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Effectiveness of Mnemonic Method on Students' Language Information Retention

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate how mnemonic methods, specifically acronyms and acrostic, impact language information retention among second year BSED-ENGLISH students at a state university in Camarines Sur. The research questions focused on the effects of acronyms and acrostics on retention, the effectiveness of mnemonics in improving retention, and differences in post-test results between comparison and experimental groups while considering pre-test scores. The participants are the 37 respondents from BSED-English 2A and 33 respondents from BSED-English 2B taking the Technical Writing course. A quasi-experimental design used test questionnaires as the primary tool. Statistical methods like frequency count, percentage, mean, and ANCOVA analyzed the data, revealing significant benefits of mnemonic strategies for short and long-term retention. The findings emphasized the importance of mnemonics in enhancing language retention. Educators are urged to integrate mnemonic techniques for improved retention. Future research could explore the long-term impact of mnemonics across subjects and student groups.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of knowledge is a continuous journey, and retaining information is fundamental to this process (Ambrose et al., 2010). According to Robson (2011), the oldest known memory aid is the method of loci, invented by the ancient Greeks at least 2000 years ago. In the educational landscape, students constantly explore innovative methods to improve their learning experiences and

academic performance (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002). Teachers may adopt purposeful teaching of metapragmatic competence skills and language learning strategies (Ocampo, 2023).

This study focuses on the effectiveness of mnemonic methods on information retention among BSED-English students. The study was conducted at state university in Camarines Sur with a specific emphasis on the Technical Writing course. This research was to evaluate the impact of mnemonic strategies on the students' performance before and after the implementation of these techniques. The researcher employed a quasi-experimental design; using pre-test and post-test assessments to identify the effectiveness of mnemonic methods within an educational context. Language development and teaching lies within the field of education is the context of the study. To explore the use of mnemonic devices in enhancing information retention, this research aimed to provide insights that could benefit both educators and students in improving learning outcomes in language-related subjects. Overall, this delves into the application of mnemonic techniques as a potential tool to enhance students' retention of information in the context of language education, with implications for instructional strategies and curriculum development in the field. By shedding light on the effectiveness of mnemonic methods, particularly acronyms and acrostics, this research contributes to the broader discussion on effective learning methodologies.

This research delves deeper into the effectiveness of mnemonic methods, particularly focusing on acronyms and acrostics, on students' language information retention. The specific research questions are:

1. What is the level of information retention of the comparison and experimental group based on the result of pre-test?
2. What is the level of information retention of the comparison and experimental group based on the result of post-test?
3. Is there a significant difference between the post test result of comparison and experimental group after controlling the result of pre-test?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

One such method gaining traction is the use of mnemonics, a memory aid designed to enhance information recall (Rawson & Dunlosky, 2013). The term "mnemonic" has its origins in ancient Greece, stemming from the word μνημονικός (mnēmonikos), which translates to "of memory" or "relating to memory" (Nolen, J. L., 2024). This connection extends to Mnemosyne, the Greek goddess of memory, with both terms rooted in μνήμη (mnēmē), meaning "remembrance". Mnemonic methods exploit our brain's natural information storage processes (Rawson & Dunlosky, 2013). Mnemonic devices are one of the most important methods used in education Mostafa, E. A., & El Midany, A. A. H. (2017).

Mnemonics encompass various techniques, with acronyms and acrostics being particularly noteworthy for their letter-based approach. For instance, in Technical Writing subject, to remember the types of writing, students could use the acronym "JEETC", which stands for Journalism, Expressive, Expository, Technical, and Creative writing. These techniques work by creating a memorable phrase or word, which makes it easier to recall the list of words trying to remember. The trick is to make the acrostic or acronym something that is easier to remember. Acronyms, according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2023), are abbreviations formed from the first letters of words in a phrase, pronounced as a single word. Using this strategy, learners create a word or phrase using the first letter of each item they need to remember. Acrostics, as defined by Encyclopedia Britannica (2024), are compositions, often in verse, where specific letter sets (like initial or final letters) form a word or phrase. This method involves crafting a sentence or phrase where each word starts with the initial letter of the information. As mentioned by Mastropieri (2000), these strategies can significantly improve verbal memory for academic content, leading to increased learning and higher test scores for students with special needs. According to The IRIS Center (2013), one of the best ways to help students to overcome this challenge is by teaching them mnemonic strategies, sometimes referred to as memory-enhancing strategies. According to Jennifer et.al, (2013), an online survey examined psychology students' metacognitive awareness and self-reported behaviors

regarding mnemonics. It revealed that mnemonics are strategies that can enhance learning and memory of course material.

