

VOCABULARY · EPISODE 67

Ancient Japanese Techniques to Learn English

Key words & expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

1

spaced repetition

la repetición espaciada · el sistema de revisión con intervalos crecientes

DEF

a learning technique in which material is reviewed at gradually increasing intervals, exploiting the psychological spacing effect to maximise long-term retention

Spaced repetition is backed by decades of memory research — reviewing something just before you would naturally forget it is the most efficient way to move it into long-term memory. Essential vocabulary for anyone building a serious study habit.

ES

Una técnica de aprendizaje en la que el material se revisa a intervalos gradualmente crecientes, explotando el efecto de espaciado psicológico para maximizar la retención a largo plazo.

Respaldata por décadas de investigación sobre la memoria.

Spaced repetition means reviewing a word after one day, then three days, then a week — not ten times in one day.

Spaced repetition means reviewing a word after one day, then three days, then a week. -> La repetición espaciada significa revisar una palabra después de un día, luego tres días, luego una semana.

She used spaced repetition to retain two thousand words in six months with only fifteen minutes a day.

She used spaced repetition to retain two thousand words in six months with only fifteen minutes a day. -> Usó el sistema de revisión con intervalos crecientes para retener dos mil palabras en seis meses con solo quince minutos al día.

2 to immerse yourself

sumergirte en el idioma · rodearte completamente del inglés

DEF

to surround yourself completely with a language or subject so that it becomes unavoidable — creating the conditions for deep, rapid absorption

Immerse yourself is the full-body alternative to study — instead of sitting with a textbook, you saturate your life with the language. It is particularly effective because it mimics the way children acquire language.

ES

Rodearte completamente de un idioma o materia para que se vuelva inevitable — creando las condiciones para una absorción profunda y rápida.

La alternativa de cuerpo entero al estudio — en lugar de sentarte con un libro de texto, saturas tu vida con el idioma.

Immerse yourself in English: change your phone, your podcasts, your reading — make English unavoidable.

Immerse yourself in English: change your phone, your podcasts, your reading — make English unavoidable. -> Sumérgete en el inglés: cambia tu teléfono, tus podcasts, tu lectura — haz que el inglés sea inevitable.

She immersed herself so deeply that she started dreaming in English after three months.

She immersed herself so deeply that she started dreaming in English after three months. -> Se rodeó completamente del inglés tan profundamente que empezó a soñar en inglés después de tres meses.

3 to review regularly

3 revisar con regularidad · volver al material estudiado anteriormente a intervalos para que no se olvide

DEF

to return to previously studied material at intervals — ensuring it is not forgotten and moves into long-term memory

Review regularly is the habit that underpins all effective vocabulary retention. Without regular review, newly learned words fade within days. The interval between reviews can be extended over time as material becomes more familiar — this is the principle behind spaced repetition systems.

ES

Volver al material estudiado anteriormente a intervalos — asegurándose de que no se olvida y pasa a la memoria a largo plazo.

El hábito que sostiene toda la retención efectiva de vocabulario. Sin revisión regular, las palabras recién aprendidas se desvanecen en días.

Review regularly instead of re-learning — returning to material is faster and more effective than starting over.

Review regularly instead of re-learning — returning to material is faster and more effective than starting over. -> Revisa con regularidad en lugar de volver a aprender — volver al material es más rápido y efectivo que empezar de cero.

She set a weekly review session for all vocabulary she had encountered in the past month and her retention improved dramatically.

She set a weekly review session for all vocabulary she had encountered in the past month and her retention improved dramatically. -> Estableció una sesión de revisión semanal para todo el vocabulario que había encontrado en el último mes y su retención mejoró drásticamente.

context clues

4

las pistas contextuales · la información dentro de un texto que te ayuda a entender el significado de una palabra desconocida

DEF

the information within a text or conversation that helps you understand the meaning of an unknown word or phrase

Context clues are the reading and listening strategy that allows learners to keep moving when they hit an unknown word. Rather than stopping and looking it up, a skilled reader uses context clues — surrounding words, sentence structure, topic — to infer meaning. This is what fluent readers do automatically.

