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USING MIND MAPPING FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY AND WRITING AT ENGLISH LESSONS AT THE UNIVERSITY

The article presents the study of the effects of employing mind-mapping techniques to improve students' vocabulary and writing. The aim of the article is to show how effective mind mapping technique can help to teach vocabulary and writing at the English lessons. Teaching vocabulary and writing skills are difficult areas for English language teachers. They are constantly trying to find effective techniques to help learners to memorize new words and improve essay writing. The relevance of this work is seen in the need to help English teachers to upgrade their teaching methods and make the learning process easier for learners. It is a nice technique that can help to enrich students' vocabulary and improve writing skills, because it enables them to arrange the facts and ideas. The results of the analysis showed that mind mapping technology has many benefits and advantages for students. Learning new vocabulary with the help of mind maps was more effective than using traditional memorizing and note-taking. Constructing mind maps helped students to achieve better results in essay writing, especially expressing their opinions and producing well-organized ideas in written form.

Key words: mind maps, writing skills, vocabulary, reading, creative strategy, mind mapping technique, critical thinking

MAIN PROVISIONS

Mind maps are a modern tool that enables teachers and students to get the most out of their learning experience. This technique can help teachers to enrich their teaching methods and make the learning process more interesting and effective.

Modern teaching process requires useful and creative techniques. Nowadays many teachers are constantly trying to find effective tools to use them in teaching writing and vocabulary. These areas,

writing and vocabulary, are key components of the teaching English process. They require much ability both from students and teachers. Writing is the most complicated skill to be taught, because students must know how to transform their ideas into clear and comprehensible responses. Writing helps students to think through topics or defend their own points of view. Through this process, students learn how to present the information into a logical and creative way. The teacher must show them how to comprehend the difference between facts and opinions, and also to support their ideas with facts. Organizing ideas and thoughts can cause many difficulties to students, because a written text must have sense. Without strong writing skills a written speech can be confusing and unclear. Writing can help students to develop their knowledge of the foreign language.

Writing and vocabulary are closely interrelated, because the latter consists of words and phrases we use in writing. Vocabulary is the basis for writing and impacts achievement in it. A nice and complete vocabulary will enable the reader to formulate more interesting sentences and avoid repetition of the same words in one paragraph. Actively practicing the new words in their written speech will help students to improve their vocabulary. When teaching a foreign language, teachers must remember about this peculiarity. Proficient teachers always try to find creative and effective methods and techniques to improve students' writing skills and vocabulary. Mind maps can help students to develop their vocabulary proficiency by not only learning the definition of the given words but also making strong connections between words in the context. The results of this research can help teachers to enhance their knowledge of methods and techniques when teaching writing and vocabulary at the English lessons.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is to show the usefulness and effectiveness of mind mapping technique in teaching students the English language. The object of the study is teaching English process. The subject of the study is using mind mapping technique in teaching vocabulary and writing. To achieve the goal, the following objectives are to solve:

- 1) Review different sources to understand the essence of mind mapping technique;
- 2) Analyze the effectiveness of mind mapping technique in the teaching process;
- 3) Reveal the key benefits of mind mapping technique when teaching writing and vocabulary.

The relevance of the study is to show the ideas how teachers can use mind maps for education in their classrooms to help students to take better notes and improve their comprehension. The hypothesis of the given study was as follows: Teaching writing and vocabulary will be more effective at the English lessons, if using mind maps technique.

Mind maps represent new ideas how to teach the English language more effectively. According to Buzan, "mind mapping in education allows a learner to fundamentally change the way they interact with information and knowledge. A mind map is a learning tool that allows users to create and share visual representations of things like lectures, notes, and research. In fact, mind mapping in education is useful for a wide variety of tasks, and can be easily tailored to the user's needs. They begin with a central idea and branches into sub-topics. Then, ideas radiate from the center out, growing and changing as you go" [1, 15].

Mind mapping is a perfect tool for any classroom because they enable students to:

- visualize ideas and concepts easily;
- brainstorm effectively, either individually or in groups;
- outline research papers and essays;
- develop reading comprehension;
- improve note taking and idea management, and develop critical thinking skills [2].

