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CONCEPT MAPS AS A MEANS TO VISUALIZE VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR MATERIAL

Mind Mapping, or making up mental, or concept maps, is an effective way to organize and systematize the material in the student's brain, as well as to obtain the necessary information in the learning process. By definition, mind mapping is a creative and logical way of taking notes or presenting acquired knowledge, which literally "reflects" the diversity of students' ideas, the pace of thought and the knowledge of the subject. All mental maps have a number of common features: they have a natural organizational structure with a basic concept in the center and use lines, symbols, words, colors and images in accordance with simple, easy-to-understand concepts. Mind Mapping transforms a long list of monotonous information into a colorful, catchy and highly organized chart that works in accordance with the natural way the human brain works. Therefore, it is not surprising that the technology of constructing mental maps has been adopted by teachers around the world.

Despite the fact that the concept map making is not a very new idea, the use of Mind mapping technique in the process of teaching Russian and Ukrainian as second languages is not developed enough. But it should be noted that the development of the educational system of Ukraine, as well as the competitiveness of local higher educational establishments on the international educational services market, require the study and implementation of new technologies for teaching foreign students,

therefore the purpose of this article is to familiarize ourselves with some practical possibilities of the mind mapping technology in the language training of students from all over the world at the initial stage of training. In particular, we are talking about the use of mental maps in teaching vocabulary and grammar of the Russian / Ukrainian languages at the preparatory department of the faculty for training foreign citizens of the Kharkov National Automobile and Highway University.

Not every linguistic teacher knows the method of building mental maps, the principles of working with these techniques and the opportunities that it provides during a period of rather intensive language training, conducted in the first year of a foreign student's stay in Ukraine. Especially relevant is the use of this technique in an ever-decreasing amount of academic hours for language learning at all stages of the training, both before entering the first year of Ukrainian universities and at more advanced stages. Therefore, it will not be superfluous to dwell in more detail on the definition and working principle of mental maps. An easy way to understand the mind map is to compare it with a city map. The city center presents the main idea; the main roads leading from the center represent key thoughts in the thought process; minor roads (comparable to small streets or alleys) and smaller branches represent your secondary thoughts and so on. Special images or shapes can represent attractions, that is, especially relevant ideas. The essence of compiling a mental map is that you can write down your ideas in any order as soon as they appear in your head. Like consciousness itself, such a procedure is non-linear: it requires first to simply generate all possible ideas, and then to worry about their structuring and reorganization.

Modern technologies provide a lot of computer programs, Internet resources and mobile applications for compiling mental maps that will help you arrange your thoughts and then automatically export them to an easy-to-read ordered list. However, the experience of RSL / USL teachers at the Department of Philology and Linguodidactics of KhNAHU proves that at the same time it is possible to make up a map in the old-fashioned way using a pen and paper, as well as a regular blackboard. The main thing is to present the information in the form of a clear and understandable

graphic diagram. After all, a mental map is a kind of external mirror of your own natural thinking, which is facilitated by a powerful graphic process that provides a universal key for unlocking the dynamic potential of the brain. But in order for the mind mapping technology to work as efficiently as possible in the student audience, it should be borne in mind that the process of constructing such cards has a number of characteristics, each of which individually, like all of them as a whole, contributes to their effective use in language training. So, when compiling a map, we should remember that the main idea, object or focus crystallizes in the central image. The main themes of the map come from the central image as «branches», and each of them contains a key image or keyword drawn or printed on the corresponding line. Subjects of lesser importance are presented in the form of «branches» coming from the corresponding branch, and «all branches form a connected nodal structure» [1; 70].

Drawing a mental map is not difficult. You should start from the middle of a blank page (or a blackboard – both traditional and interactive – if it comes to working in an audience), writing or drawing an idea that you intend to develop. The next step is to develop appropriate subtopics around the central topic, with the subsequent connection of each of them with the center using hollow lines. A similar process should be repeated, generating subtopics of a lower level, as you consider necessary, connecting each of them with the corresponding subtopic [see 1; 3 – 4]. It should be clear that it is better to write the main topics in larger letters (in larger print, if we are talking about a computer set of map elements), and narrower lines-pointers always lead to subtopics of the next level. According to psychologists, a person is inclined to better perceive and more effectively remember vividly displayed graphic information. For this reason, it is recommended that you use abundant colors, patterns, and symbols. Each topic should be as short as possible, clear and unambiguous. The temptation to write a whole phrase is enormous, but you should always find an opportunity to reduce it to one or two words, which later trigger the mechanism of effective memorization in the student's head.

Mind maps can become an effective tool in the study of new words and expressions, establishing connections in a non-linear way. Here we are talking about compiling mental maps with certain groups of vocabulary (synonyms, antonyms, homonyms). Such cards make it possible to understand and remember all the nuances of using a particular vocabulary in the process of working with it. Another option for using mental maps is to learn words in categories. For example, if the purpose of the lesson is to study the topic «Shops and Purchases», it's appropriate to put the word **Shopping** in the center and surround it with branches with subtopics *Types of shops* (supermarket, bakery, kiosk, pharmacy, etc.), *Special places in the store* (counter, fitting room, cash desk, department, etc.), *Verbs related to purchases* (buy, sell, try on, pay). If it is not a question of primary presentation of the vocabulary, but of its verification, the teacher, relying on the knowledge acquired by students in previous classes, can, when drawing up a mental map, give a certain number of words that students should remember in one category or another. Drawing up mental maps in the study (repetition) of grammar is also an effective means of memorization. If we are talking specifically about Russian as the second language, then such work can be implied case forms (masculine, feminine, neuter gender and the plural of the nominal parts of speech in the studied case), prepositional cases (for example, prepositions used with the genitive case in different meanings), verb forms of the person, number and time with separately derived exceptions and the like.

As you can see, the use of mind mapping technique (creating mental maps) in linguodidactics is quite voluminous, although it has not been studied much yet in Ukrainian educational system while so often applied in other countries, like the US or the EU. Their effectiveness in the language training of foreign students has been proven in practice. Moreover, the use of mental maps at the initial stage of teaching Russian or Ukrainian as the second language is especially effective, since it is here that students are faced with the need to master a huge amount of new lexical and grammatical material in a fairly short time. In our opinion, the method of mental mapping is useful at all stages of working with language material as a means of presentation, systematization, consolidation of educational information and control of

residual knowledge both in the field of vocabulary education and for quick and high-quality work with grammar of RSL / USL from the first months of a language study.

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