

**Situation XV.** You and your friend are different people in many ways. This time you have come away with quite different impressions of the exhibition: "Students' Achievements in Science and Technology". Your friend finds it an average sort of an exhibition with no surprises or special features. You think differently.

**Task:** Dramatize the talk between you and your friend.

**Situation XVI.** You find that there is a lack of balance at the exhibition. Too many displays in the area of electronics, computer technology, cybernetics, too few in mechanics, metallurgical engineering and so on ... Your friend thinks differently. His arguments are: all the sciences contribute to this or that invention.

**Task:** Dramatize the talk between you and your friend.

### Література

1. Скалкін В.Л. Коммуникативные упражнения на английском языке. – М.: Просвещение, 1983. – 126 с.
2. Скалкін В.Л. Английский язык для общения. – М.: Высш. школа, 1986. – 191 с.
3. Олійник Т.І. Рольова гра у навчанні англійської мови. – К.: Освіта, 1992. – 127 с.
4. Livingstone C. Role Play in Language Learning. – М.: Высш. школа, 1988. – 127 с.

Larissa Davydenko, Ihor Hrynenko (article...79)

## MNEMONICS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

The role of memory in foreign languages teaching hasn't been given due consideration but some memory aids could play a useful role. Methods of foreign language teaching and its adjacent field of science (cognitive psychology) are rich in theoretical principles that are but scarcely applied in practical manuals and teaching.

The topic of mnemonics and its use in the foreign language teaching is rarely discussed in professional journals or even casually among teachers. There are basically two reasons for this avoidance. First, is the widespread belief that memory-enhancing methods have been rendered obsolete or inconsequential by current ESL/EFL theories. The concept of memorisation has been discouraged (in part in reaction to what many now consider to have been an excessive and inappropriate stress placed upon it, and "overlearning," by the audio-lingual method) and approaches emphasising learning through relevancy, understanding, meaningfulness, and creativity have, in effect, taken its place.

The second, and probably biggest, reservation about mnemonics involves general perceptions about its nature. The subject conjures up a strong sense of something intellectually unrespectable, a feeling of cheap "mental tricks."

Whatever the association, few (particularly teachers) consider it useful for the classroom or serious learning.

These perceptions are both unfair and inaccurate. The purpose of this paper is to dispel these notions, and to argue that certain mnemonic devices are highly relevant to foreign language teaching and quite beneficial for students.

The latest publications on the subject testify to the urgency of the problem (Gruneberg M.M., G. Bower, A.Cohen, R.Merry and others), which pursued an interest in memory over the last 25 years and they achieved wide recognition all over the world. Within that period, mnemonics has received a great deal of attention and support in the field of cognitive psychology. Pick up any recent, standard textbook in the field and there are usually a few pages devoted to a discussion of memory strategies. The general scientific consensus is that mnemonics, under certain conditions, are quite effective ways by which information can be stored and retrieved.

To greatly simplify a complex issue, numerous empirical studies have been conducted with subjects involving free and serial recall, association learning, and visualisation testing. The data [1, 2, 3, 4] show that when an individual learns new material, he or she is not just a passive recorder of associations, but an active participant who manipulates information according to various "control processes" (memory strategies or systems). These processes are contingent upon what is being studied, the personal experience of the learner, and the kind of work at hand.

Studies indicate that if material is presented in a way, which fits in or relates meaningfully to what is already known, then it will be retained for relatively long periods of time. Proper organisation is very much a major component to effective recalls. If material is well organised at the "encoding" stage of memory processing, then retrieval becomes quite easy.

All mnemonic systems attempt to impose a plan of meaningful organisation. The best of them "work as a memory aid precisely as they mimic natural organisational schemata associated with meaningful material" [5, 333]. This is why mnemonics can be so effective.

Mnemonics is formal techniques used for organising information in a way that makes it more likely to be remembered. Most people are unaware that memory strategies have had a long and rich history going back to antiquity, and that a large number of distinguished writers and philosophers have touted their use. During Classical times, orators (using principles developed by, among others, Cicero and Quintilian) needed to rely upon them to help remember the details of their speeches. It should be noted, however, that mnemonics was not considered to be just the skill of simple memorisation, but rather a true, rigorous art that required imagination, effort, and a good mind.

