

- Open-ended questions allowing students to express their own opinions.

The aim of the survey was to identify the preferences of first-year students, representatives of Generation Z, in learning English as a foreign language. In particular, the study focused on analysing students' attitudes towards the use of social networks, interactive and visual teaching methods, artificial intelligence tools, as well as studying the characteristics of their learning behaviour related to time management, concentration and expectations regarding the speed of feedback in the learning process.

The survey was conducted online, which ensured its accessibility and allowed all research participants to be included.

The data obtained was processed using quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. Descriptive statistics methods were used to analyse the survey results, including:

- calculation of frequencies and percentages;

- calculation of mean values.

These methods made it possible to identify general trends in student motivation and learning preferences.

Students' open-ended responses were analysed using thematic analysis, which allowed us to identify the most frequently recurring semantic categories and supplement the quantitative data with qualitative interpretations.

The reliability of the study was ensured by:

- A standardised questionnaire form;
- Unified conditions for conducting the online survey;
- The use of proven assessment scales.

The validity of the study was ensured by the correspondence of the questionnaire content to the goals and objectives of the study, as well as by reliance on theoretical provisions identified in the course of the literature review.

Results and discussion

1. The Socio-Demographic Data

93 first-year students participated in the study. Most participants were 18-year-old students (50.5%), slightly fewer were 17-year-olds (49.5%). Men predominated in terms of gender (65.6%). Most students have been studying English for less than 5 years (55.9%), while 29% have 5-8 years of experience and 15.1% have more than 8 years. The level of English proficiency among most participants is Elementary (68%) and Pre-Intermediate (19.4%), with only a small proportion at Intermediate (10.8%) and Upper-Intermediate (1.1%).

2. Students' Interest and Academic Engagement in Learning English

Table 1 – Students' Interest and Academic Engagement in Learning English

Question	1	2	3	4	5	4+5 (Agreement)
I am interested in learning English	4,3%	4,3%	21,5%	24,7%	45,2%	69,9%
I actively participate in tasks during English classes	2,2%	3,2%	20,4%	40,9%	33,3%	74,2%
I enjoy doing additional English assignments	6,5%	15,1%	37,6%	21,5%	19,4%	40,9%
Modern lesson formats make learning English more engaging	3,2%	6,5%	16,1%	22,6%	51,6%	74,2%

Table 1 shows the analysis of the results:

- Most students (≈ 70 -74%) show a high level of interest in learning English and actively participate in class assignments (questions 1, 2 and 4).
- Satisfaction with modern classroom formats is also high, confirming the positive impact of interactive and visual techniques.
- Interest in completing additional assignments outside of class is less pronounced: only 40.9% of students indicated agreement, which may indicate a need for motivational strategies for work outside of class.

These results confirm that Generation Z students are actively involved and interested in the learning process, especially when modern teaching formats are used.

3. Use of Social Networks in English Language Learning

To assess the impact of social networks on the process of learning English, students responded using a Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree, 5 – strongly agree). The distribution of responses for each question is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Use of Social Media in English Language Learning

Question	1	2	3	4	5	4+5 (Agreement)
I learn new English words or grammar structures through content on social media (Instagram, TikTok, etc.)	5,4%	14%	29%	21,5%	30,1%	51,6%
Social media is a source of English language materials for me	4,3%	7,5%	33,3%	28%	26,9%	54,9%
I would like some of my homework or class assignments to be related to social media content	2,2%	8,6%	32,3%	37,6%	19,4%	57%
Using social media in learning English seems reasonable to me	2,2%	9,7%	32,3%	24,7%	31,2%	55,9%
I prefer learning English without using social media	16,1%	20,4%	32,3%	18,3%	12,9%	31,2%

Table 2 shows the analysis of the results:

- More than half of students ($\approx 52-57\%$) actively use social media to learn English or would like some of their assignments to be related to social media content (questions 1-3).
- Students generally have a positive attitude towards the idea of using social media in education (question 4 – 55.9% agreement).
- Only a small percentage ($\approx 31\%$) prefer to learn English without using social media, which confirms the importance of digital content for Generation Z.

