

The Use of Mind Mapping in Translator Training

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Abstract

Mind mapping is one of the most effective techniques used to help students to present information in a visualized form. According to the fundamental principles of a human's brain functioning, it makes both cerebral hemispheres work and combines processing verbal and logical information with visual information simultaneously. Translators who have to deal with a huge volume of information would benefit from learning the tools to process it. Mind mapping can be used in translator training in both theoretical and practical courses. When studying the theory of translation mind mapping technique helps students to better understand and learn basic concepts, ideas, terms, classifications of translation techniques, etc. Mind maps are easy to review that is helpful when reading for tests and examinations. Both individual and group tasks are offered. Mind mapping technique is also employed in translation practice. Students use mind mapping when analyzing a text they are to translate. They present main ideas, key words and terms in their interconnections. Thus mind mapping helps to understand the text better and generate new ideas of how to translate it in the best way possible. The team work on creating a mind map to present main ideas of a text and divide it into logical parts is useful to teach translators-to-be how to collaborate.

According to a survey 87% of students who were taught how to use mind mapping in their translation classes find this activity helpful and motivating, and 80% of them state they are going to use it regularly in their study and work.

It can be concluded that mind mapping can be a great supportive tool both for translation training and practice.

1. Introduction

Mind mapping is one of the most effective techniques used to help students to present information in a visualized form. It is based on the fundamental principles of a human's brain functioning. When making both cerebral hemispheres work it combines processing verbal and logical information with visual information simultaneously.

The methods of using mind maps were suggested by Tony Buzan, a British specialist in the area of psychology and physiology [1]. On the basis of the human's brain physiology he suggested some efficient ways of rational using of brain powers in the process of information learning and various subjects studying.

According to Mercurieva, a usual way of information processing in the course of studying includes such stages as reading, listening, writing, memorizing, reproduction of the new information [2, p. 168]. In this case people mostly use the left hemisphere of the brain. This hemisphere is responsible for verbal information processing and the linear logic. The right hemisphere of the brain is responsible for graphic information, and it is not used much in the traditional process of studying. The use of mind mapping helps students to use both cerebral hemispheres simultaneously and both types of thinking. Thus the use of mind mapping allows one to systematize the information processed by the brain, memorize a large volume of data, develop complicated plans and control their implementation afterwards.

The main advantage of mind mapping is providing a student an ability to see the studied information as a whole. This technology is efficient in both teaching theoretical and practical subjects and in new ideas generation. It develops creative thinking and imagination that is definitely necessary for both translators and interpreters. Translators and interpreters have to deal with a huge volume of information therefore they need to know tools to process it. Mind mapping, in my view, can be used in translators' training in both theoretical and practical courses.

2. Mind mapping in teaching the theory of translation

Traditionally, translators and interpreters' training includes studying the theoretical knowledge of translation principles, concepts, professional terminology, etc. It supports the practical skills of translating and interpreting, and in my opinion, theoretical classes should be as interactive as



possible. And the best solution is using ICTs, including mind mapping tools, to support acquisition of theoretical knowledge.

When studying theoretical aspects of translation students can use mind mapping to visually present a large volume of information in a graphically structured form to make it easier to understand and memorize. Students can see all interrelations and associations in a complete picture and then better understand the main concepts and analyze the information under study.

The mind mapping technique helps students to study theoretical material more efficiently, memorize terminology easier, see main concepts and ideas clearer, as well as interdependencies and interrelations. When teaching the theory of translation I offer my students such individual assignments as presenting some parts of the theoretical course in a form of a mind map. For example, they can present in this form various approaches to defining translation, adequacy and equivalency of translation, translation techniques classification, etc. According to my students' experience it helps them to memorize a greater number of new terms, concepts, names and other information.

Moreover, mind mapping can be successfully used in group assignments. For instance, I use it when offer my master students such group assignments as studying linguistics articles. A group of students (3 or 4 people) has to study some articles on the theoretical aspects of translation and present its core ideas and findings in a form of a mind map. To create a mind map students can use some free Internet resources, e.g. <https://coggle.it/>, <http://freemind.sourceforge.net/>, <http://www.kartum.ru>, and others. Thus, students use such software as coggle.it, Mindjet, XMind, and others. These tools provide instruments to incorporate words, colorful images, and numbers to make the result memorable and enjoyable. They are allowed to create their mind map freehand, if they want to.

Developing a mind map to present a scholar article on the theory of translation is a sort of a group project realized during students' independent study. Then each group of students presents their mind map at class and all the students are involved in the discussion. The criteria of mind maps' assessment include their clarity, information richness, easiness of understanding and memorizing, as well as its nicety.

Mind mapping provides ability to visually present a large volume of theoretical information, systematize knowledge that is useful when reading for examinations. To make the process of preparing for examinations easier, groups of students (2 or 3 people) make a mind map to present an answer to one of the examination questions. At class they present it to the rest of the students and answer their questions. In case of any criticism they correct and improve their mind map. At the end of a term all mind maps are collected in a sort of an "intellectual bank" to be used by all the students of the class.

Therefore, when studying the theory of translation mind mapping technique helps students to better understand and learn basic concepts, ideas, terms, classifications of translation techniques, etc. Mind maps are easy to review that is helpful when reading for tests and examinations. Both individual and group tasks are offered.

3. Mind mapping in translation practice

Mind mapping technique is also successfully employed in translation practice classes. Students use mind mapping when analyzing a text they are to translate. Taking part in group discussions they present main ideas, key words and terms of the text in their interconnections. Mind mapping helps to divide the source text into some logical parts and find appropriate approaches to their translation. Thus mind mapping helps to understand the source text better and generate new ideas of how to translate it in the best way possible. The team work on creating a mind map to present the main ideas of a source text and divide it into logical parts is useful to teach translators-to-be how to collaborate both in studying and working.

According to a survey conducted in Peter the Great Saint Petersburg Polytechnic University (Russia) in 2015, 87% of 29 master students who were taught how to use mind mapping in their translation and interpreting classes found this activity helpful and motivating, and 80% of them said they were going to use it regularly in their study and work.

During the discussions, the majority of students said that with the help of mind mapping it is much easier to remember a theoretical material, easier to understand a large amount of information, be realistic about the amount of material to be studied and revised. This demonstrates the positive attitude of students to use this new technology, as well as its effectiveness for teaching the theory and practice of translation.

4. Conclusion

Having discussed the issue of reasonability of using mind maps for teaching translation and interpretation, I believe it undoubtedly has certain benefits. Using mind mapping enables to support



every stage of the translators and interpreters learning process, to make it more efficient and get better results. It can be concluded that mind mapping can be a great supportive tool both for translation training and practice.

At the same time, mind mapping has some drawbacks. In particular, it is the complexity of the process of creating a mind map, time required for its preparation and study of the features of particular software. That is why the process of creating mind maps should be realized in the framework of independent study at home. These drawbacks of this technology is redeemed by the undoubted advantages, including the intensification of teaching and learning activities of students, facilitating learning and memorizing large amounts of information, structuring the educational material and its long-term storage in the memory, and the positive attitude of students to the creation of mind maps. This simple but highly effective technology, in my opinion, should take its rightful place in the training both translation theory and other theoretical and practical disciplines in the education of translators-to-be.

References

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