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Learning and Memory: A Cognitive Approach About The Role of Memory in Text Comprehension

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This work tries to understand the organization of knowledge in memory. There are two theories about the mnemonic system. One of them says that memory is formed by two distinct memory stores: a short-term memory, and a long-term memory. The other theory involves semantic activation models to explain memory working. We have carried out three experiments to investigate this subject. In these experiments, we have employed a probe technique to observe the semantic representation in memory during text comprehension. Our results showed response times increasing as a function of time, and that seems to be consistent with models involving semantic activation. This conclusion supports the study of learning and comprehension texts. Our goal is to offer a learning strategy which would improve

text comprehension. This strategy, based on the work of Yekovich and Walker (1986), allows the possibility of building a text in order to improve the process of comprehension. This improvement occurs through the activation of informations by peripheral concepts. An experiment has been conducted to verify this strategy. We have built two different texts to observe which one would be better understood. The results showed that the text built through our strategy was indeed better understood. Therefore, we argue that using peripheral concepts is relevant to the process of comprehension, because it activates the text's central concept, improving the comprehension's process.

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