The results show that integrating social media into the learning process can increase student interest and engagement, especially if some of the assignments or content are related to social media.

Results of an open-ended question about the use of social media in learning English

Students answered the question: 'How would you like social media to be integrated into English lessons? Please give an example.' Analysis of the responses revealed several main areas of social media use, which can be divided into categories.

1. Use of video content and films

Most respondents noted that watching short videos or films in English helps them understand the material more quickly and increases their interest in learning the language. Examples include: 'Watching films helps you understand grammar and vocabulary' and 'maybe watch the film...'

2. Interactive tasks and games

Some students suggested integrating games and quizzes through social networks or online platforms. Examples of responses: 'Quiz games', 'games', 'Kahoot, etc.'

3. Creating content in English via social media

Students also suggested creating content in English themselves, for example, writing posts on Instagram or shooting short videos on TikTok. Examples: 'Correspondence via Instagram', 'publish some stories in English', 'students can make short videos on TikTok or write posts on Instagram in English'.

4. Communication and practice through social media/chat

Some responses mentioned using social media for communication and real-life practice of English. Examples: 'Teachers create group chats and ask students to write in English,' 'I communicate with people from other countries via the internet.'

5. Use of translators and apps

A separate group of students noted that it is convenient to use technological resources such as translators and language learning apps to learn words and phrases. Examples: 'Google Translate,' 'use apps to learn English, for example Duolingo'.

6. Negative or sceptical responses

Some students expressed scepticism or a negative attitude towards the use of social media in learning. Examples: 'No, I don't think that's a good idea because everyone needs a different approach', 'I'm not very interested in using social media'.

Overall, most students demonstrated a positive attitude towards the use of social media in learning English, especially in the form of videos, interactive tasks and creating their own content. The responses show that the integration of modern digital tools can help increase student interest and engagement in the learning process.

4. Students' Preferences for Interactive Methods in English Language Learning

Table 3 – Students' Preferences for Interactive Methods in English Language Learning

Question	1	2	3	4	5	4+5 (Agreement)
I enjoy tasks that require active participation (discussions, games, group work)	3,2%	6,5%	26,9%	26,9%	36,6%	63,5%
I participate more actively in class when doing interactive tasks	1,1%	12,9%	37,6%	28%	20,4%	48,4%
The format of the task affects how easily I understand new material	2,2%	10,8%	24,7%	34,4%	28%	62,4%
I prefer traditional tasks (reading, translation, textbook exercises) over interactive formats	5,4%	11,8%	34,4%	30,1%	18,3%	48,4%

Table 3 shows the analysis of the results. Respondents have a positive attitude towards interactive teaching methods. Most students (63.5%) agreed with the statement that they like tasks that require active participation (discussions, games, group work). When completing interactive assignments, almost half of the respondents (48.4%) noted that they participate more actively in class.

The format of the assignment has an impact on the assimilation of new material: 62.4% of participants noted that interactive elements help them to perceive the learning material more easily. At the same time, traditional tasks (reading, translation, exercises from the textbook) are less popular – 48.4% of students agreed with their advantage, which shows a slight superiority of interactive methods (51.6%) over traditional formats.

Overall, the results indicate high student engagement and a positive perception of interactive teaching methods in English.

The results of an open-ended question.

Responding to the open-ended question, 'What interactive tasks do you like most in English classes?', students indicated a variety of preferences that can be divided into several categories.

1. Role-playing and speaking:

Many respondents noted that they like activities related to real-life communication and speaking practice. Examples include role-playing in a shop, airport or doctor's office, as well as dialogues between students ('One student is the salesperson, the other is the customer').

2. Group work and discussions:

Respondents also highlighted pair or group work, including discussions, debates, and collaborative exercises. These formats allow students to express their thoughts in English and interact with their classmates, which increases their engagement in the learning process.

3. Game formats and quizzes:

Many students mentioned the use of online quizzes and educational games such as Kahoot, Quizziz, and True/False.