The study "*Working Memory Training: Assessing the Efficiency of Mnemonic Strategies*" has shown the beneficial effects of the application of memory techniques like mnemonic strategies on working memory tasks, hence evident in a more challenging test (Santo et.al, 2020). Recent research provides empirical support for the use of mnemonics in learning. For instance, a study by Radović & Manzey (2019) investigated the impact of a mnemonic acronym on learning, execution, and resilience to interruptions during an eight-step procedural task. Their findings revealed that the mnemonic acronym significantly enhanced learning, bolstering the effectiveness of mnemonic devices as learning tools (Radović & Manzey, 2019). According to the study of Atimi and Afandi (2023), it is indeed that mnemonic method is one of the procedures that is considered effective for improving students' learning outcomes and memory. From the research of Kurniarahman (2023), the study revealed the fact that the Mnemonic Keyword was interesting and unique for students during the vocabulary memorization process hence it made them more enthusiastic in memorizing English vocabulary.

Teachers may use mnemonic methods to guide their presentation about delivering materials so that the students can easily absorb the information from the presentation. The use of this instructional strategy does not require extensive planning and a wealth of additional materials (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1998). From the article of Conderman (2020), teachers can infuse several types of mnemonics within their instruction to support student learning. According to Dave and Awasthi (2019), they discovered that mnemonics works for most students and has become a useful tool in their classroom. Simanjuntak (2017) mentioned that mnemonic has been a lot of help in various curriculum fields, students of all ages, and all characteristics. From the study of Bakken and Simpson (2011), mnemonic methods involve linking unfamiliar information to familiar knowledge through visual images or letter/word combinations. Hence, they speed up learning, enhance meaningfulness, reduce confusion, and promote long-term retention of information.

3. METHOD

In this research study, a mixed-methods approach was employed, integrating both descriptive and correlational methodologies to effectively explore and analyze the effectiveness of teaching reading strategies by English elementary teachers and their impact on developing oral reading fluency among students. The descriptive method was primarily utilized to capture and outline the demographic profile of the respondents as well as to measure the extent of reading strategies employed by the teachers. This method is effective for summarizing large amounts of data and providing a clear overview of the characteristics of the target population. The demographic characteristics of the 93 English elementary teachers, such as age, years of experience, educational qualifications, and training in reading instruction, were gathered using a structured questionnaire. This information allowed for a better understanding of the diverse backgrounds of the respondents and laid the foundation for exploring potential correlations. The research instrument also included items designed to assess the frequency and types of reading strategies employed by these teachers. Respondents were asked to rate the extent of their use of each strategy on a Likert scale, providing quantifiable data for analysis. The study captured teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the strategies in developing students' oral reading fluency. Responses included qualitative feedback through open-ended questions that supplemented the quantitative data.

Meanwhile, to explore the relationships between various factors, particularly the demographic profile of the teachers and the extent of teaching reading strategies, the correlational method was applied. This method enables researchers to determine whether specific teacher characteristics are associated with the degree to which they implement reading strategies. Pearson correlation coefficient had been employed to highlight the significant associations between demographic variables and the frequencies of different reading strategies used in teaching. The results of the correlational analysis helped to identify whether certain demographic factors influenced the extent of strategy implementation.

This study utilized a quasi-experimental design; using a pre-test and post-test approach to assess the effectiveness of mnemonic methods on information retention among BSED-English students. The objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies within an educational context. The data collection, analysis, and interpretation were conducted using a parallel method to ensure a foundation for the research findings.

