Improving our memory through games

In <u>psychology</u>, *memory* is the process in which information is *encoded, stored, and retrieved*. *Encoding* allows information that is from the outside world to reach our senses in the forms of chemical and physical stimuli. In this first stage we must change the information so that we may put the memory into the encoding process. *Storage* is the second memory stage or process. This entails that we maintain information over periods of time. Finally the third process is the *retrieval* of information that we have stored. We must locate it and return it to our consciousness.

Our memory system is divided into 3 functions for storage:

- **Sensory memory**: The sensory memory retains an exact copy of what is seen or heard. It only lasts for a few seconds and has unlimited capacity.
- **Short-Term Memory (STM):** This is the capacity for holding a small amount of information in mind in an active, readily available state for a short period of time.
- **Long-Term Memory**: This is relatively permanent storage. Information is stored on the basis of meaning and importance.

Short-term memory allows recall for a period of several seconds to a minute without rehearsal. Its capacity is also very limited: George A. Miller (1956), when working at Bell Laboratories, conducted experiments showing that the store of short-term memory was 7±2 items.

In 1974, Baddeley and Hitch introduced a working memory model in which working memory is an active part of short-term memory with an active maintenance of information.

Baddeley's Theory (Why is working memory important?)

The basic idea of Baddeley's theory is that the bigger the working/short-term memory, the more information will pass into long-term memory.
The reason why Baddeley's findings are important for language acquisition is that short-term memory is more responsible for differences in language development than LTM and working memory is more important for learning than other cognitive skills such as IQ.
Poor working memory also causes longer information processing (in class: problems with timing, first presentations, etc.)

Five steps to total recall:
1. Presentation
2. 10 min about one hour after presentation
3. 2 to 5 min one day after the lesson
4. 2 to 5 min one week after the lesson
5. 2 to 5 min one month after the lesson

Games and activities:

1. Mingling: Make sentences using two of your verbs and introduce them to other students in class. Then try to recall as many sentences as possible.
2. Noughts and crosses: After the activity, students try to remember the words in the chart in the right order.
3. Miming and recalling.
4. Do they match?
5. Recall the vocabulary from an exercise
6. Recall what other students said
7. Recall words from a crossword puzzle
8. Recall the questions from a quiz
9. Recall words from bingo

<u>Formal and informal language from the session (Activities 1,2,3,4,5):</u>

Match the following expressions with the more formal equivalents:

A: verbs

ask for	
need	
get	
give	
tell	
help	
buy	
get	
cut down	
answer	

provide   purchase   request   respond   assist   require   reduce   inform   receive   obtain

B: verbs

answer	
end	
let	
live	
seem	
show	
stop	
start again	
watch	
set up	

appear   reply   resume   demonstrate   cease   observe   reside   terminate   permit   establish

C: verbs

find out	
get in touch	
point out	
think about	
deal with	
start	
keep	
go on	
do well	
carry out	

succeed   consider   conduct   discover   handle   contact   commence   indicate   retain

Key A - C:

request	ask for
require	need
receive	get
provide	give
inform	tell
assist	help
purchase	buy
obtain	get
reduce	cut down
respond	answer
reply	answer
terminate	end
permit	let
reside	live
appear	seem
demonstrate	show
cease	stop
resume	start again
observe	watch
establish	set up
discover	find out
indicate	point out
contact	get in touch
consider	think about
handle	deal with
commence	start
retain	keep
continue	go on
succeed	do well
conduct	carry out