

Interactive comment on “Remember rhythm and rime: Memory and narratives in science communication” by Aquiles Negrete

Sara J ElShafie (Referee)

selshafie@berkeley.edu

Received and published: 18 July 2020

GENERAL COMMENTS

I think that an article explaining how narratives improve memory and thus aid science communication will be incredibly valuable. I'm happy to see this work in progress and I look forward to citing it in my own work.

However, this draft is mostly about memory and contains very little on narrative. For a paper entitled “Memory and narratives in science communication,” the discussion should be more balanced. I would like to see narrative defined and cited as rigorously as memory is treated in the current draft. I also think this work would benefit from introducing narrative earlier in the piece and incorporating discussion of how memory

C1

and narrative interplay throughout the manuscript.

This paper would be further strengthened by using actual narratives throughout to illustrate the author's points. For example, toward the beginning of the manuscript, offer the reader a list of facts (e.g., definitions of jargon related to the study of memory) and then tell the reader a story (e.g., about someone who needed to remember something). Later in the manuscript, ask the reader to recall the definition of one of the jargon terms presented early on. Then ask the reader to recall a specific incident from the story told earlier. Which was easier to recall? This will demonstrate the author's thesis!

Adding some figures, especially to illustrate some of the jargon or experiments described in the literature review, would also help to make this paper more engaging and accessible.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Line 1: Did the author intend to use the word “rhyme” rather than “rime” in the title? I'm guessing the former, since the author uses the word “rhyme” several times throughout the manuscript. While the word “rime” is a term used in literature, the word “rhyme” seems more relevant to this paper.

Lines 12-15: This is a very long sentence. I recommend breaking it up.

Lines 16-24: I suggest rephrasing the third sentence in the abstract, and each sentence following, as a statement rather than a mention of something that will be discussed. For example, “Evidence from the field of memory studies suggests that narratives represent a good recall device” rather than “I will present evidence. . .”

Lines 132-133: Please explain this experiment. A figure showing the potential curve would help.

Line 137: Citation needed.

Lines 138-140: Please explain this work.

C2

Lines 140-143: This is a really important and interesting example. I recommend elaborating on the role of story in geoscience knowledge across different cultures and offering some specific examples.

Lines 165-167: Citation(s) needed.

Line 243: Citation needed.

Lines 245-249: Put this example after the following paragraph.

Lines 260-266: The specific examples offered here help me understand the author's point and remember the information later (because those examples are themselves mnemonics!). I recommend using specific examples throughout the manuscript in this way, and especially to use examples of how any given memory concept applies to science communication specifically.

Line 277-279: I recommend omitting the sentence in line 277 and instead introducing the next paragraph with a sentence like, "One way to achieve organization is to introduce objects together."

Lines 297-301: This sentence is long and difficult to digest. It is also redundant with the next paragraph. I recommend omitting it. Furthermore, it seems to me that the discussion of Models in section 3.9.2 should precede the section on Story schemas. I suggest adding the first sentence under 3.9 to the first paragraph under 3.9.2 and making that section "3.9 Models." Then "Story schemas" can be its own section (3.10).

Lines 326-327: A brief description of this story would be helpful here for those unfamiliar with it. The story also needs a citation.

Lines 328-329: Please give an example.

Line 343: It is more inclusive to use the pronouns "they/them/themselves" when referring to a hypothetical person.

Lines 367-421: Following my general comments, the entire section entitled "Narratives

C3

as mnemonic devices for science communication" should be broken up and incorporated throughout the manuscript. The author has already indicated exactly how they can do this – just take each paragraph and incorporate it into the section(s) referenced within that paragraph. Also, the entire commentary on "Narratives as mnemonic devices..." needs citations. I do not see a single citation in this section until the last paragraph when a few examples of stories are cited.

Lines 415-416: Please rephrase to be clearer.

Line 416: Carbon by Primo Levi is listed without justification. Please either clarify what this story exemplifies, or omit it.

Lines 420-426: This sentence is awkward and redundant. I recommend omitting it and instead ending that paragraph with the last sentence of the paper (which does not need a separate subheading).

TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS

"Short-term" and "long-term memory" should always have a hyphen before "term." The hyphen is missing in several instances (e.g., line 197). Please search for "short term memory" and replace with "short-term memory," etc.

The author alternates between American and British spellings of words. For example, "organisation" is spelled with an "s" in line 276, but is then spelled with a "z" in the next sentence in line 277. Please review the manuscript and ensure that all spellings are consistent with whichever style the publishing journal uses.

Please also see the attached manuscript file with typos highlighted.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this work! I enjoyed reading it and learned quite a bit. I think it will be a valuable resource for anyone interested in communication, cognition, storytelling, narratology, education, and anything related!

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

C4

<https://gc.copernicus.org/preprints/gc-2020-20/gc-2020-20-RC1-supplement.pdf>

Interactive comment on Geosci. Commun. Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/gc-2020-20>, 2020.