



Research in Educational Texts: Theoretical and Cognitive Aspects of Hypertext Reading Competencies in Legal Language and Translation

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Multimedia resources provide students with valuable textual, visual and auditory information concerning their professional field. Information presented in the hypertexts could be both useful or superfluous and irrelevant for students. Training reading skills of hypertext in foreign languages requires new models of teaching, developing training practices and reading strategies. Along with new approaches, traditional learning theories acquire new developments when dealing with hypermedia. The use of hypertexts as learning materials provide for comprehensive approach to reveal all aspects of information - linguistic, legal, cultural, stylistic and contextual to derive the meaning and message of the text. Theoretical and cognitive aspects of hypertext relevant to teaching and learning legal language and translation, such as non-linear structure, text relevance, the role of motivation are analyzed. The system of assignments has been developed and introduced into LSP and translation course. Reading strategies of printed texts and their comprehension such as determining key ideas, drawing inferences, monitoring and repairing comprehension differ from hypertexts reading and comprehension. Hypertext change the ways of gaining specialized knowledge from reading. The wide use of new technologies empower students with skills important for learning at universities, autonomous learning and professional development.

Keywords: *cognitive theories of learning, reading strategies, hypertext assignment*

1. Introduction

Educational process is the driving force for human and society development. It is regulated and based on learning theories and research. Learning theories accumulate fundamental knowledge about educational progress and are instrumental for effective teaching. The common goals of educational process are development of linguistic skills, cognitive skills and social skills. Along with many factors which contribute to quality learning, active involvement of all participants into the learning process has to be considered. The student-centred approach to education has been widely introduced, with students acquiring more responsibility for their learning.

The studies of the cognitive processes in education emphasize that learners have to be active seekers and constructors of knowledge and they have to be acquainted with theoretical background of learning principles and concepts underlining various learning contexts [1], [2].

The role of foreign languages in today's world has become an effective tool and a catalyst for success in education, research and professional development. Foreign languages learning means learning and discovering world and people, requires both traditional and experimental approaches in education.

The notion of text as a unit of language got into focus of linguistic and translation research later than other units of language. Historically text has been the most important means of information and knowledge transfer and the main source of education, that is why various aspects and functions of texts and contexts were detailed by scholars. Text studies in the 20th century brought about important notions such as text coherence, context, discourse and others. The notion of hypertext, one of the latest topical themes in the text studies related to education, information processing, cognitive sciences, etc. has been discussed since the introducing information technologies in education [3],[4],[5].



The role of hypertext in learning and teaching language and translation for specific purposes has been widely acclaimed but there is still a lot to comprehend and evaluate in practical application of hypertext. The present studies are intended to outline language learning approaches related to hypertext use and to analyse outcomes of learning practices.

The hypothesis has been advanced of effective use of hypertexts in legal language and translation studies.

2. Research methods of hypertext use in educational process

Theoretical approaches to education are developed following the social, scientific and technological developments in society, bringing about necessary changes in educational models. Educational models should be consistent with educational goals, with subject field specifics and other factors. Development of new approaches to learning does not mean the abandonment of old ones. Reviewing methods and approaches allows better understanding of emerging trends. Another important aspect is the study of learning theories and technologies interaction, which is complex, their evolution comes in waves of growth and accumulation [6].

An important specific of language learning is close interrelation of recent developments in learning theories and those approaches that have been introduced in previous periods. New technologies create new contexts and grounds for existing approaches.

The role of text has been of great significance and central in education. Though the notion of educational texts, their specifics, structure and other important characteristics have not been fully investigated and classified. The introduction of hypertext in educational process requires comprehensive analysis of both educational texts and learning approaches [7].

Cognitive learning theories are relevant for language and translation and based on active involvement of students into learning process. They deal with comprehension, memorizing and relating new information to previous experience, developing and applying new knowledge. The notion of meta cognitive learning requires learners' awareness of the knowledge they possess and ability to understand and regulate their cognitive processes [8].