ES

La información dentro de un texto o conversación que te ayuda a entender el significado de una palabra o frase desconocida.

La estrategia de lectura y escucha que permite a los estudiantes seguir avanzando cuando encuentran una palabra desconocida.

Train yourself to use context clues before reaching for a dictionary — you will understand more than you expect.

Train yourself to use context clues before reaching for a dictionary — you will understand more than you expect. -> Entrena para usar las pistas contextuales antes de buscar un diccionario — entenderás más de lo que esperas.

She did not know the word but used context clues from the rest of the paragraph to work out the meaning correctly.

She did not know the word but used context clues from the rest of the paragraph to work out the meaning correctly. -> No sabía la palabra pero usó las pistas contextuales del resto del párrafo para deducir el significado correctamente.

active recall

5

la recuperación activa · la práctica de recuperar información de la memoria en lugar de releerla pasivamente

DEF

the practice of retrieving information from memory — rather than passively re-reading or reviewing it

Active recall is the most evidence-backed vocabulary technique. Instead of reading your notes again, you close the book and try to remember. Instead of looking at a flashcard with the answer showing, you hide it and try to recall. The act of retrieval itself — even when you get it wrong — strengthens the memory far more than passive review.

ES

La práctica de recuperar información de la memoria — en lugar de releerla o revisarla pasivamente.

La técnica de vocabulario más respaldada por evidencia. El acto de recuperación fortalece la memoria mucho más que la revisión pasiva.

Active recall is more effective than re-reading — test yourself, do not just review your notes.

Active recall is more effective than re-reading — test yourself, do not just review your notes. -> La recuperación activa es más efectiva que releer — ponte a prueba, no solo revises tus notas.

She replaced all passive revision with active recall exercises and her test scores improved immediately.

She replaced all passive revision with active recall exercises and her test scores improved immediately. -> Reemplazó toda la revisión pasiva con ejercicios de recuperación activa y sus puntuaciones en los exámenes mejoraron de inmediato.

to chunk information

6

organizar en grupos · agrupar piezas individuales de idioma en unidades significativas más grandes

DEF

to group individual pieces of language into larger meaningful units — making them easier to learn and retrieve

Chunking is the psycholinguistic technique that mirrors how the brain naturally stores language. Native speakers do not store individual words — they store chunks: 'a piece of', 'in the long run', 'by the way'. Learning English in chunks rather than individual words means learning language the way it is actually used.

ES

Agrupar piezas individuales de idioma en unidades significativas más grandes — haciéndolas más fáciles de aprender y recuperar.

La técnica psicolingüística que refleja cómo el cerebro almacena naturalmente el idioma. Los hablantes nativos almacenan grupos de palabras, no palabras individuales.

Chunk vocabulary instead of learning single words — learn 'make a decision', not just 'make' and 'decision'.

Chunk vocabulary instead of learning single words — learn 'make a decision', not just 'make' and 'decision'. -> Organiza el vocabulario en grupos en lugar de aprender palabras sueltas — aprende 'make a decision', no solo 'make' y 'decision'.

She started chunking new vocabulary in collocations and phrases and her output became far more natural.

She started chunking new vocabulary in collocations and phrases and her output became far more natural. -> Comenzó a organizar el nuevo vocabulario en colocaciones y frases y su producción se volvió mucho más natural.

to test yourself

7

ponerte a prueba · comprobar tu propio conocimiento intentando recordar algo sin mirar la respuesta primero

DEF

to check your own knowledge by trying to recall or produce something without looking at the answer first

Test yourself is the active learning instruction. It is the everyday version of active recall. Flashcards (answer side down), writing from memory, speaking without notes — all of these are forms of testing yourself. Research consistently shows that self-testing outperforms studying for retention.

ES

Comprobar tu propio conocimiento intentando recordar o producir algo sin mirar la respuesta primero.

La instrucción de aprendizaje activo. Las investigaciones muestran consistentemente que ponerse a prueba supera estudiar para la retención.

Test yourself on vocabulary by writing it in a sentence from memory before checking if you were right.