3.1 Participants

This study focuses on the second-year English Major students, specifically those in the two sections: 2A and 2B. The experimental group with the total of thirty-seven students from BSED-English 2A, and 33 students in BSED-English 2B, which served as the comparison group. First-year, third year, and fourth-year English Majors, as well as students from other courses and departments, including the laboratory high school, were not included in this study. The reason for this is that second-year English Majors are best suited for the subject of Technical Writing and using mnemonic methods like acronyms and acrostics can greatly help them remember important information related to this topic.

3.2 Instruments

Test questionnaires served as the instruments to measure the respondent’s level of information retention. Created in line with the Table of Specifications (TOS). These were created to evaluate students' memory retention abilities in the specific Technical Writing topics covered in the study. The use of validated instruments ensured the reliability and validity of the collected data for analysis.

3.3 Data Collection

In March and April 2024, data collection for the study took place. Test questionnaires were used to collect detailed information. Students from BSED English 2A and 2B were randomly assigned to either the experimental or comparison group. A set of fifty standardized questions was created for both the pre-test and post-test, each lasting one hour. The study focused on Technical Writing to improve students' understanding of the subject. Both groups took a pre-test to assess their initial retention abilities. The experimental group participated in an 18-hour lecture series led by the Technical Writing instructor, which highlighted the use of mnemonic techniques. While the comparison group received lectures without mnemonic strategies. After the lectures, both groups completed a post-test using the same questionnaires as the pre-test, with each session also lasting one hour.

3.4 Data Analysis

To ensure the results' accuracy and reliability, the researchers utilized a range of statistical tools for data analysis. The methods applied included frequency count, percentage, mean, and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The retention levels of both the comparison and experimental groups were evaluated using frequency count, percentage, and mean. The frequency count detailed the number of participants in each group who achieved specific retention levels, providing insight into the distribution of retention within each group. The percentage represented the proportion of participants reaching various retention levels, offering a relative measure of retention performance. The mean calculated the average retention score for each group, serving as a central indicator of overall performance. Additionally, ANCOVA was used to determine if there were significant differences in post-test results between the comparison and experimental groups while controlling for pre-test scores. This statistical approach facilitated a thorough analysis of the impact of mnemonic strategies on participants' information retention.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4. 1 Level of information retention of the comparison and experimental group based on the result of pre-test

This section utilizes frequency count, percentage, and mean to present the initial retention levels of students prior to the application of mnemonic methods, with the pre-test serving to establish a baseline for comparison.

Table 1 shows the initial retention levels of students in both the comparison and experimental groups before the implementation of mnemonic techniques. In the comparison group, which included 33 students, a significant majority (48.48% or 16 students) exhibited low information retention levels. In contrast, the experimental group, comprising 37 students, demonstrated a more diverse distribution of retention levels. Specifically, 27.03% (10 students) in the experimental group achieved high retention levels, while 45.95% (17 students) had moderate retention levels. These results indicate that the experimental group had a broader range of information retention levels compared to the comparison group before the intervention.

Table 1. Level of information retention of the comparison and experimental group based on the result of pre-test

Level	**Comparison**		**Experimental**	
	Frequency (N=33)	*Percent (%)*	*Frequency (N=37)*	*Percent (%)*
High	1	3.03	10	27.03
Moderate	14	42.42	17	45.95
Low	16	48.48	8	21.62
Very Low	2	6.06	2	5.41
	Average Performance	**Interpretation**	**Average Performance**	**Interpretation**
	21	*Moderate*	*24.59*	*Moderate*
Standard Deviation	*6.13*		*8.9*	

This indicates that there may be differences in study habits or learning abilities between the two groups. The experimental group shows a higher percentage of students with good and moderate retention levels, suggesting they may have had a better understanding of the subject matter or were more adept at retaining information prior to the intervention.

The pre-test results play a key role in evaluating the effectiveness of mnemonic methods in improving information retention. They provide a reference for assessing how effectively these techniques enhance retention in both groups.

Additionally, the research conducted by Siagian et al. (2023) in the Equator Science Journal reinforces the idea that mnemonic device techniques can boost long-term memory retention among learners. This finding corresponds with the observed advantage in the experimental group's pre-test performance, which was categorized as a moderate level of information retention. The results indicate that mnemonic methods have the potential to enhance students' retention capabilities, highlighting the importance of integrating such strategies into educational practices to improve learning outcomes.

