False Memory Lab

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* Independent Variable: Type of word presented during the study.
  + Level 1: Original list item
  + Level 2: Unrelated lures (not on list)
  + Level 3: Related lures (not on list)
* Dependent Variable: Percentage of each type of item reported.
  + Operational Definition: Accuracy rating on items correctly reported.
* This study focused on the false-memory perspective. This perspective states that most of recovered memories are actually incorrect memories. The stories and events that are constructed never actually occur, but individuals assume they happened. There have been various studies that indicate people cannot recall with absolute accuracy, whether they performed the action, or just imagined performing the action. The support for this argument is because people are lead by schemas rather than actual recalled events.
* The study conducted by the class supports the false-memory perspective because results showed that participants identified related lures just as much as the original words on the list. These results show that anyone has a chance for recalling false memories.

**Results**

As Figure 1 shows, a repeated measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) indicated that the type of word presented during the experiment caused a significant difference on false memory, *F*(2, 14) = 259.45, *p* < .001, 2 = .974. Bonferroni post hoc tests suggested that participants recognized a higher percentage of related lures (*M* = 81.25; *SD* = 10.68, 95% CI[72.32, 90.18]) than unrelated lures (*M* = 4.17; *SD* = 2.46, 95% CI[2.11, 6.23]), *p* < .001. Words from the original list (*M* = 85.71; *SD* = 6.24, 95% CI[80.50, 90.93]) were easily recognized than unrelated lures, *p* < .001. Related lures share similar characteristics to words from the original list, which caused participants to believe related lures were part of the original list of words. The data supports the idea of false memory because participants believed related lures were included in the original list, thus preventing a significant difference to occur, *p* = 1.000. Related lures in the study caused false memory to occur because participants believed they saw the related lures, but in fact were just thinking of the words instead.

*Figure* 1. Participants had a lower percentage rate of reporting unrelated lures than related lures from the original list of words. False memory occurred when related lures were reported as words from the original list.