How does all of this concern foreign language teaching? Curiously enough, while historically mnemonics was applied to many diverse areas of study, language learning was generally omitted. When language teachers have addressed mnemonics, it has been rather superficially used for the learning of vocabulary only (most of us have had the experience of using some type of acronym when we were students). Recently a relatively new method, the "keyword," has received attention [1]. But again, its use is quite limited in scope, and it is only applied to the learning of vocabulary. With the exception of a few cursory remarks by some writers, that generally is the extent of current foreign language teaching work on mnemonics. The point is that there is a large number of mnemonic devices. At least 13 distinct kinds exist, depending on how they are classified, and their possible range extends beyond the learning of vocabulary [4]. Obviously not all are usable for our purposes but a few bear a closer examination. They are not magical, but involve extra work — making up words, stories, and so on. The very effort of trying to do this may be helpful and effective. Real-life memory processes were of almost no interest until Gordon Bower [7] pointed to the value of the two principles of the mnemonic technique:

- the use of well-learned cues, which allow newly, elearned material to be located in memory;
- the use of imagery, which strengthens the association between well-learned cues and new incoming information.

One may mention a few successful types of mnemonic devices:

#### **Rhyme**

It is easy to remember a ien the following way:

"Does Pete ...? Asks *He, She, and It.*"

"Do Pete and Sue ...? Ask *They, We, I and You.*"

It's almost certain that you remember this grammar-rule by associating it with a particular rhythm and with rhyming words. Since errors break the rhythm, destroy the rhyme, or both, they are immediately evident. Moreover, people tend to repeat rhymes again and again, so they are likely to be thoroughly mastered.

#### **Pegword system**

John Sambrook introduced the pegword system in England in 1879. It consists of memorising a jingle that has the pegs on which you hang the to-be-remembered items by means of imagery. As with the method of loci, the pegword system can be used to remember shopping lists, errands, sets of facts, historical events, and the like.

*First, learn the following jingle:*

*One is a bun*

*Two is a shoe*

*Three is a tree*

*Four is a door*

*Five is a hive*

*Six is sticks*

*Seven is heaven*

*Eight is a gate*

*Nine is a line*

*Ten is a hen*

Next, visually associate each item in your shopping list with one of the pegwords as in the table below. To recall the items, you recite the jingle and retrieve the item associated with each pegword.

<i>Pegword</i>	<i>list word</i>	<i>mnemonic image</i>
<i>One–bun</i>	<i>eggs</i>	<i>a bun eating Humpty Dumpty</i>
<i>Two–shoe</i>	<i>lettuce</i>	<i>a head of lettuce growing out of a shoe</i>
<i>Three–tree</i>	<i>coffee</i>	<i>coffeepots growing out of tree branches</i>
<i>Four–door</i>	<i>soap</i>	<i>soap suds flowing through a doorway</i>
<i>Five–hive</i>	<i>milk</i>	<i>milk running from a milk beehive</i>

This method improves memory by a factor of two or three times over normal free recall. It allows you to place the information into storage in an organised and meaningful fashion and then to recall it with explicit retrieval cues. Further, the techniques employ visual imagery.

### ***The method of loci***

We are going to discuss this technique which we have found to be particularly useful in teaching of certain grammatical points.

The mnemonic called the method of "loci" (place) is supposed to have been invented by a Greek poet Simonides, who lived about 400 B.C. Variations of it have been around since then. Essentially it involves intensive use of the human visual memorisation faculties and the idea of a "memory palace." The technique consists of three steps.

First, a series of locēations, usually of an architectural type is memorised: a public building, a well-known location (hence the term "memory palace"), one's own house, or in some later theories, a general area, like a street with various landmarks. Next, an image is thought of, standing for the topic to be recalled (the purpose of this method was to help recall the details of a speech). For example, a coin could represent the topic of money. Third, the topic image is combined with the image of its corresponding location. The coin might be imagined as lying on the floor of a particular room in a house. Putting this all together, a person can recall a series of items or topics by simply "strolling" through the house mentally, neatly retrieving the object images from the locations, in the order in which they were originally placed.

