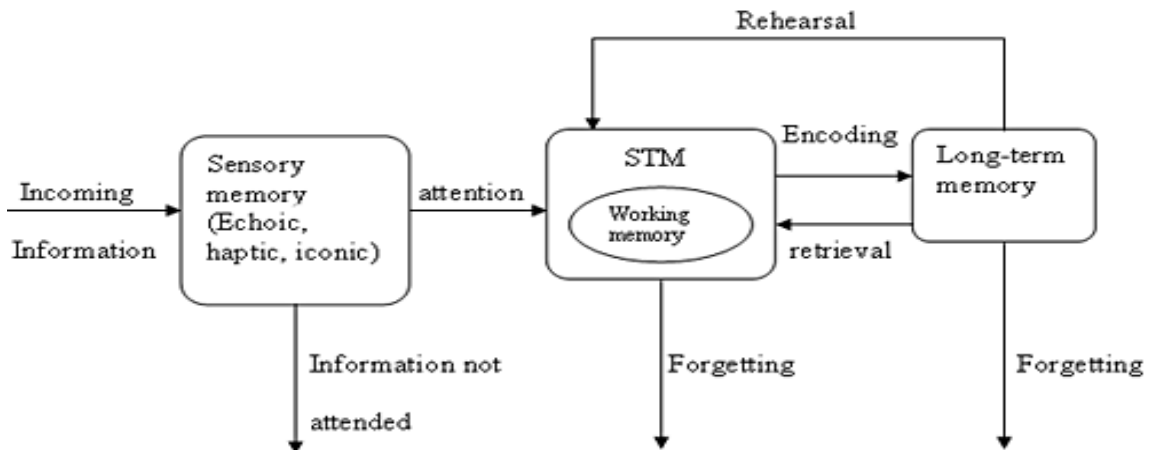# Primacy/ Recency Effect

by Marta Zywot

Introduction:

The aim of the study by B. Murdock (1962) was to find out if the position of the words on the list was having an effect on the easiest way to remembered.
B. Murdock have participants a number of words to remember and then he asked them to recall as many as they can remember, in any order.

The results shown that the first words to be recalled were those the P'c heard last (or the words that were last on the list) because they were stored in STM. Also P'c can remember the few first words that have being on the list because they were stored on the LTM.

Few words in the middle of the list were recalled, because they were not fully registered or remembered or there was lack of time to rehearse them.
The conclusion of that study is that the words on the beginning of the list and on the end of the list were more able to recall, because were stored in LTM than the words in the middle of the list because were stored in STM and there was lack of time to rehearse them.

Aim of my study is to carry out a partial replication of B. Murdock study.

Hypothesis:

My hypothesis is to find out that if the P'c can remembered more words from the beginning and the end of the list than from the middle.

Introduction & Instructions for P'c:

Hello, my name is Marta.
Would you mind taking part of my psychology experiment?

This experiment involves you to listen carefully to the list of 20 words, then try to remember as many as you can, in no order. I will then give 5min for you to try to write them on a piece of paper, as many as you can, in any order.

Do you understand what I want you to do?
Did you have any questions that you would like to ask me?
No-ones name would be used.
Thank you for taking part of my psychology experiment.

Debrief:

This experiment was done to find if there is any support for multistore model and primacy/ recency effect.

The recency effect is when you heard the last few words from the list you can remembered most because they were stored in short term memory.

The first words that you have heard from the list you can remembered because they were stored in long term memory.

The words from the middle of the list were replaced by the words from the end of the list. That's why you can't remembered them.

Thank you for taking part of my psychologist experiment.
You can be sure that your personal details will be anonymous.
If you want to know any think, or you have any questions or if you want to know results, they will be available in NCN Clarendon.

