

Public Abstract

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Title:Electrophysiological correlates of orienting retrieval to remote and recent memories: Effects of an episodic specificity induction

As more time passes since a memory is first formed, the likelihood of retrieving that memory declines. Typically, this decline has been attributed to the decay of the memory trace or interference due to intervening events. However, recent studies indicate that the strategies employed when trying to retrieve a memory from a particular time can also play a role. The present set of experiments investigates the nature of these strategies, by examining behavioral and electrophysiological indices of memory retrieval for items encountered a week ago versus the same day. Experiment 1 examined whether these strategies were distinct from effects of retrieval difficulty across time, and Experiment 2 investigated the role of detail-oriented processing in the strategies employed when trying to remember items from different times. The findings indicate that the strategies engaged to retrieve memories from different time points are not merely an artifact of difficulty and generate partial support for the role of detailed processing in these strategies. The results of these experiments highlight the potential for improving memory over time by altering the strategies individuals engage to target older compared to more recent memories.