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Mnemonics in Middle School English Lessons as a Method to Master Vocabulary

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Abstract

The English language is becoming more and more common in practically every aspect of human endeavor every year. English, the language used for international communication, is evolving quickly. As a result, there are numerous educational platforms, innovative approaches to teaching, and a wide range of courses available for both teachers and students. There are a lot of really good ways to teach the lexical component of speech at the moment. This article explores mnemonics, which we believe to be one of the most fascinating and practical strategies. The article's relevance stems from the fact that English language instructors in schools must either reject in whole or in part the conventional approaches of teaching the lexical component of speech since they fail to encourage students to learn the language and do not help them retain words over time. The purpose of this study is to determine how beneficial mnemonics are for middle school vocabulary instruction in foreign languages. The study's focus is on mnemonic devices used in secondary English language instruction to help students learn vocabulary. Mnemonics are a useful tool for helping middle school students effectively assimilate lexical units. The following techniques were applied when composing this article: examination of the psychological and methodological literature on the subject of the study; evaluation of the utility of mnemonics in middle school; enumeration and explanation of mnemonic exercise programs; theoretical extrapolation of the study findings.

Keywords: Middle School; English Language; Mnemonics.

1. Introduction

Students may not always find the process of teaching English within the confines of a school setting to be interesting. This is because a lot of teachers still employ antiquated strategies and methods of instruction. For instance, when teaching students a new vocabulary, educators often assign them to memorize words mechanically—a practice known to the general public as the "cramming method"—which prevents lexical units from being retained in long-term memory and makes the subject matter less interesting. Mnemonics are one of the most fascinating strategies that will be discussed in this article. In this article, an effort is made to incorporate mnemonics techniques into the curriculum, specifically for the fifth grade, through the creation of an exercise system designed to facilitate the efficient assimilation of lexical content.

It is reasonable to conclude that, despite our extensive search of literature on the subject, very few articles examining the disadvantages of mnemonic devices have been discovered. Furthermore, a plethora of research studies has demonstrated that mnemonic strategies can enhance the effectiveness of learning a foreign language vocabulary by a quarter. Of these strategies, phonetic, free association, and grouping methods seem to be the most widely used and successful. The fact that they are readily available and straightforward explains this. Based on the aforementioned, we can conclude that using mnemonic devices correctly and logically helps improve vocabulary acquisition.

When learning vocabulary in a foreign language, it's crucial to apply certain fundamental principles to exercises involving mnemonic techniques in order to master the language, in addition to choosing the most appropriate mnemonic technique: the novelty principle. The liveliness principle. Each and every lesson needs to be lively. There is no exception for any exercise that uses mnemonic devices. According to the attractiveness principle, tasks and vocabulary should only make students feel good about themselves.

2. Literature Review

Research on mnemonic effects on recall started in the late 1960s, and a decade later, studies on mnemonic practical applications were conducted. During vocabulary training, learners can "facilitate the encoding of information for easier retrieval" by using keyword mnemonics, which combine an auditory keyword with an associated image. Researchers have used mnemonic devices created by educators, students, and specialists to investigate the effectiveness of mnemonics in both short- and long-term retention across a range of groups. Overall, the results have been conflicting. For example, Wang and Thomas (1995) found that while immediate recall was beneficial, long-term retention was not. Nonetheless, studies on immediate recall, gifted and talented students (Veit, Scruggs, & Mastropieri, 1986), students with learning disabilities, learners of second languages (Atkinson, 1975), and commercially prepared materials have consistently shown positive results. There aren't many studies looking at how students feel about mnemonic vocabulary exercises, but the ones that exist have revealed that students generally respond well to themScruggs, et al. (1987) found that most learning-disabled students participating in the keyword condition reported that they believed the keyword strategy was helpful and rated it as more helpful than did the non-keyword group members.

Although the keyword method is most commonly used in curriculums to teach vocabulary acquisition for both first and second languages, there are other applications as well, particularly in the teaching and learning of science and social studies concepts and terminology as well as prose learning tasks (Mastropieri et al., 1987). When reading a text about the extinction of dinosaurs, students with learning disabilities (LD) found that mnemonic images helped them remember the information better (Mastropieri et al., 1987). In a mnemonic-based exercise that involved mapping out battles in North America, they also demonstrated success (Scruggs et al. 1992). Students with behavior disorders were taught science concepts over several days in a teacher-conducted study, and the results were positive (Mastropieri, et al., 1987). Students with LD were effectively taught three distinct concepts about dinosaurs and their potential causes of extinction through a mnemonic combination treatment. Furthermore, the keyword method was used to teach multiple attributes to students with learning disabilities, demonstrating the effectiveness of the keyword strategy in helping students quickly acquire "novel factual associations" (Scruggs, et al., 1985).

3. Methodology

The entire field of mnemonics studies how associations and visual aids can help people remember information. It first appeared two thousand years ago, even before writing. This is according to some sources. The process of creating associations in a student's mind between a lexical unit and its picture is known as mnemonics (Kalish, 2017). There are two categories of mnemonics: visual and verbal. Word associations with other words are known as verbal mnemonics. The acronym OSASCOMP, for instance, is made up of the initial letters of the words that determine the order of adjectives in an English sentence. Words and pictures can be associated as visual mnemonics. To enhance the effectiveness of visual associations, three strategies have been suggested:

The initial tactic is known as interaction. This implies that there needs to be an active connection between the two objects in the illustration. You could, for instance, connect pictures of a mouse and a pen and visualize someone writing with a mouse that looks like a pen. The second tactic is luminosity. Clear, striking colors should be used in the images. To make the interaction appear more like a movie than a still image, animation can be added (Higbee, 2001). The third tactic is eccentricity. It alludes to the peculiar application of imagery. Children would be drawn in by, say, an unusual image of a dog using a broom to sweep the floor or an unusual image of a dog flying in the sky (Mahdi, 2018).