4. Visual and multimedia elements:

Some respondents noted that they like video lessons, discussions of short videos, films, and multimedia assignments.

5. Writing and creative tasks:

Some students indicated that they like tasks that involve writing short texts, such as ‘My dream weekend’ or ‘My favourite hobby,’ which are then read aloud and discussed in class.

Thus, the open-ended responses show that students highly value interactive teaching methods, especially role-playing, group discussions, games and multimedia tasks, as they promote practical use of the language and increase motivation.

5. Students’ Preferences for Visual Learning Methods

Table 4 – Students’ Preferences for Visual Learning Methods

Question	1	2	3	4	5	4+5 (Agreement)
Visual materials (videos, images, infographics, presentations) help me remember information better	2,2%	5,4%	30,1%	30,1%	32,3%	62,4%
Using visual tools helps me focus better in class	2,2%	6,5%	37,6%	24,7%	29%	53,7%
Video and visual content make learning English easier to understand	2,2%	7,5%	25,8%	29%	35,5%	64,5%
I find it easier to understand new material when it is accompanied by visual elements	0%	6,5%	34,4%	23,7%	35,5%	59,2%

Table 4 shows the analysis of the results. Students noted that visual materials such as videos, images, infographics, and presentations contribute to better retention of information. Thus, 62.4% of respondents agreed with this statement (ratings 4 and 5). The use of visual aids also helps maintain concentration in class (53.7% agree), facilitates understanding of the material (64.5% agree), and makes it easier to perceive new material when accompanied by visual elements (59.2% agree). These data show that visual teaching methods are an effective tool for improving the perception and retention of information in English lessons.

The results of an open question “Which visual materials or formats in English classes do you like the most?:

Most students prefer visual materials such as videos and presentations in English classes. Short video lessons, videos with dialogues or interesting plots, and presentations that help them better perceive and understand the material were frequently mentioned in the responses. Some respondents noted infographics as a useful format for visual memorisation of information.

Examples of student comments:

- ‘Video lessons help me understand the material faster and make classes more interesting.’
- ‘Presentations and visual explanations from the teacher make lessons lively and understandable.’
- ‘Infographics and videos help me remember new vocabulary and grammar better.’
- ‘Videos with short dialogues improve listening comprehension and pronunciation.’

Thus, visual materials (videos, presentations, infographics) are the most preferred among students and contribute to increasing interest and effectiveness in learning English.

6. Use of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Learning

Table 5 – Use of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Learning

Question	1	2	3	4	5	4+5 (Agreement)
Using AI (e.g., ChatGPT, online translators, language learning apps) increases my interest in learning English	5,4%	11,8%	32,3%	17,2%	33,3%	50,5%
AI helps me better understand English grammar and vocabulary	1,1%	6,5%	44,1%	22,6%	25,8%	48,4%
With the help of AI, it is easier for me to complete assignments independently	4,3%	3,2%	34,4%	29%	29%	58%
I often use AI resources to practice speaking skills, pronunciation, or other aspects of English	5,4%	10,8%	37,6%	19,4%	26,9%	46,3%

Table 5 shows the analysis of the results. In the section devoted to the use of artificial intelligence in learning English, respondents assessed the extent to which AI affects their interest, understanding of grammar and vocabulary, independent completion of tasks, and practice of speaking skills.

The results show that the use of AI generates considerable interest among students: 50.5% of respondents agreed with the statement that AI increases their motivation to learn English. At the same time, almost half of the students (48.4%) noted that AI helps them to better understand grammar and vocabulary. More than half of the survey participants (58%) believe that AI makes it easier to complete tasks independently.

When it comes to practising speaking and pronunciation skills, 46.3% of students use AI resources to improve these aspects of the language. At the same time, a small number of respondents expressed doubts or low interest in using AI, which may be due to individual preferences in learning methods.

Overall, the data indicates a positive perception of AI as a tool that promotes interest in learning English and increases independence in the learning process.

