

## **Drawing associative pictures: a mnemonic in memorizing and determining grammatical genders of german nouns**

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Learning German as a foreign language is often challenged by the complications in getting familiar with German nouns and their grammatical Genders. German Grammatical Gender system consists of three genders; masculine, feminine and neutral. In the acquisition of German as a foreign language, grammatical gender has often been viewed as a problem by both learners and teachers alike (Rogers, 1987). Majority of the learners find it challenging to determine the correct gender and thus make mistakes in the grammatical structure of the sentence. Therefore, it is essential to use different strategies to learn and memorize the grammatical gender of each German noun. The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of guiding the learners to draw pictures associating the German nouns and their grammatical gender on the skill of correctly determining the genders. 30 students representing the Higher National Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management (SLIATE) who learn German as a foreign language have been involved in two groups as the control and the treatment groups. Pre and post tests and a focus group discussion were carried out in collecting the data followed by a paired sample t-test and a Qualitative Data Analysis (Seidel, 1998). The key findings revealed that this visual learning technique had a clear impact on the learners. The learners responded correctly to the questions of determining the grammatical gender of the nouns than earlier. Focus group discussions emphasized the novelty and the stimulation added by the method. The participants also said that they begin to remember the pictures that they drew and it helps them to determine the gender of a particular noun correctly. The study accordingly recommends German teachers and learners to use the associative illustration method in learning and the grammatical genders of the German nouns.

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