Test yourself on vocabulary by writing it in a sentence from memory before checking if you were right. -> Ponte a prueba en vocabulario escribiéndolo en una frase de memoria antes de comprobar si tenías razón.

She got into the habit of testing herself on new phrases before looking at her notes and her retention soared.

She got into the habit of testing herself on new phrases before looking at her notes and her retention soared. -> Adquirió el hábito de ponerse a prueba con frases nuevas antes de mirar sus notas y su retención se disparó.

8

to build on something

basarse en algo · usar el conocimiento o habilidades existentes como fundamento y desarrollarlos más

DEF

to use existing knowledge or skills as a foundation and develop it further

Build on something is the scaffolding metaphor in learning. You cannot learn advanced grammar without basic grammar to build on. You cannot learn academic vocabulary without general vocabulary to build on. Every stage of language learning is building on the previous stage — which is why gaps in the foundation eventually slow progress.

ES

Usar el conocimiento o habilidades existentes como fundamento y desarrollarlo más.

La metáfora del andamiaje en el aprendizaje. No puedes aprender gramática avanzada sin gramática básica sobre la que basarte.

Build on what you already know — advanced English is just basic English used more precisely.

Build on what you already know — advanced English is just basic English used more precisely. -> Basa lo nuevo en lo que ya sabes — el inglés avanzado es solo inglés básico usado con más precisión.

She built on her strong grammar foundation to develop more sophisticated written expression over time.

She built on her strong grammar foundation to develop more sophisticated written expression over time. -> Se basó en su sólida base gramatical para desarrollar una expresión escrita más sofisticada con el tiempo.

9

to track your progress

seguir tu progreso · medir y registrar cuánto has mejorado con el tiempo

DEF

to measure and record how much you have improved over time — so you can see growth that day-to-day feels invisible

Track your progress is the motivation tool. Progress in language learning is often invisible because it is gradual. You do not notice daily improvement — you notice it when you look back six months. Keeping a record — recordings, journal entries, test results — makes the invisible visible and sustains motivation through plateaus.

ES

Medir y registrar cuánto has mejorado con el tiempo — para poder ver el crecimiento que día a día parece invisible.

La herramienta de motivación. El progreso en el aprendizaje de idiomas suele ser invisible porque es gradual.

Track your progress by recording yourself speaking monthly — comparing recordings across time is motivating.

Track your progress by recording yourself speaking monthly — comparing recordings across time is motivating. -> Sigue tu progreso grabándote hablando mensualmente — comparar grabaciones a lo largo del tiempo es motivador.

She kept a listening comprehension log and tracking her progress showed her that she had improved more than she thought.

She kept a listening comprehension log and tracking her progress showed her that she had improved more than she thought. -> Llevó un registro de comprensión auditiva y hacer seguimiento de su progreso le mostró que había mejorado más de lo que pensaba.

to reinforce

10

reforzar · fortalecer un comportamiento o pieza de conocimiento repitiéndolo o revisitándolo

DEF

to strengthen a behaviour, skill, or piece of knowledge by repeating or revisiting it

Reinforce is the behaviourist and neuroscience term for strengthening what you have already learned. In language learning, reinforcement comes from using language in real contexts. You can reinforce vocabulary by hearing it again in a podcast, using it in a conversation, or seeing it in a new text. Each encounter deepens the neural encoding.

ES

Fortalecer un comportamiento, habilidad o conocimiento repitiéndolo o revisitándolo.

El término conductista y neurocientífico para fortalecer lo que ya has aprendido.

Reinforce new vocabulary by using it in three different sentences — one per day over three days.

Reinforce new vocabulary by using it in three different sentences — one per day over three days. -> Refuerza el nuevo vocabulario usándolo en tres frases diferentes — una por día durante tres días.

She reinforced each new expression by looking for it in the wild — in films, articles, and conversations.

She reinforced each new expression by looking for it in the wild — in films, articles, and conversations. ->

Reforzó cada nueva expresión buscándola en contextos reales — en películas, artículos y conversaciones.