INTRODUCTION

• Memory retrieval in reverse order is reportedly difficult.
• Little consensus exists on underlying differences between forward & backward recall.
• Differences in recall performance illuminate the degree to which distinct cognitive processes underlie forward & backward recall.
• Experimental manipulations of list length & expectation of recall direction influence manner of recall.

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

Manipulations: list length, cue timing, recall direction

• Arrow points to the right to indicate forward recall trials, left for backward recall.
• List length varies from 6 up to 12 items.

SUBJECTS & METHODS

• 48 test lists per session: three list lengths per subject, two cuing conditions, two recall directions.
• N = 570, each participant contributing one session
• Data collected through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk)

CONCLUSIONS

• Subjects perform similarly in forward & backward serial recall.
• Pre-cuing subjects boosts performance in both forward & backward recall.
• Recall performance decreases as list length increases, this being less pronounced in backward recall.
• Higher accuracy of recall initiation & higher probability of fill-in transitions, particularly early in output, suggests recency bias differentially affects backward recall.