

Bartlett (1932)

Bartlett (1932) conducted a longitudinal study of recall, where the PPs were studied repeatedly over a period of time. He gathered his data quite casually, in times and places that were convenient. As part of his study, he gave his participants a North American Indian folk tale called 'The War of the Ghosts' to remember. He tested their recall of it on a number of occasions up to a year later. Each time, he would compare their latest recalled version with all of the earlier ones, noting any changes that occurred. Bartlett observed that, in all participants, the story changed in a number of characteristic ways:

- It got shorter;
- Details were left out, especially ones that were unfamiliar to the PPs;
- Some parts were changed to make it more 'English'.

Bartlett found that recall of the story became more and more distorted over time. It never stopped changing, though the rate of change was greater early on and diminished with time.

Loftus & Palmer (1974)

Loftus and Palmer (1974) carried out a laboratory experiment in which 45 student participants watched a short film during which two cars were involved in an accident. The PPs were asked to estimate the speed at which they had been travelling. they were asked, 'How fast were the cars going when they _____'. The end of the question was varied for different groups of PPs. Loftus and Palmer found that the word used influenced the average estimates:

'Smashed' - 40mph

'Hit' - 34mph

'Contacted' - 32mph

Cordua et al (1979)

Under laboratory conditions, Cordua et al (1959) showed 128 five and six year-old children films featuring male and female doctors and nurses (all possible combinations). Afterwards, they asked the children a series of questions to assess the accuracy of their recall of the films. They found that children who had seen female doctors and male nurses tended to report having seen male doctors and female nurses. This tendency was strongest for recall of male nurses. Recall of other details from the films was generally quite accurate.

Stuyvers & Hemmer (2012)

Stuyvers & Hemmer (2012) conducted a laboratory investigation in which they showed PPs photographs of one of five different types of typical scene (e.g. a streetscape, a kitchen, a hotel room etc.) The photos contained various objects, some of which were highly relevant to the scene (e.g. a knife in the kitchen, a bed in a hotel room) and some of which were irrelevant. When PPs were assessed for the accuracy of their recall of specific scenes it was observed that they were more accurate for objects that were highly relevant to the scene than for objects that were irrelevant. Recall of irrelevant objects was generally quite low.

Wynn and Logie (1998)

Wynn and Logie (1998) conducted a laboratory study in which 63 first-year Psychology students were asked to describe the events and places they had encountered during their first week at university. The PPs gave a written description of the events and places. One group recalled this four times, some three and some two times. Recall was at predetermined intervals - after two weeks, two months, four months and six months. The researchers recorded how long the recall accounts were (i.e. the number of words) and whether the PPs used the same words each time. For all groups, the recall accounts got significantly shorter after six months had passed. However, there was relatively little change to the content of the recall accounts and there was little difference between the groups.