

view claims that one tries to verify sentences by simply retrieving them from memory, only resorting to more elaborate inferential reasoning if the statement cannot be found. That view is not consistent with the obtained plausibility effect in the delayed presented condition, since other memory data of Reder mentioned earlier indicates that the presented statements are stored. The reconstructive view of plausibility judgments, on the other hand, is consistent with the results, even the effect in the delayed presented condition.

Upon introspection, it seems clear from everyday examples that plausibility judgments are typically made by means of reconstructive computations and not by means of direct retrieval. For example, to decide if the three characters in *No Exit* were happy or if the young boys in *Lord of the Flies* were savages, one does not search memory for a specific proposition that asserts that the *No Exit* characters were unhappy, nor for a proposition that asserts that the boys in *Lord of the Flies* were savages.

Directions for Future Research

What most impresses us about elaborative processes is that they seem to provide a mechanism for producing powerful effects in overall level of recall. Although measurements using reaction time—as in Reder's experiment—are often theoretically more sensitive, the striking effects should be seen in percent recall. Our respective research endeavors in this area are aimed at discovering what manipulations can increase the amount of relevant elaborative processing that a student can do for prose material and whether these manipulations have their anticipated effects on percent retention. Many mnemonic devices advocated for learning material (see Bower, 1970, for a review) are not directly related to the content of the material. For example, a Roman orator using the method of loci to remember a speech might imagine a puddle of water in front of a temple to prompt discussion about water projects. On the other hand, elaborative processing that also facilitates retention is naturally associated with the studied material. The act of elaborating text is basically "exercising" the reader in thinking about the content. We are excited about the theoretical notions of elaborative processing, because we feel this theoretical analysis may be setting a firm conceptual base for practical applications to human memory.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The preparation of this manuscript was a collaborative effort. The preparation and the research reported were supported by NSF grant BNS76-00959 and ONR grant N00014-72-C-0242 to the first author and by an NSF Graduate Fellowship, a Rackham Dissertation Grant, and an NIMH postdoctoral fellowship to the second author. We would like to thank Miriam Schustack for her comments on the manuscript.