Cognitive psychology essay sample

NARRATIVE REPORT

Eyewitness Testimony – is a legal term. It refers to an account given by people of an event they have witness.

Example: They may be required to give a description at a trial of robbery or a road accident someone has seen. This includes identification of perpetrator, details of the crime scene etc.

In research in cognitive psychology if very important area is the eyewitness testimony, it is because if we tend to pay close attention to the testimony of eyewitness we can find answer and a reliable source of information in an certain event.

State for an example, they showed the witness of a real life incident (a gun shooting outside a gun shop in Canada) had remarkable accurate memories of a stressful event involving weapons. A thief stole guns and money, but was shot six times and died.

The police interviewed witness and re-interviewed after 5 months. Recall-found to be accurate after a long time , and 2 misleading question inserted by the research team had no effect on recall accuracy.

Yuille and Cutshall study illustrates two important points:

1. There are cases of real-life recall where memory for an anxiousstressful event is accurate even some months later.

2. Misleading questions need not have the same effect as has been found in laboratory studies.

Reconstructive Retrieval – an understanding of the reliability of eyewitness of testimony as he suggest that recall is subject to personal interpretation dependent on our learn or cultural norms and values.

Here we believe that our memory works just like a videotape were we store information through recording and remembering just playing it back of what has been record. But our memory did not work just like a videotape because it does not store information exactly just it presented to us, rather we extract information in the way that make sense to us. According to the research, we make sense of information by trying to fit into schemas, which are a way of organizing an information. Schemas is a mental units of knowledge that respond frequently. It allow us to make sense what we encounter in order for us to predict what is going to happen and what we should do in any given situation. Therefore the schemas is capable of distorting unfamiliar or unconscious unacceptable information in order to fit in with our existing knowledge or schemas. According to research, this can therefore, result is unreliable eyewitness testimony.

That is why, according to some estimates roughly 8500 such miscarriages of justice occur each year in the United States alone with as many as half attributable to incorrect eyewitness testimony (Lofus, 1986).
Besides focusing on reconstructive retrieval, efforts to explain these inaccurate have focused on the following: a.) selective encoding by the witness b.) attempts to mislead the witness through slanted questioning c.) implanted memories

Reconstructive memory- is the process of putting information on together based on the general types of stored knowledge in the absence of a specific memory representation. It leads to incorrect memories and it is the process of piecing together memories by fitting them to a meaningful plan.

The active and inferential process of retrieval whereby gaps in memory filled in based on prior experience, logic, and goals. Though sometimes inferences lead to false memory.

Schema in reconstructive memory is trying to answer the following questions on the picture you saw at the beginning were there other people in the carriage, how many people were figting?, and who was carrying a knife?

Selective Encoding- the scene of the crime might not be plainly visible because of poor lighting and pleeting glimses of the perpetrator (Buckhout, 1974). Seeing the perpetrator at a distance, focusing attention as a weapon, and being under the influence of alcohol can all reduce the extent to which an eyewitness accurately encodes a crime scene.
In this selective encoding the eyewitness of the violent crimes may experience a level of stress that they may fail to encode the events adequately. So in a less severe situation, the social anxiety must give a public address so it can lower the subsequent recall of the speech of one's own.

Errors in the eyewitness identification are particularly likely when the police lineup is not properly composed. Filters are individuals whom the police do not regard as respects of the crime. In the filters selected do not match the

general description of the suspect given by the eyewitness prior to the lineup, then they do not serve as useful control cases.

The problem of misidentification in lineups is particularly acute when the witness and suspect are of different racial and ethnic backgrounds just like Asians recognize other Asians better than they recognize Caucasians and the reverse relation also holds for Caucasians.

Misinformation Effect- when the questions certain misleading information they may distort memory.

Just state for example: presented people with a film of a traffic accident and then questioned them, as might an investigator or an attorney, about what they had witnessed. One of the several questions asked was " How fast were the cars going when they hit each others?" the various conditions, the verb Hit was replaced by more or less violent words like contacted, hit, bumped, collided, smashed.

So by these replacing verbs the participants or the eyewitness gave estimates of how fast the cars were traveling when the accident occurred. As a result, it showed that the average speed estimates varied in direct relation to the wording of the question.

Implanted memories- it refers to the individual creating a false memory in the mind of the other person by means of suggestions and questions about the imagined event.

Is it possible to implant a false memory in an eyewitness to a crime by suggesting a suspect guilt? That memory implantation in eyewitness to a crime is a possibility, particularly for young witness.

As Brainer (2013) observe the testimony of " witnesses who were intoxicated during crimes, who were suggestively questioned after the crime, who received anesthesia after crimes should be carefully evaluated for reliability by the law.

False memories is normal and give a little impact of our lives but it can bother a person. A person were come to believe in an traumatic may affect their ability to function as normal in everyday life.

Recovered memory- if you forget where you left your keys, and then later remember the location, you have just recovered a memory. There are conceptual on this recovered memories just like defining precisely what we know and do not know, because we must untie the several issues involved: first we must distinguish phenomena (what), motivations (why), and mechanisms (how). The phenomena are apparent forgetting and later remembering a significant event (or series of event). Why they occur is a question of motivation, and how they occur a question of mechanisms and second the memory accuracy to which the memory is historically true.

Delusional false memory- is a false memory of an event experienced by an individual who has strong beliefs that a bizzare event could actually occur. Although it is not well understood how the delusional beliefs originates, but the culture and social circles of the individual play a role.

Repression- refers to an inhibitory process of excluding events from retrieval. It is an unconscious mechanism that prevents thoughs from entering awareness.

So the repressed memories may reflex either the retrieval of a previously repressed event or an inaccurate reconstructed false memory. It also prevent the conscious awareness in a traumatic event. The traumatic-induced amnesia is not the only possible response to a real traumatic experience and this can caused the victim to experience the trauma.