For many teachers, gathering and forming plans and ideas for students can be wearisome. It often requires loads of documents, charts, and links that do not fit on a single page. Lessons and presentations typically require multiple media outlets, with teachers switching back and forth from presentations to documents and videos. This can be confusing to students, stressful for teachers, and ultimately create more work than necessary. When students use mind maps as a study or learning

tool, they are able to grasp the concepts more easily because they are integrating themselves into the learning process. It is similar to the act of studying, reiterating, and explaining information to a partner. As students build out a mind map, their brain is forced to make associations between various pieces of seemingly disconnected information. In the end, this helps students develop a clearer and more complete picture of a topic or concept [3].

Many students struggle to find study habits that work for them. In reality, conventional methods, such as reading and taking notes, serve only a small number of people. For those seeking alternative and more effective methods, mind mapping is ideal. Students of any age or field are surely familiar with the feeling of information overload, and the stress caused by racking their brain to remember a concept later. Mind maps provide a solution to this – rather than having excess knowledge stored in our heads with little to tie it all together, mind-mapping technique gives us the tools to help the information actually make sense. Our brains operate in an unorganized and complex fashion. Mind maps allow students to fully engage in the topics at hand. By using information visualization and outlining the relationships between ideas, mind maps mirror the way students' brains actually work [4].

Here are some benefits of using mind maps in teaching process:

- learning becomes a stimulating process;
- complicated topics can be simplified and easy to comprehend;
- one can visualize complex points to easily remember and recall large pieces of information;
- the freedom to connect ideas without a specific order leads to creative and innovative solutions;
- one can come up with a hierarchy of points by easily differentiating between primary and secondary topics;
- making mind maps speeds up brainstorming and improves productivity;
- easy cooperation allows an entire group to work together on a presentation or project [5, 9].

Mind mapping allows the learners to see connections and relationships between different ideas. The process makes it easier to understand complex topics and make the right decisions. In this way, a mind map enhances students' memory, comprehension, and productivity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The given research is based on the works of T. Buzan [1], E. A. Pavlova [4], Schroeder N.L., Nesbit J.C., Anguiano C.J. [2] where there were given different explanations of the effectiveness of mind mapping technique when teaching the foreign language.

The research methodology includes the use of empirical methods: interviews, questionnaire, survey, as well as theoretical methods: comparative analysis of literature and data from Internet sources. Questionnaires and interviews provided fact-based information to the respondents, making the analysis process more streamlined and less time-consuming. Comparative analysis of literature was a part of diagnostic phase and helped to answer the important question of the practical value of applying mind maps in teaching language process. The present study involved second year students, whose age ranged from 18 to 19 years old. The study analyzed data collected through tests in the form of a pre-test at the beginning of the course “Basic Foreign Language B1” and a post-test at the end of the above mentioned course. The tests consisted of two tasks – 1) lexical (gap-filling, labeling, ordering) and 2) writing (make up a plan and write a paragraph based on the given topic). The materials used to collect data are questionnaires and test sheets. To analyze the data there was used descriptive qualitative and quantitative analysis. These types of analysis helped us to measure the level of writing and vocabulary skills of the participants and to describe and interpret the obtained results of the research. To assess students' level of achievement in writing we applied a scoring rubric. The rubric consists of four criteria to assess students' writing performance – content, vocabulary, accuracy, organization; the scale describing how well the given task has been performed – excellent, good, fair, poor. As the rubric is clear, with detailed explanation of quality descriptions, the students self-evaluated their writing works and provided feedback during peer assessment.

