

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MIND MAPPING TECHNIC INTO THE PROCESS OF TEACHING MANAGERS ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES

### УПРОВАДЖЕННЯ МЕТОДУ ПОБУДОВИ МЕНТАЛЬНИХ КАРТ У ПРОЦЕС НАВЧАННЯ МЕНЕДЖЕРІВ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЗА ПРОФЕСІЙНИМ СПРЯМУВАННЯМ

Nowadays, the problems of enhancing professional competence of future professionals, their training for future activities in the current socio-economic conditions are extremely urgent. Exploration of higher education standards applied in recent years reveals a significant increase in the requirements for foreign language knowledge gained by non-linguistic students.

The article is devoted to the problem of the mind mapping technic implementation into the process of teaching English for specific purposes at the higher non-linguistic educational establishments for future managers.

The definition of the main notion "a mind map" has been analyzed. The advantages of using such a form of cognitive process characterized by a qualitatively different level of mental literacy and two-dimensional educational reality, are outlined. The advantages of using the technique of mental map construction in the educational process at higher non-linguistic educational institutions are considered, taking into account the features of the future specialty of students.

We have conducted the experiment in Vinnytsia National Agrarian University at the Ukrainian and Foreign Languages Department. The study involved 40 first-year students. The respondents were randomly assigned to the experimental mind-mapping group of 20 students and the control group of 20 students. The students in the experimental group were involved into the experiment using the mind-mapping technique during their study, and the students in the control group continued their studying in the usual way.

The research findings have shown the effectiveness of implementing the mind-mapping technique into the university course of teaching English for Specific Purposes. Consistent use of mind maps will also promote the educational process efficiency and have positive effects on the general formation of competitive skilled specialists. Thus, the theoretical and practical components of our paper testify to the expediency of using the method of constructing mental maps in the educational process of non-linguistic institutions of higher education. The article identifies ways and main directions of further research.

**Key words:** mental map, English for professional purposes, communicative, creative, non-linguistic specialties, literacy, two-dimensional.

Сьогодні надзвичайно актуальними є проблеми підвищення професійної компетентності майбутніх фахівців, їхньої підготовки

до подальшої діяльності в сучасних соціально-економічних умовах. Дослідження стандартів вищої освіти, що застосовувалися в останні роки, свідчить про значне збільшення вимог до знань іноземних мов, отриманих студентами нелінгвістичних закладів вищої освіти.

Стаття присвячена впровадженню методу побудови ментальних карт у процес вивчення іноземної мови професійного спрямування студентами нелінгвістичних закладів вищої освіти, зокрема менеджерами. У роботі проаналізовано поняття «ментальна карта», окреслено переваги використання такої форми пізнавального процесу, яка характеризується якісно іншим рівнем ментальної грамотності та двовимірності навчальної реальності. Показано переваги використання техніки побудови ментальних карт у навчальному процесі у вищих нелінгвістичних навчальних закладах з урахуванням особливостей майбутнього фаху студентів.

Ми провели експеримент у Вінницькому національному аграрному університеті на кафедрі української та іноземних мов. У дослідженні брали участь 40 студентів першого курсу. Респонденти були випадковим чином поділені на дві групи (контрольну та експериментальну). Студенти експериментальної групи були залучені до експерименту, використовувалась методика MIND MAPPING під час навчання, а студенти контрольної групи продовжували навчання звичайним чином.

Результати досліджень показали ефективність упровадження досліджуваної методики в університетській курс викладання англійської мови професійного спрямування. Доведено, що послідовне використання ментальних карт також сприятиме ефективності навчального процесу кваліфікованих фахівців. Таким чином, теоретична та практична складові частини нашої роботи свідчать про доцільність застосування методу побудови ментальних карт у навчальному процесі нелінгвістичних закладів вищої освіти. У статті визначено шляхи та основні напрями подальших досліджень.

**Ключові слова:** ментальна карта, англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням, комунікативний, креативний, немовні спеціальності, грамотність, двовимірний.

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**Statement of the problem.** Transformations in the national system, as well as the changes in the international approaches to the concept of the higher education, are setting new goals and requirements to the process of the formation of highly qualified professionals. Contemporary changes of the economy and technology provide new challenges to the profes-

sional demands. The growing tendencies of flexibility, a complicated contextual component of education, internationalized content lead to the necessity of creating completely new approaches to the process of study.

