

## ABSTRACT

Impairment in episodic memory is the cardinal symptom of Alzheimer's Disease (AD) which causes memory problems in daily life. Some studies found semantic organization to be an effective way in helping normal elderly and AD patients to enhance episodic recall. However, AD patients also have deficit in semantic memory on which semantic organization depends. The present study investigates whether normal elderly and AD patients' episodic memory can be improved from non-semantic organization, to compare the effectiveness between the two types of organization strategies, and to explore the factors associated with their ability to benefit. For AD patients with grossly preserved general level of cognitive functioning, non-semantic organization task can facilitate their memory, and it should be better than the semantic one. At the same time, semantic organization could facilitate both the normal elderly and the AD patients' use of semantic retrieval strategy. Moreover, their benefits from practice and from semantic organization were related to their effective use of the retrieval strategy. Yet there is no conclusive findings regarding normal elderly's benefits from the two types of organization. For the patient group, it seems that because of their heterogeneity, their free recall did not benefit significantly from either semantic or non-semantic organization. Research and memory training can be directed to strategies used at recall in addition to the manipulation of to-be-remembered materials.