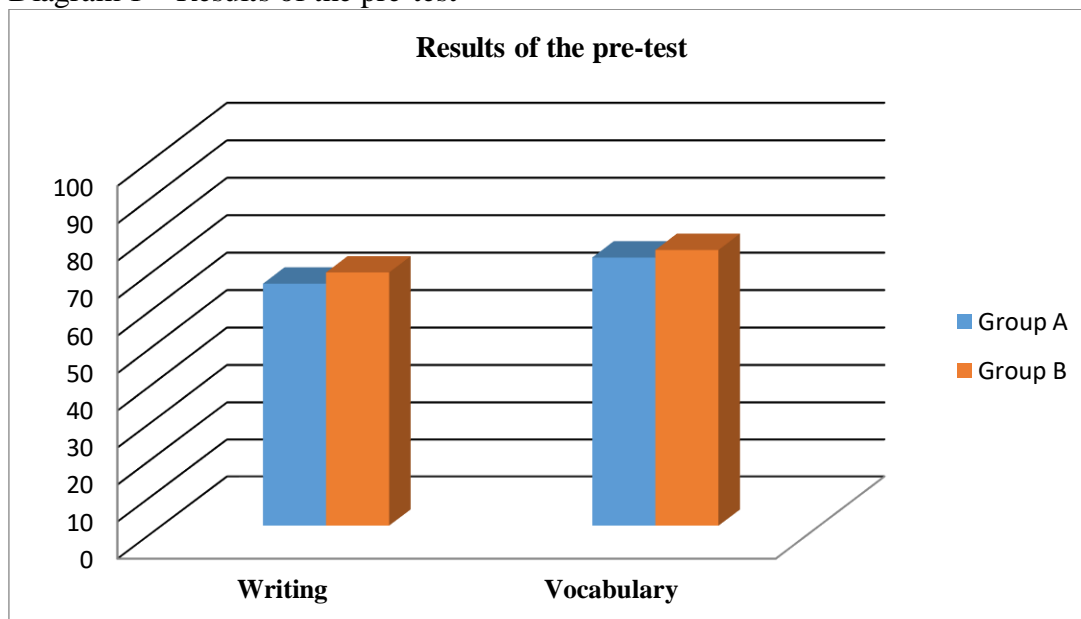
This research, in terms of theoretical significance, reveals analysis of a certain teaching technique when teaching English. To the practical significance of the given research can be attributed the results obtained experimentally through questionnaires and tests at the English lessons. The obtained results can be of interest for English teachers.

RESULTS

Teaching writing and vocabulary claim to be the most complicated areas in the learning process and thus it gave an impetus to conduct the study concerning the effects of employing mind-mapping techniques to improve students' vocabulary and writing. The study lasted during the autumn semester of 2022-2023 academic year at Ualikhanov University, at the Department of the English Language and Teaching Methods, the name of the course Basic Foreign Language B1. Two groups of the 2nd year students, educational program Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages (A – the experimental group and B – the control group) were involved in the study. The objectives of the study were to determine the effects of employing mind-mapping techniques to improve students' vocabulary and writing skills and to collect data on students' opinions and perceptions of applying mind maps.

At the beginning of the course there was conducted a pre-test which tested students' knowledge of lexical material and writing performance prior to employing mind-mapping techniques. Testing tasks were designed according to the competencies related to the educational program Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages.

Diagram 1 – Results of the pre-test



As shown in diagram 1, the results of the pre-test of both groups are almost on the same level. The average grade of writing performance in Group A is 65, in Group B is 68; lexical test in Group A makes 72, in Group B - 74.

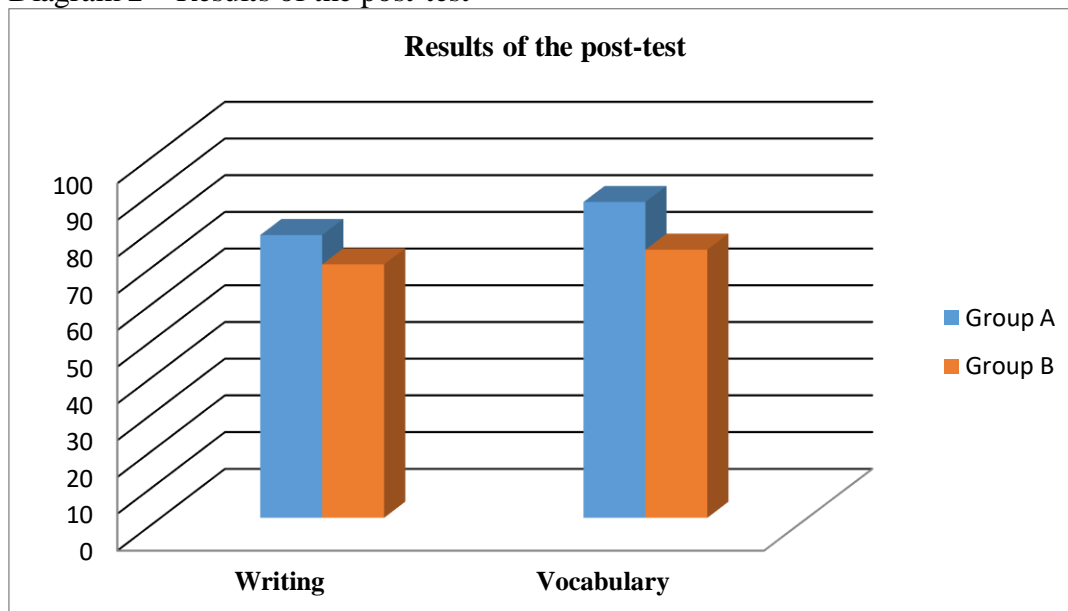
Being an experimental group, students of A learned new vocabulary by employing mind maps, while students of B enlarged their vocabulary by traditional memorizing and note-taking. During the course the students of the experimental group were asked to create mind maps for new words, expressions, phrases, notions. They worked individually, in pairs, in groups of 3 or 4 students. During the experimental period students of group A were encouraged to ask questions to clarify their doubts about structuring their ideas when creating a mind map.

