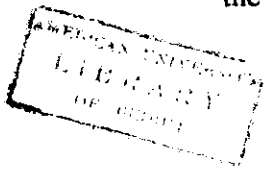




ENGLISH 100  
FINAL EXAMINATION  
SPRING 2002-2003  
READING COMPREHENSION

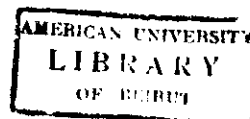
**Types of Memory**  
by  
Nick Kenny

1. Most readers will be familiar with the experience of looking up a telephone number and then repeating it to themselves for the time it takes to sit down and dial the number. As luck would have it, this is invariably the occasion for someone to ask a distracting question with the result that the number is forgotten and has to be looked up all over again. Equally familiar and irritating is when you need the same number twenty-four hours later and find that you are quite unable to remember it.
2. These experiences reflect the widely recognized view among psychologists that with verbal learning the ability to hold information for brief periods (usually up to 30 seconds in duration) demands fairly constant repetition, and any distraction or interruption is likely to severely impede that ability. Moreover, it has been established that our capacity for short-term retention is remarkably consistent, and that most people experience some breakdown in retention as soon as the number of items or chunks of information exceeds seven.
3. This type of memory, known as 'short-term memory', is clearly different from 'long-term memory', which is our capacity for recall of information minutes, weeks and years after the original input. Furthermore, the difference is not simply one of duration. Unlike short-term memory which is limited in capacity, long-term memory is seemingly inexhaustible and can accommodate any amount of new information. Not surprisingly, this new information can be stored at a price; it is generally acknowledged that we need to work much harder to commit information to long-term memory; and the type of repetition we described as being essential to short term retention may not be adequate for long term retention.
4. Our 'mental lexicon' is highly organized and efficient. Were storage of information haphazard, we would be forced to search in a random fashion to retrieve words; this simply is not feasible when one considers the speed at which we need to recognize and recall. Furthermore, it is extremely improbable that we organize words in the brain as a dictionary does. Imagine you were trying to recall the word 'nozzle' for instance. It is unlikely that you would retrieve the word



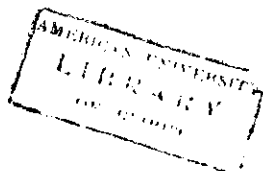
'noxious' (which appears next to 'nozzle' in the dictionary) in place of the target word.

5. Some very interesting experiments carried out by Brown and McNeil exemplify this point forcefully and give us clues about lexical organization. The experimenters gave testees definitions of low frequency vocabulary items and asked them to name the item. One definition was 'A navigational instrument used in measuring angular distances, especially the altitude of the sun, moon and stars at sea'. Some testees were able to supply the correct answer which was 'sextant', but the researchers were more interested in the testees who had the answer 'on the tip of their tongues'. Some gave the answer 'compass', which seemed to indicate that they had accessed the right semantic field but found the wrong item. Others had a very clear idea of the 'shape' of the item, and were often able to say how many syllables it had, what the first letter was, etc. It seems, then, that these systems are interrelated: at a very basic level there appears to be a phonological system, a system of meaning relations and a spelling system.
6. One way in which researchers investigate how the mental lexicon is organized is by comparing the speed at which people are able to recall items. It is generally accepted that if certain types of prompts can be answered more quickly than others, then this will reflect the lexical system. Freedman and Loftus asked testees to perform two different types of tasks: e.g.
  1. Name a fruit that begins with a 'p'.
  2. Name a word beginning with a 'p' that is a fruit.
7. Testees were able to answer the first type of question more quickly than the second. This seems to indicate that 'fruits beginning with p' are categorized under 'fruit' rather than under a 'words beginning with p' heading. Furthermore, experimenters discovered in subsequent tests that once testees had access to the 'fruit' category, they were able to find other fruits more quickly. This seems to provide further evidence that semantically related items are 'stored together'. Most researchers appear to agree that items are arranged in a series of associative networks.
8. We also have to consider other variables which affect storage. One important factor here is 'word frequency': items which occur most frequently are also easily recognized and retrieved. Imagine a pile of cards, each representing an item of vocabulary. In this system the most frequently used words are 'at the top of the pile', and therefore easier to retrieve. 'Recency of use' is another variable, and, to return to the analogy of the pile, one can imagine words most recently used being at the top. These variables are concerned with the use of items, but it is also important to consider when items were first learnt. Imagine a pile of words organized chronologically: the words learnt on the first day of a language course would be at one extreme and those most recently learnt at the other.