The results of an open-ended question

The analysis of an open-ended question “Do you think that using AI in any way hinders your independence or the development of critical thinking? Please explain” is shown below.

Respondents expressed mixed opinions about the impact of AI use on their independence and critical thinking skills. Some students (about 25-30%) noted that excessive use of AI can create dependency and reduce the ability to think independently. They explained that if tasks are completed entirely with the help of AI, the ability to formulate ideas independently, make decisions and develop creative thinking is reduced. For example, one student noted: ‘Yes, I think it is harmful because we rely on it and stop learning independently’. Another added: ‘If we only perform a task using AI, our ability to form our own thoughts, make decisions, and work creatively may be diminished.’

Some students did not see any negative effects, pointing out that AI makes it easier. Other respondents emphasised the positive impact of AI when used as a support tool. They noted that AI helps them understand material more quickly, improve their grammar and vocabulary, and develop their writing and speaking skills, without hindering their independence when used consciously. As one student noted: “No, it doesn't interfere; AI complements my ideas.” Another added: “I think AI can help in learning English, but you shouldn't overdo it.”

Easier to complete complex tasks, but does not replace their own thinking. For example, one respondent wrote: “AI is just a tool. It does not interfere with independence if used consciously”. Several participants also emphasised that the effectiveness of AI depends on how it is used and, on the teacher's, pedagogical methods.

Overall, the results show that students perceive AI as a useful tool that can both support and potentially limit independent learning and the development of critical thinking if used excessively or incorrectly.

7. Time, Attention, and Speed of Feedback in Learning

Table 6 – Time, Attention, and Speed of Feedback in Learning

Question	1	2	3	4	5	4+5 (Agreement)
I regularly spend time studying English outside of class	9,7%	22,6%	32,3%	18,3%	17,2%	35,5%
I often postpone English assignments if they seem too extensive or demanding	8,6%	11,8%	37,6%	19,4%	22,6%	42%
I find it difficult to stay focused on one task for a long period of time	4,3%	12,9%	32,4%	23,7%	24,7%	48,4%
I usually expect quick feedback from the teacher on completed assignments	10,8%	12,9%	38,7%	17,2%	20,4%	37,6%
I prefer completing several short tasks instead of one large assignment	8,6%	3,2%	34,4%	23,7%	30,1%	53,8%

Table 6 shows the analysis of the results. In the section devoted to time, attention and speed of feedback when learning English, respondents demonstrated a variety of habits and preferences. Only about 35% of students regularly devote time to studying English independently outside of class, while the majority of participants either study irregularly or occupy a middle position on this scale. This indicates that the proportion of those who agree with regular study is relatively low.

When doing homework, only 42% of respondents agree that they often put it off if the assignments seem too voluminous or difficult. At the same time, almost half of the students (48%) noted that they have difficulty concentrating on one task for a long time. These figures show that fewer respondents agree with discipline and concentration than those who choose average or neutral positions.

In terms of feedback, 38% of participants usually expect a quick response from the teacher on completed assignments, and more than half (54%) prefer to complete several short assignments instead of one large one. This demonstrates that there are fewer active respondents who agree with such preferences than students who take neutral positions, but their share is still significant.

Overall, the results show that there are fewer students with clear habits and preferences than those who take a neutral position. Nevertheless, most respondents value flexibility in the organisation of their studies and timely feedback, which contributes to improving the effectiveness of learning and maintaining attention during classes.

8. Time Preferences in English Language Learning

Table 7 – Time, Attention, and Speed of Feedback in English Language Learning

Question	Answer option	%
How much time per day are you willing to spend studying English outside of class?	Less than 15 minutes	11,8%
	15-30 minutes	28%
	30-45 minutes	29%
	45-60 minutes	19,4%
	More than 60 minutes	11,8%
Which lesson duration format is most comfortable for you?	10-15 minutes	5,4%
	20-30 minutes	17,2%
	40-45 minutes	38,7%
	More than 45 minutes	38,7%

Table 7 shows the analysis of the results. The results concerning students' time preferences when studying English show a moderate willingness among learners to devote time to independent work outside of class. The largest proportion of respondents (29%) indicated that they were willing to spend 30-45 minutes a day studying English. A similar number of students (28%) said they could devote 15-30 minutes to this. A smaller proportion of respondents are willing to study for 45-60 minutes (19.4%), while 11.8% of students chose less than 15 minutes, and the same proportion (11.8%) indicated that they are willing to devote more than 60 minutes a day. Overall, the results show that most students are willing to devote approximately 15 to 45 minutes daily to independent English language study.