In summary, Table 1 illustrates the initial disparities in information retention levels between the comparison and experimental groups, showing the potential of mnemonic methods to strengthen students' retention skills. This lays the work for further investigation into the effects of mnemonic techniques on information retention in educational contexts and emphasizes the significance of utilizing mnemonic strategies to enhance learning outcomes.

4.2 Level of information retention of the comparison and experimental group based on the result of post-test

This section outlines the perceived retention levels of students following the application of mnemonic methods.

Table 2 displays the post-test results for both the comparison and experimental groups after the implementation of these mnemonic techniques. The comparison group, which included 33 students, exhibited lower performance levels, with the majority falling into the moderate to very low retention categories. Specifically, only 13.51% (5 students) in the comparison group achieved high retention, while 32.43% (12 students) demonstrated moderate retention levels. While the experimental group, consisting of 37 students, shows a great enhancement in information retention.

A remarkable 70.27% (26 students) in the experimental group attained very high retention levels, and an additional 29.73% (11 students) achieved high retention levels. None of the students in the experimental group were categorized as having moderate, low, or very low retention. The average performance of the comparison group remained at a moderate level, highlighting a clear difference in retention levels between the two groups after the intervention of mnemonic methods.

Table 2. Level of information retention of the comparison and experimental group based on the result of post-test

Level	**Comparison**		**Experimental**	
	Frequency (N=33)	*Percent (%)*	*Frequency (N=37)*	*Percent (%)*
Very High	1	2.70	26	70.27
High	5	13.51	11	29.73
Moderate	12	32.43	0	0.00
Low	12	32.43	0	0.00
Very Low	3	8.11	0	0.00
	Average Performance	**Interpretation**	**Average Performance**	**Interpretation**
	21.97	*Moderate*	42.59	*Very High*
Standard Deviation	8.35		*4.25*	

The improvement of the information retention observed in the experimental group following the intervention is consistent with the findings of Radović and Manzey (2019) regarding mnemonic acronyms. Their research demonstrated that participants who utilized mnemonic devices were more proficient in learning task sequences and exhibited greater resilience to interruptions, suggesting that these techniques improve both initial learning and information recall. The improvement in post-test scores for the experimental group underscores the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies in enhancing retention and academic performance. These findings highlight the need to integrate mnemonic techniques into educational practices to foster long-term retention of information among students and optimize their learning processes.

4.3 Difference between the post test result of comparison and experimental group after controlling their pre-test

The ANCOVA results presented in Table 3 provide a statistical comparison of the post-test results between the comparison and experimental groups, controlling for their pre-test scores.

The statistical analysis revealed a gap between the two groups in terms of information retention levels following the intervention of mnemonic methods. The high F-value of 462.021 and a p-value of 0.000 indicate that the null hypothesis can be rejected, underscoring the substantial difference in post-test performance between the comparison and experimental groups. Furthermore, the large effect size (partial eta squared = 0.873) emphasizes the considerable impact of the reading method (conventional vs. mnemonic) on students' retention capabilities.

Table 3. Difference between the post test result of comparison and experimental group after controlling their score in pre-test

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	9520.092[a]	2	4760.046	409.006	.000	.924
Intercept	1770.335	1	1770.335	152.116	.000	.694
Pretest	2100.138	1	2100.138	180.454	.000	.729
Method	5377.041	1	5377.041	462.021	.000	.873
Error	779.751	67	11.638			
Total	85937.000	70				
Corrected Total	10299.843	69				

a. R Squared = .924 (Adjusted R Squared = .922)
b. Computed using alpha = .05

These findings are consistent with earlier research, including Hill's (2022) study, which emphasized the beneficial effects of mnemonic devices on vocabulary retention among ESL students. Hill pointed out the importance of tailoring mnemonic techniques to bridge the gap between a student's native and target languages, suggesting that personalized strategies can significantly enhance their effectiveness. This highlights the necessity of adapting mnemonic approaches to address the specific needs of individual learners, thereby maximizing the advantages of these interventions in educational contexts.