9. Clearly, native speakers do not acquire all their vocabulary in lexical sets, but rather acquire items in a haphazard, chronological fashion, generally in a fairly predictable order of frequency. However, native speakers have many years in which to build up a comprehensive lexicon, whereas foreign learners are limited in this respect. Exploiting our present knowledge of storage systems to the full should allow us to attempt to speed up the learning process and facilitate storage.

Taken from Proficiency Passkey



**ENGLISH 100  
FINAL EXAMINATION  
SPRING 2002-2003**

**Reading Comprehension  
Time Allowed: 75 Minutes**

**Types of Memory**  
by  
Nick Kenny

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Section \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Part I: Multiple Choice: Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary(24%)**

*Directions: Circle the letter that best completes each of the following:*

1. The word 'impede (Paragraph2, line4) is closest in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. concentrate
  - b. obstruct
  - c. discriminate
  - d. diffuse
  
2. The word 'sextant' most likely means a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. navigational instrument
  - b. associative network
  - c. compass
  - d. semantic field
  
3. The tone of the passage is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. neutral
  - b. sarcastic
  - c. humorous
  - d. ironic
  
4. Acquiring vocabulary for native and non-native speakers is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. similar
  - b. differentjustify your choice:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**Part II: Short Answer Questions (76%)**

*Directions: In your own words, answer each of the following questions. Be sure to use correct sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling. Please limit yourself to the space provided.*

1. Explain the meaning of the following expression, "Not surprisingly, this new information can be stored at a price..." (paragraph 3, line 6) (7%)

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2. What are the conclusions which can be made from the research that has been conducted by the following: (14%)  
A. Brown and McNeil

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B. Freedman and Loftus

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3. What is the author's main message? (10%)

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4. Based on the information in the passage regarding long-term memory, what advice would you give to a friend who is studying for a test? Justify your answer. (12%)

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5. Discuss the differences between short-term and long-term memory. Provide examples on each. (12%)

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6. What are the variables that affect storage of vocabulary? Explain. (9%)

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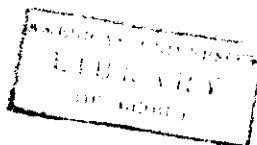
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7. According to the passage, when do people experience a breakdown in retention? Explain. (6%)

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8. Give examples of two types of development used in this passage. (6%)

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ENGLISH 100  
FINAL EXAMINATION  
SPRING 2002-2003

ESSAY TOPICS

Allowed Time: 75 Minutes

**Directions:** Choose one of the following topics and develop it into an essay of four paragraphs.

1. "Photography has imposed itself through the twentieth century as a valuable art. Its role has taken more and more importance in journalism, advertising, film-making, teaching etc...". Discuss and give examples.
2. Students take part-time jobs for many reasons (e.g. new experience, career-preparation). Why do you think people take part-time jobs? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
3. Films can tell us much about the country in which they were made. What have you learned about a country by watching its movies? Use specific examples and details to support your response.
4. Nowadays, there are many just causes to which people are strongly committed. Indeed, we constantly hear about fund-raising campaigns for social, political or personal causes. Imagine that you are raising money for a cause that you strongly believe in. *What* is the cause that you strongly believe in and *why* do you think it is so important?



**English 100  
Final Examination  
Fall 2000-2001**

**Essay Topics**

**Allowed Time: 75 Minutes**

**Directions:** Choose one of the following topics and develop it into an essay of four paragraphs.

1. What characteristics do men and women drivers share? What characteristics do they differ in? Consider knowledge of cars, skills, worry and fear, accidents, etc... Write a well-organized essay comparing and contrasting men and women drivers.
2. "Photography has imposed itself through the twentieth century as a valuable art. Its role has taken more and more importance in journalism, advertising, film-making, teaching etc...". Discuss and give examples.
3. Students take part-time jobs for many reasons (e.g. new experience, career-preparation). Why do you think people take part-time jobs? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
4. Films can tell us much about the country in which they were made. What have you learned about a country by watching its movies? Use specific examples and details to support your response.