This particular method was extremely popular in ancient times. One reason for this popularity was that it was so easy to use. After a speech was given, the images would soon fade, but the well-learned loci could be used again to memorise other speeches. Abstract subjects could also be recalled easily when appropriate images were constructed.

Studies [2, 4, 6] have strongly attested to the effectiveness of this technique. Loci users score better than nonusers on immediate and delayed recall tests, recency judgements, and higher than individuals using standard memory methods.

Now let's use a version of this mnemonic method while teaching the students of the first year university prepositions and basic English sentence structure.

How does it work? Let's say we are going to teach prepositions of place (*on, at, in, under, near*). Initially we would proceed on standard lines: perhaps writing the preposition under question on the board, using classroom objects, situations, or simple drawings to explicate meaning, and then by examining sentences using the term, and so forth. The memory palace procedure is used when the teacher is satisfied that the students have understood the core analytical meaning of the words and is ready to discuss the translation of this meaning into images. In regard to the form these images should take, psychologists have discovered that images, which are concrete, sensory, practical, interactive, and interesting, have a much greater rate of recall than those, which are not [3]. This should be kept in mind when creating images.

Traditionally, the teacher was responsible for presenting the method of making images, and for giving a few examples, while the students were then required to form their own. We have found this to be a good rule for beginning (i.e., first year university) and upper-level students (second and third year), provided that basic instruction in the particulars of the loci approach is thorough. When teaching beginning students, the teacher should provide some of the images.

To familiarise students with the basics of the memory palace method, the teacher begins by writing four to five simple words on the board (*e.g., car, TV, cup, and pen*). The students are then told to close their eyes, imagine their own room at home, and to place these objects somewhere in the room. When this is finished, the teacher then asks the students where they placed each object, in the order in which they were presented. Certain students can also be told to recite the objects in reverse order (for reinforcement value). After all of this is done, the teacher can have the students mentally

move to another room, and place additional objects. So, by the end of the first class, the students should understand the essence of the loci technique and have filled at least three rooms with a total of 12 objects.

On the second day, we have the students write down what they remember about the 12 objects and question them again on where the items were placed. Then we proceed to a discussion of prepositions: their meaning and types.

On the third day, starting out with prepositions of location, for example *on*, we write on the board a sentence containing an image, which clearly illustrates the meaning of the term ("A fat green cat is *on* the floor"). The students are again told to place this image in a room. At this stage, the teacher has several options. While asking the students to use their own domicile as a memory palace has the advantage of using surroundings which are intimately familiar and of a vested interest, a simple and general floor plan constructed by the teacher is also effective and helps to facilitate the precise location of images.

We use a basic generic architectural floor plan of a house, complete with several rooms (living, dining, bedroom, and kitchen). We make copies of the plan and give it to the students. We then ask them to place images both mentally and physically into the plan. With high-level classes, some furniture, windows, and so forth is added for orientating purposes. (Plans of commonly known buildings — stores, museums — can also be used). The memory palace selected will serve as a template for storing images and as a framework for relating differing concepts in a meaningful way. The size of the plan is dependent upon the material being covered and the level of the class.

Recent language textbooks commonly present students with a simple diagram of a room or have students imagine their own rooms in order to illustrate prepositions of place. The floor plan approach, besides having more depth, also has, as we shall see, greater flexibility in that it can be used to incorporate much more data and provides a richer context in which this data can be retained.

After the first image is shown, the students are given auxiliary location preposition images ("A tall, western woman is *by* the door"). After the initial introduction of images, teachers also have the option of either continuing to generate images or giving the term under discussion to the students and having them make their own images. The teacher in the latter case would oversee the placement and quality of the imagery. Students need to be told that their images should be clear and concrete; however, it should also be stressed that images, which employ unusual colours or objects, odd or idiosyncratic behaviour or situations can help to increase recall.

