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Retention of Chinese Characters Under Conditions
of Imagery-based Learning or Rote Rehearsal

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The hypothesis was that recall of Chinese characters would be significantly higher for imagery-based mnemonic strategies than for rote rehearsal. To test this hypothesis sixty students were recruited from a General Psychology class and were randomly assigned to one of two learning conditions (i.e., imagery-based learning vs. rote rehearsal). All participants studied the same 24 Chinese-English word pairs and cued recall was tested 5 min after the acquisition phase of the experiment. The test of cued recall consisted of a Chinese character followed by a blank line. Participants were asked to write in the English meaning of the character that they had studied earlier. Support for the hypothesis would be obtained if imagery-based learners recalled significantly more Chinese characters than rote learners.

Independent variable construct: learning strategy.

Independent variable (operationally defined): learners were instructed to study material either by using an imagery-based strategy or by rote rehearsal.

Dependent variable construct: memory.

Dependent variable (operationally defined): number of Chinese characters recalled (i.e., English meaning) after a 5 min retention period.

Sample: College students attending a General Psychology class. They participated in partial fulfillment of course requirements.

Population of interest: young adults.