Enhancing English Vocabulary Acquisition through the Use of Mnemonics

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Abstract: The article below gives data on how to effectively remember new words through mnemonic techniques. The TOG method is widely covered with a detailed description and examples.

Keywords: Cognitive connection, retention, language skills, mental fatigue, mnemonic devices.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the developing world, the demand for learning foreign languages is increasing day by day. It is known that among these languages, English has the largest number of speakers. High access to all information in any field through the English language motivates many people to learn this language, be it a doctor, a musician, or an engineer. However, due to difficulties in language learning, some learners may stop the process or totally give up. The problems include lack of reading and listening comprehension, inarticulate speech, which are caused by a lack of vocabulary. Most people find learning words to be a boring activity, and even if they want, they can not engage in it with their full potential. In situations like this, applying mnemonics to language acquisition is a great way to overcome these problems. Mnemonics, derived from the Greek word "mnemonikos", is a set of techniques designed to aid memory and enhance recollection by forming artificial connections. This concept is linked to Greek mythology, specifically the goddess of memory, Mnemosyne [1]. Nowadays, mnemonics has become popular among people, but not everyone can connect it with language learning. There are many people who just rely on word repetition in order to memorize. Nevertheless, mnemonics is offered as a way to reduce time consumption and make it easier to remember new words. Here the most effective methods of mnemonics are presented with the help of examples.

II. METHODS

For many years, in mnemonics various ways are used to enhance vocabulary skill of learners. Among these TOG(Townsend, Osana, Green) method is preferred to explain thoroughly, considering these steps:

1. Townsend (Associate): Establishing a cognitive connection between the unfamiliar word and a learner's existing knowledge or a recognizable image by associating it with a word or concept that is already familiar to him. This process involves creating a mental link, wherein the learner integrate the new word into the framework of what he already understood, facilitating a more profound and lasting understanding of the vocabulary. It means that a learner should connect a new word in English with a familiar word in any language, which is pronounced in the same way

and imagine its view. For example, if a learner want to memorize the word "top" in English, he can connect it with the word "to'p" in Uzbek language. After finding such word, the next step will be imagination.

2. Osana (Visualize): Generating a rich mental representation by visualizing the connected word or image in a context that is not only memorable but also vivid and detailed. The act of creating a comprehensive mental picture serves to significantly boost learners' ability to retain and recall the associated information. In this stage, the learner must know the translation of the word "top" (the highest part of something) and create a live image including Uzbek word and English word with its meaning. The learning can imagine a boy who is throwing a ball (to'p) to the top (a new word) of the net.

3. Green (Review): Establishing a systematic approach to reviewing recently acquired vocabulary by consistently revisiting the new words learned, developing a structured timetable dedicated to this purpose, employing various strategies such as flashcards or integration into sentences to enhance the depth of understanding. The deliberate repetition of these exercises over an extended period is fundamental, playing a crucial role in firmly anchoring these words within memory. The unwavering commitment to regular reviews not only solidifies the retention of the vocabulary but also fortifies the cognitive connections, ensuring a lasting and robust proficiency in language skills. So, after visualizing the image, the learner should repeat with word with its correct meaning and regularly use it in sentences and speech.

Another method is called "Tomato", which is created by Francesco Chirillo. Here the steps, which learners should follow, are given:

1. Avoid distractions: At this stage, distracting elements ought to be removed. Family members, phones, noise, and other distractions might divert your attention from your work during the day. People inside the house are alerted at this point, and phones are either switched off or placed in automatic mode. Since cumulative work is the foundation of this strategy, focus in one location is necessary. This phase is crucial.

2. Planning and preparation: Effective planning is crucial for tasks, whether it is organizing materials, determining the extent of reading, or estimating the workload. Lack of preparation during work can result in confusion. Another factor is the cognitive load- the brain functions more efficiently when aware of the workload and nearing completion. Clear objectives enhance productivity; without them, the brain tends to become lethargic.

3. Turning on the timer : The tomato technique involves initiating focused work sessions using a 25-minute timer, known as a "tomato". This method's effectiveness lies in breaking down tasks into manageable intervals, typically 2-3 hours, to prevent procrastination. The timer acts as a motivator, encouraging quicker task completion by signaling time constraints. The accelerated pace is a result of the brain responding to the urgency created by the ticking timer. For those struggling with a 25-minute concentration span initially, shorter intervals like 20 or 15 minutes, referred to as "minute tomatoes" can be employed.