The results carry implications for teaching practices, illustrating that mnemonic methods can effectively enhance memory retention. It shows in situations where students are required to quickly gain large volumes of information, the integration of these techniques can facilitate learning and promote long-term retention. By employing mnemonic strategies, educators can create engaging learning environments that improve information recall.

In conclusion, the findings presented in Table 3 illustrate the significant impact of mnemonic methods, particularly acronyms and acrostics, on students' ability to retain language information. The results indicate that these strategies effectively enhance students' retention and recall, with the experimental group outperforming the comparison group. This creates the vital role of mnemonic techniques in refining learning processes and aiding students in retaining information, contributing to their academic success.

This study looked at second-year students in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English at Central Bicol State University of Agriculture - Sipocot Campus. The students were split

into two groups: 2A (experimental group) and 2B (comparison group). The research used a quasi-experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests to see how well mnemonic methods helped students remember information in Technical Writing from Week 7 to 13 covered topics. The results showed that mnemonic strategies improved students' ability to retain language information, both right after the intervention and later on.

The research strengths include a clear design that allowed for a good evaluation of mnemonic effects, the use of reliable tools to measure retention, and practical advice for teachers on how to improve memory using these techniques. By focusing on specific Technical Writing topics, the study provided useful insights for teaching.

However, there are limitations. First, the sample size and diversity were small, so a larger and more varied group could give better insights into how effective mnemonic methods are for different students. Second, the time spent using mnemonic techniques might not have been long enough to see lasting effects on retention. Future studies could look at how long these strategies work overtime. Third, the comparison group could be improved by giving them a different type of intervention or no intervention, which would help show the specific effects of mnemonic methods. Fourth, using only test questionnaires to measure retention might miss other important learning outcomes, like critical thinking or applying knowledge. A broader assessment approach could give a fuller picture of student learning.

The study also did not explore how well mnemonic methods transfer to other subjects or real-life situations. Looking into how students use these memory strategies in different areas could provide more insights into their overall usefulness. Addressing these gaps and focusing on future research, such as the long-term effects and transferability of mnemonic strategies in various educational settings, can make the study more relevant. While this research gives valuable insights into how mnemonic strategies help with information retention in language learning, more studies could strengthen the findings for teaching practices and student outcomes.

The study found that students who used mnemonic methods remembered information better than those who did not. The experimental group scored higher on post-tests, with more students achieving very high retention levels, showing that mnemonic techniques are effective for memory. Before the intervention, the experimental group already had better retention levels than the comparison group. The pre-test results showed that more students in the experimental group had moderate to high retention before using mnemonic methods, indicating they might have had an advantage. In contrast, the comparison group, which did not use mnemonic strategies, showed stable performance with no significant improvement in retention after the intervention.

4.4 Implications

The study's findings have important implications for educators, highlighting the value of incorporating mnemonic techniques into teaching practices to enhance students' memory retention capabilities. Customizing mnemonic strategies to align with learners' linguistic backgrounds can further enhance the effectiveness of these methods in improving information retention. The study recommends regular use and evaluation of mnemonic interventions to monitor students' performance and retention levels; Implementing mnemonic methods more widely across educational settings can potentially lead to improved performance and retention levels among a larger group of students.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study shows that using these strategies not only leads to immediate improvements in retention but also helps with long-term memory. It emphasizes that specific mnemonic techniques, especially acronyms and acrostics, are effective in enhancing memory retention in language learning.

This suggests that the wide use of mnemonic methods can improve learning outcomes and retention for various student groups. By including strategies like acronyms and acrostics in their teaching, educators can create a more engaging and effective learning environment that helps students remember and recall information better. This research adds to the broader discussion on effective learning methods and highlights the need to use mnemonic techniques in education to improve students' retention and learning experiences.

For future research, it is recommended to investigate the long-term effects of mnemonic methods across different subjects and student groups. Studying how well these methods work overtime can provide useful insights into their effectiveness in various educational settings. Additionally, further studies could compare different mnemonic techniques and how they can be used to improve memory retention for different learning goals. By expanding research in this area, educators and researchers can continue to improve and adapt mnemonic methods to maximize their benefits for students' learning and memory retention.

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