Students' preferences regarding the duration of a lesson also show a tendency towards medium or longer lessons. Most respondents indicated that the most comfortable format for them is lessons lasting 40-45 minutes (38.7%) or more than 45 minutes (38.7%). Shorter formats were less popular: 17.2% of students chose 20-30 minutes, and only 5.4% chose 10-15 minutes. These data show that most students prefer standard or longer classes, which allow them to delve deeper into the material and complete various types of assignments.

A summary analysis of the data reveals several consistent trends.

Firstly, students have a positive attitude towards interactive and visual teaching methods, as the proportion of those who agree with most of the statements in these blocks exceeds 60%. This indicates that active forms of work, as well as the use of videos, images and presentations, are perceived by students as effective means of assimilating learning material.

Secondly, the results demonstrate a moderately positive attitude towards the use of social networks and artificial intelligence in English language teaching. More than half of the students consider social networks to be a useful source of educational content and support the idea of integrating such resources into educational tasks. Similarly, about half of the respondents note that the use of AI increases interest in learning the language and helps them complete assignments.

At the same time, the data related to learning time and concentration show a lower level of agreement. This indicates that students are not always willing to devote significant time to independent work outside of class and may have difficulty maintaining concentration for long periods of time. At the same time, more than half of respondents prefer several short assignments to one large one, which indicates the importance of breaking down learning activities into small steps.

Conclusion

The results obtained allow us to conclude that the hypothesis put forward has been partially confirmed. The hypothesis suggested that the use of social networks, interactive and visual teaching methods, as well as artificial intelligence tools, taking into account students' preferences regarding time, concentration and speed of feedback, contributes to increasing students' interest and involvement in the process of learning English.

Data analysis showed that interactive and visual teaching methods have the most pronounced positive effect on student interest and engagement. Most respondents noted that tasks requiring active participation (discussions, games, group work) make the learning process more attractive, and the use of videos, presentations and other visual materials contributes to a better understanding and memorisation of the learning material.

The use of social media also received a generally positive assessment from students. More than half of the respondents consider social media to be a source of materials for learning English and support the inclusion of such content in educational assignments. This demonstrates the potential for integrating digital platforms into the educational process.

Students' attitudes towards the use of artificial intelligence tools proved to be more ambiguous. On the one hand, a significant proportion of respondents noted that AI helps them to better understand the course material and makes it easier to complete assignments. On the other hand, in their open responses, students pointed to the possible risks of excessive dependence on AI and a decline in independence if it is used in an uncontrolled manner.

In addition, the results of the study showed the importance of taking into account students' cognitive and organizational preferences. A relatively small proportion of students regularly study English outside of class, and many respondents note difficulties with sustained concentration. At the same time, most students prefer to complete several short assignments rather than one large one, which indicates the need to adapt the structure of learning tasks and the format of feedback.