The results of writing performance of both groups were assessed according to the categories and criteria in the scoring rubric. The rubric consists of 4 points: content, vocabulary, accuracy,

organization. The results of the pre-test showed that the students have difficulties expressing their opinions and producing well-organized ideas in written form.

During the experimental period creating a mind map was a pre-writing activity. After giving a topic, students started putting it at the center of a map and then generated ideas, developing and relating them. Working in groups students compared and discussed their ideas, adding new data, opinions, images. In the next stage the students of the experimental group organized their mind maps into a structure to decide the best way and order to present their points.

Diagram 2 – Results of the post-test



As shown in diagram 2, Group A, which used mind mapping technique performed better in both writing and lexical tasks at the post test. The average grade for writing tasks in Group A increased by 12 points, in vocabulary by 14 points.

The data analysis given above shows that Group A, which had used mind mapping technique to improve writing skills and enlarge the vocabulary performed significantly better than Group B. The results of the writing performance and lexical post-test has strengthened our conviction that mind mapping as a learning technique has a positive significant effect on enlarging students' vocabulary and improving their writing skills.

By the end of the experimental period a survey was conducted to collect data on students' perceptions of applying mind maps in learning writing and memorizing vocabulary. The aim of the survey was to find out the students' ideas on effectiveness of mind mapping. The survey included the following questions for students of the experimental group.

- 1) Do you think mind-mapping technique was an efficient tool for you in learning writing and vocabulary? Why (not)?
- 2) What are the advantages and benefits of mind mapping for you?
- 3) Are there any disadvantages of mind mapping?
- 4) What difficulties, if any, did you face in applying mind maps?

It was found out that 12 (86%) students of the experimental group had positive perception on the use of mind mapping technique in learning writing and lexical material. They mentioned that the mind-mapping technique helped them to structure their ideas and make up a clear plan before writing an essay or a composition. As to lexical material it was admitted by general consent that mind mapping technique was effective and beneficial to memorizing new words, phrases and expressions. There were 2 (14%) students who admitted that it took a longer time to find a keyword and create branches. 10 respondents of the experimental group stated that mind mapping helped them to develop

and organize ideas. Thus, the majority of the students of the experimental group had positive perception on the use of mind mapping in developing writing skills and learning vocabulary.

The analysis of the students' responses showed that 21% of the students of the experimental group had some difficulties in using mind mapping. One student found it difficult to understand other students' maps, two students admitted that they had difficulties in finding subject-related keywords and images. However, 13 (93%) respondents admitted that they would use mind mapping technique to learn lexical material and to improve writing as well as to better comprehend and memorize information in other courses.

One of the questions in the survey asked the students to point out some advantages of using mind mapping. Given below are some excerpts from the students' answers:

“With mind maps it became easier to manage the vocabulary list”.

“Using mind maps really helped me to learn more effectively and faster than using traditional list-making technique”.

“With mind mapping it became easier to organize ideas before writing an essay or a composition”.

“With mind mapping it became easier for me to memorize different, related words through remembering the connections between them”.

The analysis of students' responses makes it possible to point out that after getting involved in the process of creating mind maps on a regular basis they find it useful, effective, creative and enjoyable way to generate and to improve their writing skills as well as to enlarge the vocabulary. The hypothesis of the study was completely proved.