The term multimedia learning is used along with on-line learning and technology enhanced learning, in the way new technologies provide for means of delivery various forms of media. Cognitive theories of multimedia learning have been relevant to the use of new technologies in education [9].

3 Analysis of hypertext specifics and reading assignments in legal language and translation studies.

The use of text processing as learning activity has been intensified lately, as on-line form of education has been widely introduced due to the pandemics. As many researchers claim new technologies provide new forms for search of information and new forms of interactivity between participants of learning process which are considered as pedagogically promising. Hypermedia environments represent a non-linear system of reading and writing which is similar to the principle of human thought processing becomes one of the most privileged methods of computer-assisted teaching. Non-linear presentation of information enlarge the possibilities for discovery during the learning process [10], [11]. Changes in the text forms and use challenge traditional models of reading comprehension and call for a generalized theory of multiple text processing [12]. New approaches to text processing rely on the notion of relevance, or readers' needs for information. The use of e-texts in education and the impact of e-text on students learning and performance has been one of the widely discussed issues. Researchers argue for the need of scaffolding and special instructions for using these texts as educational Instructional design for a particular course requires thorough consideration and development of a system of tasks. The evaluation criteria of working with texts depend on educational tasks and goals [13], [14].

Various types of reading are used in language courses such as critical, scanning and provide for foreign language acquisition and various skills development. It is important to take into consideration differences in the structure of traditional texts and hypertexts, which require different reading strategies and evaluation criteria [9].

The development of new technologies and new forms of texts require students to develop 'new literacies' skills in educational contexts. One of the important notions in reading a hypertext is text relevance. Text relevance refers to instrumental value of text information, which differs from the text



aspects which are important for text understanding. Hypertext reading skills are intended to identify, understand and integrate the information which are relevant to reader's goals. Students' learning goals are to get relevant information to acquire knowledge [15].

Hypertext reading strategies differ in some way from traditional reading. Researchers point out that skimming and scanning reading strategies, navigating strategy are more important for hypertext reading. Another important skill necessary for hypertext reading pointed by educators is the ability to formulate guiding questions to look for information the students need [11], [16].

Hypertext used in legal language and translation learning has to be approached as effective educational tool. The system of assignments can include a wide range of tasks. Cognitive theories in education outline some points which have to be taken into account while working out assignments. One of the essential theories, cognitive load theory by John Sweller (1988) states that human working memory could process small amount of information at a time. To reduce cognitive load some techniques could be considered. The research of interaction between motivation, cognitive load and learning performance proved effective and provided important outcome. One of motivation techniques is a growth mindset intervention, which means stating that a student can complete the particular task and his mental capacities will improve. Other ways to improve learning outcome are visual information and split attention effect. Visual information can enhance text understanding, but not animation, as static information is easier to comprehend. Split attention effect, that is placing relevant information in adjacent areas and interactive learning could also increase interest and improve learning. Positive emotional state is motivating and scaffolding is helpful for students to achieve results [17].

Significant transitions in education toward process-driven, integrated, interactive learning and growing complexity of social and educational processes are challenging both to educators and learners [6].

3.1 Legal language studies

A hypertext is defined as a document composed of several information units or node connected by links. Important characteristics of hypertext is the ability of movement from one information resource to another [18], [19], [20].

Reading activities assignments based on the use of hypertext should be carefully thought out to provide for learning goals. Information retrieval have to be regulated by learners as there is always a risk of the phenomena known as serendipity or risk of discovering unnecessary information which could be distractive. To avoid this situation, students could be asked particular questions or they could be assigned to think of and formulate questions on particular facts or data they have to find out. There could be a discussion in class of what kind of questions they are going to use for their search.

To develop awareness of legal terms use in the professional context or to systemize information related to the functioning of law companies, courts, legislative bodies students use graphic organizers in the form of tables. They have to put down legal terms in the table containing the following blocks: terms, meanings, contexts the terms are used or other blocks. Information relating to law professional organizations, associations, courts, legislative bodies are recorded in the graphic organizers made of the following blocks: website, website structure, types of information (factual, historical, academic, expert, etc.), aims and goals of organizations, types of activities, and others. This information is used for text discussion and other learning activities.

