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Memory is “blossoming” when students are networking

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Recently Baylor University has published that students would recall the information received better, if they could re-tell it to other people immediately (1-3). Youngsters are able to restore the details longer and more precisely, and this outcomes of experimental study may be effectively used during test time, say a Baylor University researchers. So the information may be generated and analysed in such re-tellings rather than being accumulated while simple re-readings or re-brouings of class notes, textbooks as revising the data or slides on past lectures again later, according to Dr. Melanie Sekeres, Ph.D, the lead of this striking study, published in “Learning & Memory” journal.

In one week the memory remains almost the same as before. So re-telling is a specifically perfect way for students and possibly lecturers to study and keep updated knowledge instead of simple repeating to read or brouse textbooks, class notes, slides and related databases.

Dr. Sekeres'es team has conducted the experiment in which the students were shown half a minute clips from 40 films within a half an hour period. Three groups of undergraduate students, 20 participants each, 21 years old, have been chosen. After viewing the film clips, the students were requested to re-tell the details after delays lasting from several minutes after the showings up to seven days later. Researchers picked out mostly foreign films and somewhat obscure clips which had not been supposedly seen by undergraduates. All clips contained brief scenes of normal, everyday events that mimicked the kind of events someone might experience in a day, such as a family dinner or kids game in the park. The study assessed undergraduates ability to retrieve both the general plots as well as particular details including background events, sounds, colors, gestures, and other additional information that allow each youngster to extract from memory significant as secondary details in rich abundance. Another stimulus unraveled by the researchers, was a brief visual cue from the movie demonstrated to students later. It may be a title or a screenshot from the film. All this boosts memory. So there is no lack of the room for storage, conclude the researchers. There is possibly complex way to its instant access. It might mean that our memory has own passwords or better to say identification signals supposed “to whip up” the memory in the long run. Under such conditions complex though “marked by specific signals” path to instant retrieval of saved information may be a sort of countermeasure or an antidote against mental disorders. So it would be especially challenging to study this mode of signaling under senile dementia or

generally weakening memory at aging. Taken together it means that significance of this study is not only in inventing innovative tools of teaching but also defeating senile mental diseases. Ongoing research on memory checks mostly the affect caused by brain damage to recollection ability, but Dr. Sekeres' group has studied healthy young adults with a good memory in the stage of forgetting. The strategy of re-telling information known as 'the testing effect' was previously shown as really effective study technique. The novelty of the study presented by Baylor University is in its attention to human memories change over time for a specialized group. Researchers have stated that: **i**, All participants recalled less details and the substance of the films over a longer period of time. Peripheral or secondary details from the films have been forgotten more quickly, and to a greater extent, than the films' central themes; **ii**, The second group of students, which was given cues before being asked to recall the films, has displayed better retrieval ability of the peripheral details. However, their retention of the core information has been quite similar to that one of the first group, which did not receive such cues; **iii**, The third group, which retrieved the memory of the films by re-telling soon after viewing, remembered both core and peripheral information better irrespective of questioning time. Thus, although "replaying" method looks rather labour-consuming, it may be worth for teaching. At least, this method is known for ages to be used at al-Farabi Kazakh National University for teaching in small or larger English-language groups.

Dr. Sekeres emphasizes that the brain is adaptive, and people remember the important things, for the most part, and forget unimportant details. However, accurate memory in certain situations of giving eyewitness testimonies or taking tests may be evoked by details and context. This accurate memory's capacity may have hereditary roots, genetic predispositions and ethnic peculiarities. Dr. Sekeres stresses that techniques used in this study could be implied also for memory reactivation. Further research based on functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) would be directed towards the effects of cuing and active retrieval over greater periods (months or years), and ration of core and peripheral details with age. This study was supported by a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in partnerships with the University of Toronto and the Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest, a Canadian research hospital.

References:

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