

Listening script

Sound Check

This is the listening examination for the Course for English Language Teachers. You should have a question booklet and an answer sheet in front of you. You will hear someone talking. It will be played twice. You should listen carefully, and take notes in your question book. After it has finished, you should turn to the answer sheet, and you will be asked to write answers to the questions in Japanese and English. Read them carefully and answer them as instructed.

If you had any trouble hearing this recording, please raise your hand now.

(Pause recording)

Have you ever had trouble remembering something? For example you meet someone and a few minutes later you can't remember their name, but you meet someone else and you can still remember their name weeks, or even years, later. Or, your teacher gives you a list of words to remember and some words you learn very easily, others you struggle with for a very long time but still can't remember them. If you have experienced this then you are not alone. In fact if, you had not experienced this, it would be extremely unusual. Forgetting is a normal part of the learning process.

In 1885, a German psychologist called Herman Ebbinghaus published a paper about his research on memory. He discovered that the way people forget things over time follows a pattern. After a person learns something; some things are forgotten very quickly, some things are remembered for a very long time, and the rest of them fall somewhere in between these two extremes. If we put this on a chart, like Chart 1, which shows the percentage of things remembered on the vertical scale to the left and time in days on the horizontal scale at the bottom, we get a curve that goes down very quickly at the beginning but becomes almost flat as time goes on. This is called the forgetting curve. If you look at Chart 1 in your book, you can see the forgetting curve starts at the upper left corner and curves down and to the lower right and continues almost flat. Chart 1 shows that we forget a lot soon after we learn it, but some of the memories stay with us for a very long time.

Let's look at an example: A teacher gives her class a list of 100 words to learn, so they learn all of the words on the list and they do not review the list again. The next day, she gives them a test and most of the students have forgotten about half the words. Again they do not review the words and after two more days the teacher gives them another test and the average score is 40%. One week later, she gives them another test and this time the scores are about 30%. One month after they first learned the words, the scores are about 25%, and after 3 months the scores are about 20%. This example shows that, if we do not review, we will forget most of what we have studied.

Ebbinghaus also showed that if you review what you have learned over time, you will remember things better, and that the time between reviews can increase

each time because you will remember more things, for a longer period of time. You can see this in Chart 2. Chart 2 shows how if you review more often, you will remember more. The exact percentages of what is remembered and the time required between reviews depend on the ability of the learners, and the difficulty of the content they have to remember. But, the general pattern stays the same and has been shown to be true by other researchers.

So, going back to our classroom example; obviously, the teacher wants her students to remember everything for a long time, so after the first test she gets her students to review all of the words until they know them all again. Now, when she gives them the second test after two more days, instead of getting 40% her students get 65%. She gets them to learn all of the words again, and then one week later she gives them the next test. This time instead of 30%, they get 75% correct. She repeats the process, and after one month she gives them another test, and now her students get about 85% correct, and so finally in the test three months later they remember about 95% of the words.

This is the end of the listening passage it will be repeated in two minutes.

(Repeat)

This is the end of the listening passage. Please turn to the questions on page 2 and answer them as instructed.