Thus, the results of the study confirm that the integration of modern digital tools and active teaching methods can help increase student interest and engagement, but their effectiveness largely depends on pedagogically sound and balanced use.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ Z БУЫНЫ СТУДЕНТТЕРІНІҢ АҒЫЛШЫН ТІЛІН ШЕТ ТІЛІ РЕТІНДЕ МЕНГЕРУДЕГІ ҚАЛАУЛАРЫ: ОНЛАЙН САУАЛНАМАҒА НЕГІЗДЕЛГЕН ЗЕРТТЕУ

Бұл зерттеу Қазақстандық Z буыны студенттерінің (17-18 жас аралығындағы бірінші курс студенттері) ағылшын тілін шет тілі ретінде оқуда қалауларын талдайды. Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты – Z ұрпағының өкілдері, бірінші курс студенттерінің (17-18 жас) ағылшын тілін шет тілі ретінде оқудың таңдаулы әдістері туралы пікірлерін, сондай-ақ олардың қызығушылығы мен білім беру процесіне қатысуына әсер ететін факторларды анықтау. Зерттеу жұмысының эмпирикалық негізі: сипаттамалық статистика және ашық жауаптардың сапалық талдауы арқылы талданған 93 студенттің онлайн сауалнамасы. Студенттердің ағылшын тілін оқуға деген қызығушылығына және сабақтағы белсенділігіне әлеуметтік желілердің, интерактивті/визуалды құралдардың, жасанды интеллекттің әсері, сондай-ақ оқу мінез-құлқының сипаттамаларына – уақытты басқару мен зейін қою және кері байланысқа ерекше назар аударылады. Нәтижелер студенттердің көрнекі және интерактивті құралдарға, әлеуметтік желілерге және сандық құралдарға деген көзқарасын талдайды: студенттер қысқа тапсырмаларды және жылдам кері байланысты қалайды, бұл олардың динамикалық оқу стиліне өте жақсы сәйкес келеді. Жасанды интеллектке деген көзқарастары аралас – олар оның артықшылықтарын мойындайды, бірақ өздерінің дербестігі мен сыни ойлау қабілеттерінің төмендеу мүмкіндігінен қорқады. Қорытындыда ағылшын тілін оқыту үрдісін және бағдарламасын «зумерлардың» сандық әдеттеріне бейімдеу уақыты келді деп атап көрсетілген. Оқу бағдарламаларына арналған ұсыныстар мен технологияны тілдік білім беруге интеграциялау практикалық құндылық болып табылады.

Түйін сөздер: Z буыны, тілдік оқыту, студенттердің қалауы, Қазақстандық университеттер, тілдік оқытудағы әлеуметтік желілер, білім берудегі ЖИ.

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ПРЕДПОЧТЕНИЯ СТУДЕНТОВ ПОКОЛЕНИЯ Z В ИЗУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА КАК ИНОСТРАННОГО В КАЗАХСТАНЕ: ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ НА ОСНОВЕ ОНЛАЙН-ОПРОСА

В данном исследовании анализируются предпочтения студентов поколения Z (студенты первого курса в возрасте 17-18 лет) в отношении изучения английского языка как иностранного в вузах Казахстана. Цель исследования – изучить мнения студентов первого курса (в возрасте 17-18 лет), представителей поколения Z, об их предпочтительных методах изучения английского языка как иностранного, а также определить факторы, влияющие на их интерес и вовлеченность в учебный процесс. Эмпирическая основа исследования: онлайн-опрос среди 93 студентов, проанализированный с помощью описательной статистики и качественного анализа открытых ответов. Особое внимание уделяется интересу и академической вовлеченности, роли социальных сетей, предпочтениям в отношении интерактивных/визуальных форматов, отношению к ИИ-инструментам, а также особенностям поведения в процессе обучения – от планирования времени и концентрации внимания до ожиданий обратной связи. Результаты демонстрируют интерес к визуальным и интерактивным методам, социальным сетям и цифровым инструментам: студенты предпочитают короткие задания и быструю обратную связь, что идеально соответствует их динамичному стилю обучения. Отношение к ИИ неоднозначно – студенты признают его преимущества, но опасаются потери автономии и утраты критического мышления. В выводах подчеркивается, что необходимо адаптировать обучение английскому языку к цифровым привычкам поколения «зумеров». Практическая ценность исследования заключается в рекомендациях по разработке учебных программ и интеграции технологий в языковое образование.

Ключевые слова: поколение Z, языковое обучение, предпочтения студентов, университеты Казахстана, социальные сети в языковом обучении, ИИ в образовании.

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