Teachers could develop and provide the educational texts with useful links to additional information, comments and tasks. To involve students into collaborative learning they could be assigned to create an e-textbook on particular topics [9].

3.2 Legal translation studies

Translation has become an important service and human right in the 20th century. The training of translation skills is turning an important part of language courses, with foreign languages and translation programmes being an integrated part of many university programmes. Legal translation draws a substantial interest on the part of specialists, researchers and educators.

Legal translation was regarded initially as one of many fields of translation for specific purposes later it came to be considered as an independent discipline. Legal translation specifics fall in the category of issues arising in the field of language and law relationship. As J. Gibbons states the law is significant and complicated due to the importance of law as a system and the fact that language of law is packed with language problems [21].

The specialists in legal translation and interpreting are required in all kinds of global and domestic processes and activities. One of the trends which could be traced in education lately is to train specialists possessing specialized translation competencies.



Teaching interpreting and translation became a part of professional training in many Russian universities. Translation programmes for lawyers is a comprehensive programme which is intended to develop both translation and interpreting skills. Speaking about Translation/ Interpreting as a field of study, it could be difficult to outline the scope of all skills and knowledge the students have to master while taking translation courses. One of the important goals of the learning is to develop learning skills and educators' tasks are to introduce students to learning activities which allow them to develop as future specialists at the university and later in their further professional activities. Students have to be acquainted with the benefits of using information technologies in classrooms and in their autonomous learning.

In spite of great opportunities which computer technologies provide, their use has been a challenge for both learners and educators. Hypertext reading assignments for developing translation skills include working with legal dictionaries. Students are advised to get acquainted with various types of dictionaries: electronic dictionaries, which offer various combinations of languages, encyclopaedias, etymological and legal dictionaries available online. Students have to compile their working dictionaries containing useful information such as terms, the definitions of terms, their translation and synonyms. Definitions and synonyms are useful to learn various ways to represent a particular meaning. A big part of translation training is to get acquainted with various specialized legal texts and contexts and their translation.

A new development in translation has been post-editing. Post editing of hypertexts with links to various information could solve the problem of understanding the correct meaning of the word/term, sentence or paragraph of the text in specific contexts.

Assignments for training consecutive interpreting skills involve interpreting of speeches, interviews, lectures, etc. In the internet such speeches are often accompanied by transcripts and present specific types of reading, which could be challenging for translator as it requires particular efforts. Students have to activate both visual and auditory memory for translating audio texts with transcripts. This type of assignment is useful for developing memory and language skills.

Sight translation is considered one of the most difficult types of translation, close to simultaneous translation. Sight translation is a widely used assignment for training simultaneous translation skills. Sight translation of hypertexts with numerous links to information nodes could be considered even closer to simultaneous translation. The assignment of reading and translating hypertext could be compared with speaking and simultaneous translation in that it is processed in the way the interpreter could not fully predict in advance, and have little time between reading new piece of information and interpreting it. To make the assignment work in that way, hypertexts which possess elaborated nodes structures have to be selected, or educational hypertexts have to be worked out to include a number of links referring to important provisions or concepts stated in the text.

The use of new technologies in translation and training translators has become a major turn in education and professional development. Technologies are changing and improving fast and require constant adjustments of learning approaches and this is a motivating factor for all participants of the learning process.

4. Conclusion

Legal translation skills are an important component of lawyer professional competence. Legal translation programmes become an integrated part of professional training. The problems of legal translation are numerous due to the complexity of legal concepts, legal language and various legal contexts in general. Training of legal language and legal translation skills can be enhanced by specialized reading assignments using new technologies. The central component of education is text, the relationship between the text and the learner is the basis of knowledge. If we think about language and translation learning, the text is both knowledge and skills.

Hypertext allows more learning space and opportunities to the learner and the educator. Hypermedia and hypertext create platform for autonomous training, preparing for particular events, and continuous education for specialists. Hypermedia provides for authentic environment, materials and diversity in learning process which contribute for quality education.

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