DISCUSSION

Mind maps can be useful for teaching vocabulary and developing writing skills. Learning vocabulary, being an integral and essential part of language learning process, is important in developing students' speaking skills. Mind mapping is an effective technique that can help learners to memorize the words and consequently promotes vocabulary development. Applying mind mapping helps students to clarify their thoughts by categorizing and grouping them into related ideas. Being a creative note-taking strategy mind mapping also helps learners to remember more information. In the process of creating a mind map students use different colors, images, they label and categorize things and notions, etc. As a mind map is a graphic organizer, students think about terms or concepts in different ways. Most word map organizers engage students in developing a definition, synonyms, antonyms, and a picture for a given vocabulary word or concept. It is important to point out that mind mapping technique imitates the thinking process, namely it makes it possible to move from one topic to another. A pattern will not just help the students to understand the vocabulary but also lead students to have interest in mastering the language [6, 239].

Essentially, writing is a way when students can express their thoughts, and nice writing comes from nice thinking and preparation. Before students start writing something, it seems necessary to offer them opportunities to think about the topic they need to write about. When teaching writing, teachers can face many problems. They have to apply to different techniques and methods to help students to develop their writing skills. Writing is the most difficult mental process, because it requires many skills from learners. Some teachers, including students who consider writing as a difficult process, may have a difficulty in terms of expressing their ideas in the written form [7]. Mind mapping can become the way to solve this problem. During the course “Basic Foreign Language B1” we applied this technique and asked the students to make a mind map before writing. Mind mapping stimulated students' thinking, helped them to concentrate and organize their own ideas, and cultivated their abilities to summarize, analyze, and criticize. On the other hand, it reinforced the process of writing in English, and students could see the outline when they started to write. Mind mapping can help students to improve their writing skills in terms of enriching vocabulary, increasing creativity, arranging sentences and organizing ideas. As a result, the mind mapping technique would be particularly suitable for teachers to help students in planning their writing as the approach encourages students to reach a deeper level of understanding of the writing topics; using key items can help

students to remember things more easily, because an image is very memorable [8]. However, the teachers should remember giving clear instructions and time limitation for the students not to focus more on listing down their ideas from their maps, because they should also remember about the structure of their writing.

Essay writing also requires much ability from students. Mind mapping can help students to achieve nice progress in it. Mind mapping is an effective means to take notes and brainstorm essay topics. A mind map involves writing down a central topic and thinking of new and related ideas which radiate out from the center [9]. There are a lot of benefits of applying mind mapping technique for successful essay writing. The first one is that it has a complete overview of the entire topic and a clear flow of ideas. The second benefit of mind maps is that they let the learners understand how the main topic connects with its supporting parts. Finally, this approach provides a much more suitable format to supply information to students' minds. They will remember the information more clearly, improving their writing potential [10]. In general, mind mapping is a diagramming technique that helps to display information visually. Since most students prefer to outline their essays before actually making them into long paragraphs, it is always considered a nice practice to make a mind map in and around the essay's topic.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the results of the research show that employing mind-mapping techniques is effective both for developing vocabulary and improving writing skills. It was proved that mind mapping promotes effective and faster memorization of words than traditional list-making. According to the results of the post-test the grade for vocabulary tasks in Group A increased by fourteen points. The students of Group A admitted that they could practice, recycle and memorize words easily.

The analysis of the survey on employing mind maps in teaching writing also shows a positive effect: it facilitated the students to develop their ideas; it became easier for students to think and organize their ideas before writing. The findings also have showed that for some students, mind mapping took longer time to find a keyword and create branches. However, the majority of the students had positive perception on the use of mind mapping technique in learning new vocabulary and writing.

Nowadays every single day can bring different challenges for English teachers. The main question that teachers ask themselves every day is how to find optimal and effective tools to make teaching process easier and more creative. The results of the experiment showed that applying mind maps has many benefits for students in the process of learning a foreign language. The benefits are as follows:

- mind maps can help students to visualize, organize, systematize and structure their ideas in a way for better grasping the given information;
- they develop students' creative and mental abilities, thinking and memory;
- they can help to generalize knowledge on a variety of topics;
- they can help teachers to organize individual, group and collective activities;
- they can help to create basic action algorithms.

Thus mind mapping technique can provide teachers the necessary sources to upgrade their teaching methods.