The place of the foreign languages in the curriculum of managers is significantly enlarged, the criteria

of the estimation and evaluation of their knowledge are strengthening during the recent years. However, these facts are combined with relatively low language and motivational levels of first-year students. So, in order to achieve positive results the teaching faculty is to be able to use such methods and forms of the foreign languages teaching that will greatly benefit the process of mastering English for specific purposes (ESP) on the appropriate level.

The peculiarity of teaching ESP to the students majoring in Management involves acquiring certain skills related to the future occupation and their further use for self-development and self-improvement. The practical goal is ESP acquisition as the means of conversation within the sphere of students' profession. The general educational aim includes expanding knowledge of the peculiarities of the lexical and terminological structure of ESP. An educative target presupposes the formation of oral monologue speaking skills [9, p. 88].

Forming students' professional speaking skills involves demonstrating the learners the ways to keep the conversation with facts associated with their future professional area, stimulates acquisition processes and motivation to studying. Engaging Management students into independent investigations and analysis of recent information concerning their occupation promotes their motivation to get sufficient knowledge of ESP because the international sources as a rule are published in English. Thus, in order to work with them, to participate in discussions or to hold a conversation about definite aspects, nuances, concepts of administration issues, students should possess the key professional vocabulary, grammar, and monologue speaking skills concerning management topics.

Although a lot of efforts have been put for successful implementation of different techniques in teaching English as a second language, there are still many problems teachers and students face in the language classroom. We need to make changes in the educational process, otherwise there will be more barriers students and teachers will be unable to overcome in the future. There is a demand to use powerful, creative and adaptable techniques in teaching and learning languages.

Mind mapping can be used to solve the problems mentioned above. We suggest that using mind maps in teaching and learning English will be useful for both teachers and students as the amount of information is increasing every second and our brain, which doesn't work in a linear way can't perceive even a small part of it.

#### **Analysis of recent research and publications.**

Mind mapping was first popularized by the British psychology author Tony Buzan in the late 60s. It was designed to help students take notes effectively, brainstorm, solve problems and plan projects. Tony Buzan defines mind maps as "an expression of radi-

ant thinking and is therefore a natural function of the human mind. It is a powerful graphic technique which provides a universal key to unlocking the potential of the brain" [3, p. 117].

The researchers and educators have been studying mind maps and their peculiar features all over the world. According to Budd "a mind map is an outline in which the major categories radiate from a central image and lesser categories are portrayed as branches of larger branches" [1, p. 36]. The author of the paper "Real-time feedback systems in a foreign language teaching: A case of presentation course" emphasized that the mind-map picture gives presenters opportunities of promoting a new awareness, various kinds of discoveries, and a deeper reflection about their works. He came to the conclusion that their "system can be incorporated into Learning Management Systems (LMS), and it has a large potential for further use in a distant learning environment to capture an overall reaction from the audience all over the world" [8, p.780].

A. Buran and A. Filyukov studied the mind-mapping technique in language learning by technical students [2]. R. Hanewald pointed out the open-ended nature of mind maps that provided students with greater control over their training [4]. Daniel Long and Dr. David Carson investigated how thinking maps could be used by students to achieve greater understanding in comparison to the students using traditional note-taking strategies [6]. Cathy-Ann Radix and Azim Abdool examined how mind maps can be used for the assessment and improvement of learning quality in higher education within the constructivist learning practices [10]. Sherri Melrose also studied usage of mind maps within the constructivist learning environment [7]. Joeran Reel and Stefan Langer analyzed the mind maps structure and the information they covered [11]. Brett D. Jones, Chloe Ruff et al. have examined how students' motivation differed depending on types of mind-mapping activities they had been engaged [5].

However, there are still no studies, describing using mind maps in teaching English to management students. Mind mapping techniques were developed in the late 1960s, but only with the occurrence of information and communication technologies, mind maps are being successfully applied nowadays in teaching and learning the languages [2, p. 216].

**The purpose of the article** is to prove that a mind map is a powerful tool because it represents any information in a visual form, using words, images and numbers; is the implementation into the process of the foreign languages study the method of the mind maps building, which would benefit the students mastering the skills and abilities of the professional communication in English.

**The main part.** The mind mapping method is attractive teaching method as it creates a complex

structured approach to the study of the educational information. Due to the processes of selective visualization of the main concepts and the links between them the students became aware of the learning material's main points personally. The mental processes included into the process of mind mapping helps the students to create more complex and effective cognitional schemes which in their own turn benefit the processes of the memorization and recalling the studied material in their further activities.