In order to avoid standard memory interference effects, all images need to be linked into a coherent chain. Moreover, their placement must be logical and consistent. As images are situated, memory palace rooms should not become too crowded (about four images per room is adequate). As the number of images and rooms expand, reinforcement and light repetition activities become necessary in order to ensure recall. Activities can take the form of oral reviews, short and simple written tests, or the students drawing or filling in a picture.

After location prepositions are finished, prepositions of motion work well. Movement can easily be explained by plotting activity within rooms or through them. One can particularise movement by assigning names to individuals moving in relation to objects ("Old Mrs. Lee is slowly moving *through* the kitchen").

Time prepositions, unlike motion and location, are somewhat difficult to convert into concrete images. One way is to incorporate them with previous images. For example, returning to our first image of the cat, we can add the tag that it has been there *for* four hours (or *since* last Monday or any other time location). By this recurrence to antecedent images, prior images will be reinforced.

We consider the most attractive aspect of this methodology to be its flexibility. A great deal of information (not just prepositions, but also other grammatical points) can be encompassed by these mnemonic tools of imagery and spatial organisation. The methodology can also be used in a narrow specialised sense, or simply to augment more traditional approaches. The alternations are easy to make. For instance, in order to introduce additional location prepositions, we can construct parks, streets or even more buildings. For motion and time, movement occurs in these structures under various time constraints.

The direct advantage of this technique is that it presents an excellent grid or even a small world by which important information can be organised, defined, and retrieved. Like all good mnemonics, it

imposes order, associations, context, meaning, and retrieval cues into material that is essentially lacking in these characteristics. Furthermore, because the loci techniques rely heavily upon imagery, depth of processing is greatly increased, as are important connections, which facilitate retrievability.

Our classroom experiences using this method strongly support these conclusions. We have observed (based on test results from closure and information gap exercises, and data from listening and comprehension activities) that students who employ the loci method retain information (particularly grammatical information) more effectively and for longer periods of time than those who do not.

There is also an air of naturalness to the device. Bellezza and Reddy [8] have argued persuasively that it organises data in a way similar to the way people organise information in their daily lives. During an average day we simultaneously discern familiar and easily remembered background information (teaching our classes), and new experiences (meeting new people). These new experiences can be recalled later when cued by the more easily remembered background setting. In like manner, the loci technique replaces the organised setting, and visual images succeed visual observation. The loci is first recalled and followed by the data associated with it. Both ways of remembering generally utilise the same processes of retrieval and storage.

It may at first appear that the loci method involves too much work for the teacher and is much too complex and impractical for students. We have discovered, however, that patience, a careful explanation of the principles involved, and a little creativity, bring a good effect. While the strong pairing of images and location has been shown to produce much greater recall by students than traditional means, it also has the added advantage of maintaining student interest (particularly if the memory plan is tailored to the students' own way of thinking).

The method moreover provides a psychological boost to the students. Generally students see memory as a passive sponge which rapidly becomes saturated with too much learning. Mnemonics shows that students have direct control over the way they learn and remember, and that there are interesting and viable alternatives to simple rote memorisation. It helps contribute to the feeling that students are active participants in the learning process, forces them to think about the meaning and nature of the material to be learned, and teaches them how to organise data efficiently.

Having analysed the works in the brief bibliography at the end of this article we can make several conclusions:

Taking into consideration the fact that the method of loci is of great effect the other mnemonic techniques need to be tested and used in the English language teaching.

Research is also required on the combined use of different mnemonic methods, while data from pertinent cognitive psychological studies should be incorporated into foreign language teaching discussions.

General suspicions and misinformation about mnemonics need to be overcome.

- The mnemonic itself does not interfere with correct responses.
- It does not lead to more rapid forgetting. This goes against the popular view that anything learned too fast will be equally quickly forgotten.
- It leads to better retention and recall than 'context vocabulary learning', where the meaning of a new item is inferred from a meaningful context.
- It enables equal or better comprehension of text than context vocabulary learning.
- It generates positive effect on speed, ease, confidence and enjoyment of learning.
- We might find that mnemonic techniques are most useful at the early stages of education, where they would help learners to acquire large quantities of the foreign **language** quickly and painlessly and thereby provide much-needed motivation for further learning. Besides, they are equally useful at later stages to help learners expand their competence.

