Tma01

HOW CAN THE WAY IN WHICH WE ORGANISE OUR THINKING BY UNSING, IMAGES, CONCEPTS AND SCHEMAS HELP US IMPROVE OUR MEMORYMemory plays a huge part in our everyday lives. It allows us to remember skills that we??™ve learned or recall information stored in our brains, even when it seems like were not actively using it.

Memory creates a link to the past or future, so we can adjust our behaviour based on past experiences. Whatever we do involves our memory. However what, if due to accident or illness, would life be like without the ability to think or have no capacity to recall or store new memories As highlighted in the case of Clive Wearing who suffered total amnesia due to infection. My way of addressing this question is to consider how we organise and improve our memory by using mental images, concepts and schemas do they really help improve our memory Firstly to consider mental images, as adults, we tend to do most of our thinking in words. But experiments show that if we form iconic mental images from written or verbal information, that are bright and flamboyant, this will help fix the information in our memory.

These images will then create cues when we need to recall the information later. For example Figure 16 in the course workbook looks at learning the French word ??? poubelle??™ pronounced (pooh-bell) the mental image is that of lifting a lid off a bell holding your nose because of a poo smell. Mental Images have also been proven to help in learning new languages. This is know as Key Word Technique, developed by Michael Rough and Richard Atkinson in (1975) By experimenting with two groups of participants, both asked to learn 60 Spanish words, one group using the Key Word Technique the other not. Upon testing the participants using Key Word Technique

scored much higher than the group that did not use Key Word. Of course one variable considered in this testing was did any of the participants have prior knowledge of Spanish A conclusive experiment showing that mental images do help us improve our memory when asked to learn new information. There is another known strategy for improving memory, called mnemonics. An ancient mnemonic called the ??? method of loci??™.

Created by poet Simonides who lived in Ancient Greece in 500BC . He taught learners to link their mental images of items, they were trying to remember to familiar settings. Here is a simple example of ??? method of loci??™ for remembering a shopping list of banana and eggs. Make a picture in your mind for each item and try to imagine them in a familiar place. For example the front door is a banana and the eggs are on the floor when you walk through the door.

This technique works best with outstanding or silly images. These images will help us remember the list better. Secondly lets look at Concepts, which is how we process information from our world by putting them into categories. This is called Concept formation. As individuals we categorises or organise our thoughts into concepts.

It is a way of putting things into groups like cars and animals, but within each concept there are sub-concepts such as sports cars or animals which could be sub divided into fish, mammals. We are totally unaware that we are using concepts in our daily lives. But they can sometimes be observed in young children over-generalising a concept that they are trying to understand. For example all tall men with a deep voice all become their daddies. An

experiment by Weston Bousfield (1953) asked participants to learn 60 words. All of which could be divided up into categories but were presented in a random order.

Words that are learnt in a random order are much harder to recall. But if stored in the memory under category headings the test results showed a much better recall. This experiment illustrates that information stored in organised rather than haphazard fashion is accessed more easily. We can use concepts to improve our memory by putting things from lists into categories. Therefore concepts are an aid to improved memory.

Finally on to ??? Schemas??™, which also help improve our memories. This is a method that allows us to organise and interpret information from a cognitive framework. People use schemas to organise current knowledge and provide a framework for further understanding. For example a schema for ??? going to the dentist??™ may include the following knowledge, dentist, chair, drill, noise, pain! Of course each individual will have similar schemas but with different depths of knowledge dependant on our personal knowledge or love of a subject. For example if you loved the game of football it would contain every aspect of the game. But if you disliked football it would be simplified to consist of ball, players, and net. Schemas provide us with the ability to recall information when we need it.

In Jean Piaget??™s Theory of child development, he concluded that children adopt different schemata to be able to form an understanding about the world around them. Which for example could include schemas about people, bike riding, swimming almost every possible new experience a young child

comes across. It is thought that our memory is like an expandable filing cabinet bursting with individual files full of different schema. Which all help us to apply our knowledge of past similar situations. They help us respond in an appropriate way when we find ourselves in a new situation. Experiments carried out by John Bransford and Marcia Johnson (1972) looked at the role of schemas in our understanding and recall of information. The experiment consisted of two groups of participants both read a simple passage. One group had a title for the passage the other did not.

The group without a title had great difficulty understanding the simple passage and had very little understanding or recall. However, the other group, given a title, clearly understood the passage and their recall was greater. The title for the passage provided the schema, which allowed the information to be organised and stored properly resulting in better recall. Therefore it is clear that schemas help us organise and help us improve our memories. To conclude we all remember things everyday by using Mental Images, which increase our memory recall, concepts that organise and store information from our daily lives and schemas that provide cues to prompt our memory when needed. All play an important role for us to connect our past with our present or future, and they all give us the ability to organize our thinking and further improve our memories.