Considering the scientific researches [1; 3; 4; 5; 9] we have defined the following advantages of organization the class work according to this method:

- 1) usage of complex knowledge;
- 2) the development of problem-solving abilities;
- 3) team building;
- 4) possibility to transfer the created skills and abilities to the other subjects learning;
- 5) formation of the self-regulation processes;
- 6) development of two dimensional, nonlinear way of cognition;
- 7) development of the students' individual and group organized interaction;
- 8) development of the group, collaborative learning;
- 9) creative visualization of the knowledge;
- 10) creating an ability to the complex analysis of the material;
- 11) creating a schematic way of thought.

Mind mapping is a highly effective way of getting information in and out of the brain. It is a creative way of note taking. It uses many pictures, many colors, key words to present ideas and information in clear classification. It also uses association which makes it easier for the information to be remembered because students associate it with information that has already been known. According to Buzan [3, p. 59], mind maps have four basic characteristics; these are:

- 1) the subject of attention is crystalized in a central image;
- 2) the main themes of the subject radiate from the central image as branches;
- 3) branches comprise a key image or key word printed on an associated lines; topics of lesser importance are also represented as branches attached to a higher level branches;
- 4) the branches form a connected nodal structure.

This method application is widely spread while teaching English abroad. Speaking about English for specific purposes we must mention that the concentration on the concepts and the links between them cannot be overestimated while working with the professional texts. So, we can speak about the advantages in building logical structures of the texts, creating links between main concepts, including new professional vocabulary into the content, visualizing the textual information as a unity, creating links for further usage of the definite maps etc. Taking into account the communicative nature of the learning

processes we can get extra benefits from organizing mind mapping work. The main positive results which can be achieved can be shaped as:

- 1) a better way to summarize textual information;
- 2) creating a united view on the massive of professional information;
- 3) creating communicative situations in micro- and macro- groups;
- 4) creating easier constructions with more comprehensive context verbal structures;
- 5) creating patterns for personal and collective work on a specific topic;
- 6) creating the structured mechanism of the further professional information's usage in the personal practical activity;
- 7) creating visual support for topical information;
- 8) formation of easier cognitive structures;
- 9) stimulating the mental processes of the professional vocabulary memorization;
- 10) use of more comfortable language structures;
- 11) visualizing the key points and the main links between them.

Taking into account all above-mentioned mind-mapping advantages we can clearly see the benefits of their application in the process of teaching English at the higher educational establishments. At the faculty of Management and Law of Vinnytsia National Agrarian University English course lasts for two years and the final exam contains the professional material. That's why creating schematically map-shaped visual support looks like a beneficial idea for the process of memorization. The additional advantage is the proved effectiveness of the method for the students with the lower level of knowledge, as the substantive part of them doesn't demonstrate the high enough one. The technology of mind mapping building, so, will support them in creating a unity of professional information massive.

We have implemented mind mapping techniques into the course English for Specific Purposes taught at Vinnytsia National Agrarian University, 40 first year students participated in the experiment. The participants were randomly divided into two groups; each group contains 20 students. Both groups were working on the topic "Management as a Science. Types of Management". According to the experiment conditions, the control group used standard linear texts, whereas the members of the experimental group designed and drew individual mind maps.

Before the experiment, participants were explained the basic concepts and principles of mind mapping. They were told that the mind map is a kind of a scheme or a diagram used to represent or outline the required information visually. Mind maps allow the students' brains to organize and understand information faster and better [3, p. 4].

The students' mind maps were built considering necessary structural elements and principles.

The final stage of drafting and presenting mind maps was preceded by a complete cycle of thematic practical lessons, which included several phases. They involved introduction of lexical elements, reading and analyzing a key thematic text, doing exercises to form the skills of active use of lexical and terminological elements, mastering activity of an oral speech presenting using current thematic vocabulary. The participants of the experimental group were using the mind mapping technique through all those stages. At the last lesson, students were given an opportunity to apply their mind maps when speaking on the topic.

The mind map on the topic and the talk should involve the following terms, terminological phrases, key words and word-combinations: *principles, strategies, key functions of management, planning, organizing, directing, controlling, types of management, human resource management, time management, financial management, decision-making, forecasting, etc.*

So, we have obtained the following results of our research. The students of the experimental group have demonstrated better outcomes: 6 students (30%) have excellent marks, 10 students (50%) have got good marks, and 4 people (20%) have got satisfactory results. There were no students who failed the task (Fig. 1).

The students of the control group have shown the following results: 3 participants (15%) have had excellent marks, 8 (40%) students have got good marks, 6 (30%) students have got satisfactory results, and 3 (15%) people have failed the task (Fig. 2).