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Мақалада оқушылардың сөздік қоры және жазу дағдыларын жетілдіру үшін ақыл-ой карталарын тиімді пайдаланудың зерттеу нәтижелері берілген. Мақаланың мақсаты – ағылшын тілі сабақтарында жазу мен сөздік қорды үйретуде ақыл-ой картасының тиімді әдіс екенін көрсету. Ағылшын тілі мұғалімдері үшін лексика мен жазу дағдыларын үйрету күрделі жұмыс. Олар оқушылардың жаңа сөздерді есте сақтау мен эссе жазуға көмектесетін тиімді әдіс-тәсілдерін үнемі іздестіруде. Жұмыстың өзектілігі ағылшын тілі мұғалімдеріне оқыту әдістерін жақсартуға және оқу үдерісін жеңілдетуге көмектесу қажеттілігінде қарастырылады. Бұл оқушылардың сөздік қорын байытуға және жазу дағдыларын жақсартуға көмектесетін тиімді әдіс, өйткені оларға фактілер мен идеяларды реттеуге мүмкіндік береді. Талдаудың нәтижелері мұғалімдерге ақыл-ой карталарын қолдану әдісінің лексика мен жазуды үйретуде бірқатар артықшылықтары бар екенін түсінуге көмектеседі. Ақыл-ой картасының көмегімен жаңа сөздік қорды үйрену дәстүрлі есте сақтау мен жазуға қарағанда тиімді екені дәлелденді. Ақыл-ой картасын құрастыру оқушыларға эссе жазуда, әсіресе өз пікірлерін білдіруде және жазбаша түрде өз ойын дәлелді жеткізуде жақсы нәтижелерге қол жеткізуге болатынын көрсетті.

Кілт сөздер: ақыл-ой карталар, жазу дағдылары, сөздік, оқу, шығармашылық стратегия, ақыл-ой картасы техникасы, сыни тұрғыдан ойлау

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Использование ментальных карт для обучения лексики и письму на уроках английского языка в вузе

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В статье представлены результаты исследования применения ментальных карт для улучшения словарного запаса и письменных навыков учащихся. Цель данной статьи показать, что эффективная техника ментальных карт поможет в обучении письму и словарному запасу на уроках английского. Обучение лексике и навыкам письменной речи являются весьма трудными областями для учителей английского языка. Они постоянно пытаются найти эффективные методы, которые помогают учащимся запоминать новые слова и писать эссе. Актуальность данной работы рассматривается в необходимости помочь преподавателям английского языка улучшить их методы преподавания и сделать учебный процесс более легким. Это эффективная техника, которая может помочь обогатить словарный запас учащихся и улучшить навыки письменной речи, поскольку позволяет им упорядочить факты и идеи. Результаты данного анализа могут помочь преподавателям понять, что методика использования ментальных карт имеет ряд преимуществ в обучении лексике и письму. Изучение новой лексики с помощью ментальных карт оказалось более эффективным, чем традиционное запоминание и конспектирование. Построение ментальных карт помогло обучающимся достичь лучших результатов в написании эссе, особенно в выражении своего мнения и создании хорошо организованных идей в письменной форме.

Ключевые слова: ментальные карты, навыки письма, словарный запас, чтение, креативная стратегия, техника интеллектуальных карт, критическое мышление

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ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ СУПРА- И ТОПОГРАФЕМИЧЕСКИХ СРЕДСТВ В КАЗАХСТАНСКИХ УЧЕБНИКАХ РУССКОГО ЯЗЫКА

Ввиду того, что современная культура характеризуется визуальностью, печатный текст немислим сегодня без включения знаков из иных семиотических систем. Их функция состоит в организации, оформлении смысла и усилении воздействия на читателя. Школьные учебники не являются исключением. Их авторы все шире используют различные замещающие знаковые языки для структурирования информации и обеспечения успешного ее восприятия учеником-реципиентом. В статье рассматривается визуальное семиотическое пространство казахстанского учебника русского языка для 6 класса авторов Ж.Ж. Капеновой, М.В. Валовой и Н.В. Мирошниковой. Подобный анализ отечественных учебников не осуществлялся в казахстанской лингводидактике, несмотря на актуальность исследования роли поликодовых текстов в современной методике и лингвистике. Авторы статьи анализируют шрифтовое оформление учебника, расположение материала на странице, классифицируют используемые в учебнике иллюстративные материалы, а также оценивают соответствие визуальных знаковых систем учебника опыту ученика-реципиента. По результатам семиотического анализа сформулированы рекомендации по оптимизации визуальной стороны учебника.

Ключевые слова: метаграфемика, супраграфемика, топографемика, дизайн учебников, поликодовый текст, семиотический анализ, визуальная семиотика.