## References

1. Morris P., Hampson P. Imagery and consciousness. – New York: Academic Press, 1983. – P. 15-25.
2. Phye G.D., Andre T. Cognitive classroom learning: Understanding, thinking and problem solving. – London: Academic Press Inc, 1986. – P. 108-133.
3. Ormond J. Human learning (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs. – NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995. – P. 51-117.
4. Searleman A., Herrman D. Memory from a broader perspective. – New York: McGraw-Hill,

- Inc., 1994. – P. 71-75.
5. Wingfield A. Human learning and memory: An introduction. – New York: Harper and Row, 1979. – P. 330-333.
  6. Groninger L.D. Mnemonic imagery and forgetting. – *Psychonomic Science*, 1971. – P. 23, 161-163.
  7. Bower G.H. Analysis of a mnemonic device. – *American Scientist*, 1970. – P. 58, 496-510.
  8. Bellezza F.S., Reddy B.G. Mnemonic devices and natural memory. *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society*, 1978. – P. 11, 277-280.

Alina Leskiv (электрон. почта)

## **ROLE PLAY AND ITS PECULIARITIES IN TEACHING SPEAKING TO SENIOR PUPILS**

"Language came into life as a means of communication. It exists and is alive only through speech. When we speak about teaching a foreign language we first of all have in mind teaching it as a means of communication" [1, 40].

The knowledge of a foreign language is acquired through its practical mastering, i.e. through the process of focusing the attention on teaching pupils to speak spontaneously in a situation close to a natural one, thus transforming their already acquired language habits into automatic speech habits.

Foreign language teachers often tend to assume that conversation in the language classroom in roles is nothing more than putting into practice the grammar and vocabulary skills taught elsewhere in the course. These types of activity do to some extent help pupils to develop speaking skills. But teachers need to be aware of characteristics of native speaker performance in conversation if they are to teach conversation effectively and be able to create the living, real atmosphere and surroundings which the learner is sure to find while speaking a foreign language [2, 7].

One of the ways at bringing situations from real life into the classroom is the role play. In role play pupils pretend to be someone else, for instance, a teacher or a shop assistant, etc. When we do role play we ask pupils to use their imagination.

Very often teachers of foreign language use different forms of dramatisation, for example retelling a text from the point of view of its characters, reading a text in roles, drama improvisation. Pupils become authors of the improvised scene. The teacher may suggest a theme or a situation for improvisation or merely drop them a hint of it.

In role play pupils improvise, too. The situation is fixed and they make up their own "script" as they get along. Situations we use for a role play should, as far as possible, be within pupils' experience. In general, the more familiar a role or a situation is, the easier it will be enacted.

Pupils are given role cards at the beginning of the lesson, not beforehand as a home task. The value of such improvisations consists in forming pupils' habits in speaking freely on a topic suggested without any previous preparation. Besides, everything that is going on in the class during the improvisation is effectively comprehended and learned by pupils, even by those who take a less active part in role play. Every pupil is responsible for carrying on the discussion, and follows the proceedings with great attention in order to be able to join in.

Role play is such a form of the teaching process which enables the teacher to combine group, individual and pair work at a lesson [3, 87].

Even the preparatory stage of role play is very important as it unites pupils, stimulates their work and thus raises their motivation for learning.

Role play is a useful oral activity because:

1. Pupils speak in the first and second person. Texts are often given in the third person.
2. Pupils learn to ask questions as well as to answer them.
3. Pupils use short complete bits of the language and respond appropriately.
4. Pupils practise not only words and phrases but also the necessary tone of voice, stress, intonation, facial expressions.
5. Pupils are encouraged to have a natural «hat» in the class, to make up dialogues about little things which have happened and which occupy them at the moment.

To use role plays effectively in the lesson one should know the main peculiarities of roles, their functions in the process of studying and the conditions for realization of these functions.