Figure 3 shows the ratio of students' results of the experimental and control groups.

**Conclusion.** At first, it must be stated that the researched problem has great potential for further investigation. The deeper work may be performed in the spheres of mapping of professional topics. The further usage may be seen in creating semantic and grammar maps (they are not new for the communicative methodology but may be strongly personalized due to the group level and topical information). The number of online programs and universities recommendations of the mind mapping's usage clearly shows the necessity of this technic's implementa-

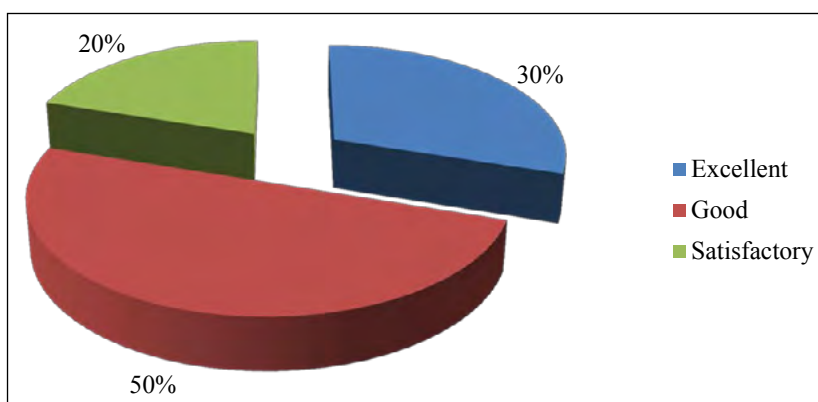


Fig. 1. The results of the experimental group

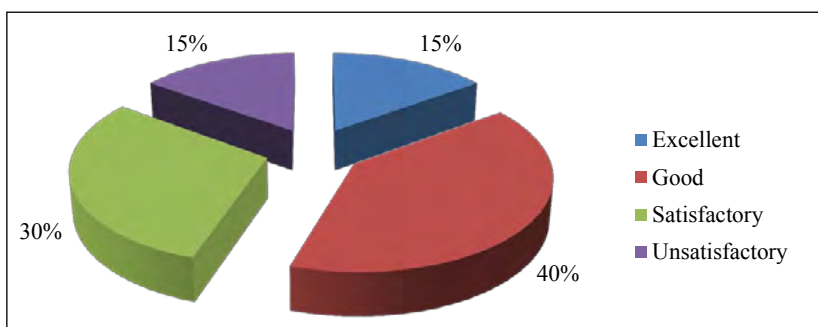


Fig. 2. The results of the control group

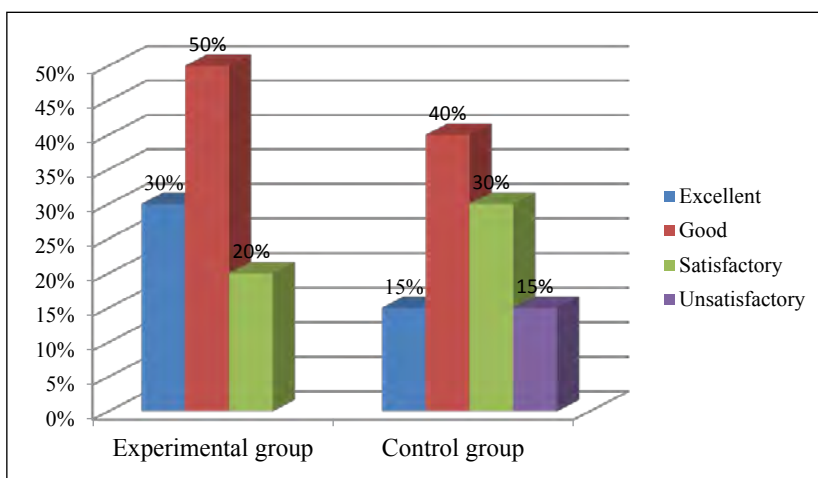


Fig. 3. The ratio of students' results of the experimental and control groups

tion on all levels of study and creation of a systematic sketched picture of the educational material. The visual support and activation of the other level of memorization will be strongly recommended while teaching English for the professionals at the higher educational establishments.

The research findings have shown the effectiveness of implementing the mind-mapping technique into the university course teaching the English to develop, advance and master students' professional communicative competence. It is significant to state that profound studying of mind map characteristics

and features of their implementation lessons; as well as consistent use of mind maps will have positive impact on the overall training of competitive skilled specialists and their employment options in the present-day socially mobile world.

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