Sources:

These are 20 words that you have to try to remember, as many as you can, in any order.
1. brick
2. crane
3. short
4. scare
5. trees
6. stone
7. watch
8. paper
9. horse
10. cause
11. plate
12. faces
13. skate
14. reach
15. mango
16. mouse
17. doors
18. light
19. house
20. press

Table of raw data to show how often each word from a list of 20 words was remembered by participants in a study into primacy and recency effect.

Position of the words on the list		Number of times word is recalled		
1	brick		10	
2	crane		6	
3	short		4	
4	scare		2	
5	trees		6	14%
6	stone		5	
7	watch		3	
8	paper		3	
9	horse		6	
10	cause		1	9%
11	plate		3	
12	faces		3	
13	skate		2	
14	reach		1	
15	mango		6	7.50%
16	mouse		7	
17	doors		5	
18	light		6	
19	house		9	
20	press		4	15.50%

Method:

Design:
This study used an repeated measures design. This design was used because if I will give my P'c twice the same words they will be able to remember more words.

The independent variable was position of a words in a list.
The dependent variable was how often the word was recalled.

Extraneous variable are variables which could influence the results and so they have to be controlled. In this study extraneous variables were noise from the out side, if some participants have studied psychology, light, time to complete task, reading clearly, tone of voice, speed at which read out.

These were controlled by doing this study in a quiet room, only those who have not studied psychology can do the experiment otherwise they will know what study is all about. Also the experiment have to be done in similar light levels. I have to also make sure that I gave my P'c the same amount of time. If I will be worried about that I will not read questions or words loud and clearly, I will write down everything on a big piece of paper.

The ethical consideration I took into account to meet British Psychological Guidelines were:
- The P'c will stay anonymous,
- Confidentiality,
- I will ask for consent,
- Debrief P'c,
- Every P'c have right to withdraw,
- I will make sure that there is no mentally or physically harm.

Discussion:

The results clearly shows that participants an remembered the words from the beginning of the list and from the end of the list. P'c can't remember the words from the middle of the list because they were replaced with new words (from the end of the list). 14% were remembered from 1st quartile and 15.5% from last quartile compared to 9% and 7.5% from middle quartile. These results therefore support the hypothesis.

There were not many unusual result. Maybe some P'c were able to remember few words from the middle of the list because they were easy to remember.

The aim of this study was to find if the primacy/ recency effect support multistore model. My results show that this support the prior research that the study is based on.

The weaknesses of this study is that the P'c might not listen carefully to the words that examiner was reading. Or examiner might read very quiet so the P'c could not heard the words and then they might not knew that this words were actually on the list. The other problem might be because some P'c can be good on the memory games. Or maybe some P's already have done the experiment, so they knew what this study is based on and they can be more focused on the words on the middle of the list so then my results can be different than my hypothesis was predicting.

I think that these results can be used by doctors because some patients can not remember what actually doctor says about taking medications, because doctor was saying about that in the middle of conversation. Doctor should say to patients about taking medications on the beginning of the conversation or on the end of conversation. Also primacy/ recency effect can be used also for teachers. Some students can't remember what to do for homework, coursework, what are coursework deadline, what date is the exam or even on revision workshop. Because they were not listening to what teacher was saying because teacher was telling all of this stuff on the middle of lesson or conversation when any of the student doesn't concentrate on the lesson. Teachers should tell everything that is important on the beginning of the lesson and should also repeated this on the end of the lesson.

If I would carry out further investigate I will make sure that the people can listen to words that I say. I should record myself so that people will have equal opportunity to remember words. I will look at the length of the words, to see if the length have an effect on my experiment.

CONCLUSION:

The aim of the study by B. Murdock was to find out if the position of the words on the list having an effect on the easiest way to remembered.

My hypothesis is to find out if P'c can remembered more words from the beginning and end of the list than from the middle. On my experiment 14% were remembered from the beginning of the list and 15.5% from the end of the list compared to 9% and 7.5% from the middle of the list. My results clearly shows that this supports the aim and the hypothesis of the study.