4. Five minutes rest: After the time elapses, a 5-minute break follows. During this relaxation period, it is essential for the brain to rest without distractions, such as avoiding phone use. This is because, during this time, the brain processes and analyzes the information it has received.

5. Steps 3, 4 are repeated: After setting a timer for 25 minutes, learners should engage in focused work. After the timer concludes, it is advised to take a 5-minute. It is more effective to work in two 25-minute sessions (tomatoes) than to work continuously for an hour. After completing four tomatoes, taking a longer break of 1-2 hours is preferred, as extended work without breaks can lead to mental fatigue [2].
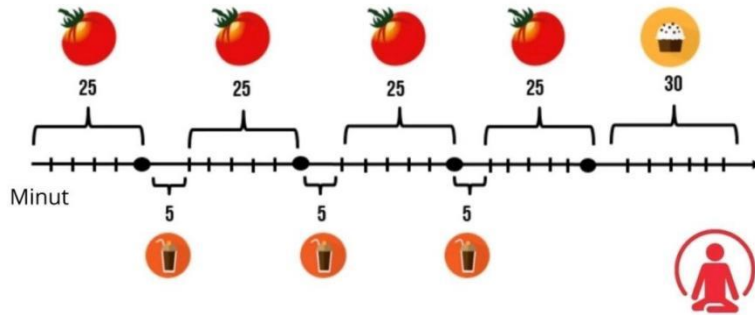
(picture1 [2])

The 16/9 tomato timer method is employed. In the initial 16minutes, images are associated with foreign words to memorize as many as possible. The memorized words are then reinforced during the following 9 minutes. After the time concludes, a 5-minute break is taken. During the word check, an attempt is made to recall translations for foreign words, and those remembered incorrectly are set aside. The focus is on revising the incorrectly remembered words, followed by an attempt to recall foreign words based on their Uzbek meanings, introducing an added level of difficulty to the translation process. Foreign words are articulated aloud while being associated with Uzbek words for better retention.

III. RESULTS

As for the results of the above methods, it should be mentioned that the words memorized by mnemonic methods are remembered more and longer than the words memorized by repetition. In our brain, memory appears in two forms: passive memory, which is designed to remember data for a short period of time, and active memory, which stores information in an active state for long time. By means of mnemonics, it is possible to easily increase the amount of short-term remembered words and speed up the process of their activation. Even if it is somehow difficult in the initial stages of the process, after a while it is expected to do it twice or three times as fast as it was at the beginning. Moreover, such memorizing techniques are found to be more interesting by people than conventional ways and easily attract large amount of followers. As a result, they accept memorizing process as an easy task and overcome difficulties related to vocabulary. Mnemonics, a helpful aid in memorization, offer significant advantages for those learning a language. They involve linking words to memorable cues, like acronyms or vivid images, creating mental triggers that boost recall. This technique leverages the brain's innate ability to remember patterns, simplifying word retrieval. It is even possible to memorize 100 words in 5 minutes for a professional mnemonicist. But for ordinary people, it is manageable to remember at least 25-30 words after short period training.

IV. DISCUSSION

It should be admitted that preferences differ among individuals. The regular use of mnemonics has proven effective in broadening vocabulary and aiding language retention. The individualized approach to creating mnemonics enhances engagement, adding enjoyment to the learning process. In language learning, mnemonics emerge as a valuable resource, promoting efficient and enduring memorization of words. Despite its advantages, mnemonics come with its potential drawbacks. Some learners might perceive these memory aids as time-consuming to construct or challenging to recall in specific situations. Moreover, the associations formed through mnemonics can be subjective, leading to misunderstandings among users. Excessive reliance on mnemonics may impede the natural development of language acquisition skills. In certain instances, mnemonic devices might oversimplify intricate concepts, potentially restricting a thorough understanding. While mnemonics assist in recall, they may not sufficiently address deeper comprehension or application of words in diverse contexts. Striking a balance between

mnemonic use and diverse learning methods is crucial to mitigate these potential negative aspects. However, through proper steps of practice, learners can achieve their goals.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the methods mentioned above are of great help to English learners. Considering that they also determine language proficiency levels by the number of words memorized, mnemonics can significantly reduce the time spent on language learning and prevent the process from becoming tedious. The TOG and tomato methods are important in facilitating the process of word memorization, and applying these methods to language learners is a solution to many of the problems that exist today.

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