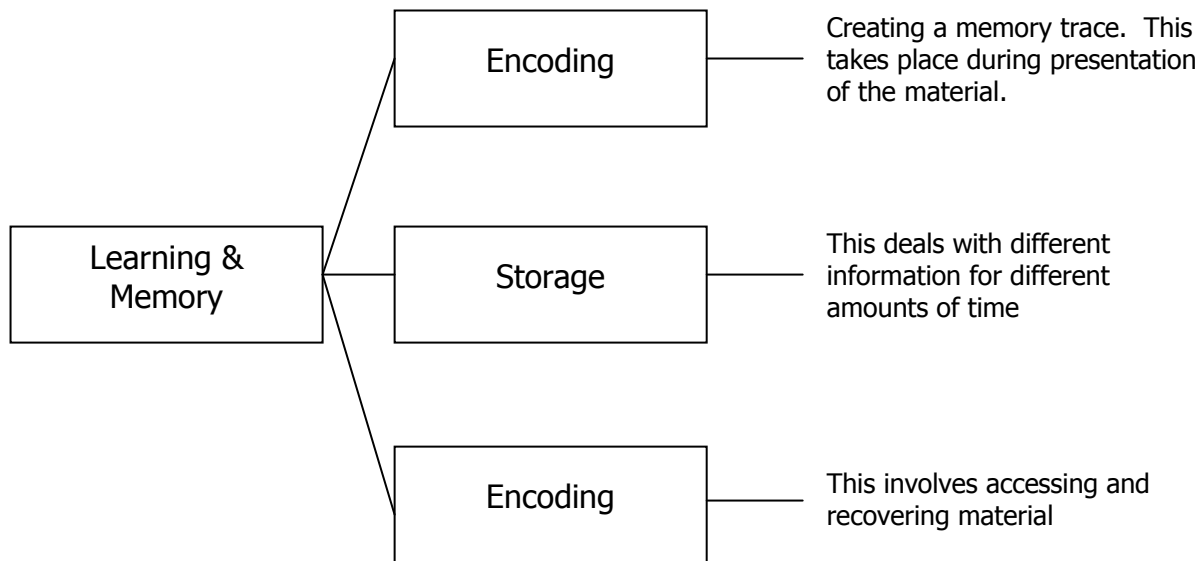


Cognitive Psychology – Notes from 27/02/04

Learning and Memory



The amount of information we can remember in our short term memory is 7 ± 2 (i.e. between 5 and 9 pieces).

Testing Memory

- Free recall - Give participants some words to learn and then ask them to recall the words in any order
- Cued recall - After presenting the material to be learned, provide cues to help recall, e.g. saying that some of the items are animals
- Recognition - Giving a list of words which include some of those in the initial list and asking participants to identify some words
- Pairs associate learning – Participants are given word pairs and then tested by presenting one of the words and asking them to recall the other
- Nonsense syllables – Participants are asked to remember meaningless sets of letters

Serial Position Effect

- Primacy effect – people are more likely to remember words from the start of a list
- Recency effect – people are more likely to remember words from the end of a list

The combination of the two means that recall of words in the middle of a list is usually poorer.