4. Results

An explanation of the designed exercise series that uses mnemonic devices to help students memorize vocabulary words from the book "Spotlight 5. Student's book." This section of the work is devoted to the practical portion of the investigation, which seeks to determine whether or not secondary school students can effectively acquire vocabulary in a

foreign language by using mnemonic devices. We used the academic and methodological complex for students of the 5th form "Spotlight 5. Student's book," written by Rakhimova (2017), to create a set of lexical exercises for students.. It is noteworthy to mention that the Russian Federation's Ministry of Education has recommended this book. When it comes to mnemonic strategies, we believe it is useful to apply them at every stage of vocabulary instruction, including introduction, practice, memorization, and speech application. This technique's non-standard approach and ability to successfully modify the lesson activity are its main advantages. In order to guarantee that trainees are effectively engaged in cognitive activities and progress from ignorance to knowledge, it is also critical to emphasize that contemporary teachers need to be aware of the mechanisms and strategies for developing education and training. In this sense, we think it's essential to combine computer technology with mnemonic techniques. Students can interact with educational materials in a variety of ways and enhance their learning experience with multimedia technologies.

We have selected the "It's fun" sub-theme from the seventh module, "In all weathers," to create mnemonic exercises based on the academic and methodological complex "Spotlight 5. Student's book." We recommend a set of exercises that use mnemonic devices to introduce, practice, and help students memorize word combinations that are covered in the lesson. the phase of lexical unit introduction. You can present words in the form of rhymes with pictures of actions to create the most engaging and memorable introduction. We believe that students in the fifth form should use the Russian language when learning new words. English rhymes are preferable for older students who are also in the secondary schooling stage. An illustration of one of these exercises is as follows:

Practice is the next step. At this point, you can employ the following mnemonic devices: Activities to practice matching words to pictures and their variations include writing words by themselves, joining words with pictures, and putting letters into words. classification based on semantics. Students separate a notebook page into two columns. "Indoor activities" are written in the first column, and "outdoor activities" in the second. mimics the game. Cards with instructions on which action to display on the blackboard are distributed to the students. Other students ought to identify the action. The student who names the action first gets to go up to the whiteboard and demonstrate it. This exercise is ideal for switching up a lesson plan and a quick physical workout.

In 1999, Baddeley Some of them are taken into consideration in this paper: quasi-words were created. Quasi-words are invented terms that aid in memory retention. For instance, students can commit the word "Osascomp," which stands for opinion, size, age, shape, color, origin, material, and purpose, to memory in order to learn the proper order for adjectives in English. Using rhyme. An example of this technique would be a sentence with rhymes. The utilization of rhymes facilitates the efficient and quick learning of lexical content. "The weather is a funny thing," for instance. In the spring, it frequently rains (Parima, 2018). (Rakhimova, 2017) created associations with the situation or the "Eidetic" technique. As they attempt to learn a new word, students can draw connections to previously experienced events, which will help the word become more deeply ingrained in their memory (Nasilevich, 2021).

The "Chain" method facilitates word sequence memorization. For instance, a student must learn the words "ruler," "rubber," "pencil case," and "book" in that order. If the chain technique is applied, it could operate as follows: Ruler and Rubber, who already owned a large, stylish pencil case and a book written by the book's author, went to the store to purchase a ruler and an eraser (Erofeeva, 2018). The "Matryoshka" method is another intriguing technique. Set expressions are simple to learn with its assistance. For instance, you can visualize the word "make" written on paper in a lovely handwriting with a bright purple marker, and conjure up images of a sumptuous breakfast, friends, and money on it to help you remember set expressions like "make money, make friends, and make breakfast." The process of mastering phraseological units is determined by these factors, which also elicit an emotional response, greatly increase interest in, and motivation for language activity and the subject in general when studying phraseology (Davletbaeva et al., 2016). One of the most widely used mnemonic strategies nowadays is the mind map, or mental map (Osiyanova, 2020).

5. Discussion

We can conclude that the objective of this article, which focused on mnemonic strategies and their efficacy in teaching vocabulary of a foreign language to students enrolled in secondary education programs, has been met and all the assigned tasks have been completed. First, the notions of the "lexical unit," "lexical competence formation," and the specifics of instructing students in the lexical component of speech have been analyzed based on the opinions of eminent Russian and international educators. It has been defined that mnemonics are the science of using associations to help remember different types of information. As students advance to secondary school, there is an increase in the lexical

minimum that needs to be learned, which causes many of them to struggle with learning new words. In light of the fact that traditional teaching methods are nearly obsolete, educators ought to blend them with more contemporary and interactive techniques. The examination of the instructional materials supported the requirement to provide a series of tasks for one of the lessons that were made using mnemonic devices.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, mnemonic strategies can be applied in language instruction, especially when teaching vocabulary. In addition to aiding in the quick and accurate memorization of vocabulary, they also enhance memory, cognitive function, and attention, all of which benefit students holistically. These methods can pique students' interest and boost their motivation to study foreign languages because they are unconventional. The fact that certain mnemonic techniques take a lot of time is their only drawback. Nonetheless, the majority of educational experts only find benefits in utilizing these methods, and they counsel educators to use them occasionally. It is imperative to remember, however, that mnemonic devices cannot serve as the sole foundation for an educational process; rather, they can serve as supplementary study tools that enhance the learning process. The article's findings should be useful for future research on mnemonics when teaching vocabulary in English at different educational levels.

Acknowledgements

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