CHAPTER I

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Memory issues are extremely important to communication inquiry. Conversational interaction requires Participants to utilize their memory for a great variety of tasks. Everyday people meet, converse with each other, and depart with memories of their interactions. These memories affect future interactions, feelings about others, and even judgment of self. Staford and Daly (1984) detail the demands made upon memory in conversation: "A critical requirement for successfully completing any interaction is a functioning memory that permits people (1) generate relevant topic from the store of memories they have from previous interactions with the other involved in the current exchange; (2) access and use diverse psychological Schemes that hold and integrate both general and specific topical information; (3) recall general rules of social interaction and mesh them with the particular conversation; (4) adjust to new messages that arise as the Conversation progress with in the frame of remembered materials; (5) devise expectancies and trajectories for likely directions the conversations may take; and (6) Store in some suitable fashion, impressions and memories of the conversation for future use (1984, PP. 379-380).”

Because interactants ‘must be capable of storing and retrieving a great deal of information from memory in order to engage in communication, theories of interaction must be sensitive to the
capabilities and limitations of memory. An exemplar is Capella and Folgers's (1981) account of inconsistencies in attitudes and behaviours which is based on the distinction between Semantic and episodic memory. Cognitive theories of communication appear promising (Planalp & Hewes, 1982) but will require careful consideration of the cognitive capacities of human beings, including their ability to retrieve information from memory to guide their own behavior and interpret the behavior of conversational partners. Planalp and Hewes (1982) argue that retrieval issues have for reaching implications for the Communication scholars:

"Retrieval issues may thus underlie overestimates of the face validity of tests, the assessment of personality based on cross-situational consistency (Hewes & Haight 1980), the detection of sequential relation between communicative acts, or any tasks which requires judgments of empirical relations. Communication scholars interested in attitude / behaviour or trait / behaviour relationship would benefit by exploring the implications of the retrieval research for the validity of Fishbein and Ajzen's(1975) behavior Sélection Process".

This illustrate the importance of an understanding of memory for communication Scholars from diverse theoretical positions.

Moreover, an adequate conception of memory is also critical for communication research, which frequently employs verbal reports as a form of data. Limitations of subjects ability to remember information
bear directly on the veracity of verbal reports. Self report data is quite common in our literature. For example we ask subjects to reflect on their relationships, recall their viewing habits, remember critical incidents, or rate how likely they are to use various compliance gaining strategies. Despite the importance of the verbal report data to communication inquiry we know little about human information retrieval capacities or the accessibility of particular kinds of information.

**CONVERSATION MEMORY**: The information we acquire about people or environment is often conveyed in informal conversations. A person may tell us about some one to he met or we may listen to people exchanging anecdotes about mutual acquaintance later we may be called to convey our own impression of the individual who was described. we presumably do this on the basis of cognitive representation we had formed of the person while listening to the conversation. So conversation memory may be defined as "the ability of an individual to correctly recall or recognize the contents of the conversation either verbatim or Sematic."

While memory has been important topic of research for some time , relatively little inquiry into memory for conversations has occurred. Stafford and Daly(1984) investigate the conversational memory of the participants in conversation. They use free recall and report that only about 10% of all idea units in a conversation are recalled by participants ( The best subject recalled only 40%). Prompting the
conclusion that people abilities' to recall something as complex as conversations are limited."

However other researchers obtain result much higher than Stafford and Daly's results. Macwhinney, Keenan and Reinke (1982), using both participants and observers as subjects, report that recognition memory from 71% to 82% (Keenan, Macwhinney, & Mahew, 1977). Kintsch and Bates (1977) indicate that students are able to recognize a considerable amount of information from a lecture even after 5 days. Benoit & Benoit (1986) employing a recognition test, report that conversational interactants are able to recall over 90% of specific verbal communicative behavior Benoit & Benoit (1987), also employing a recognition task, report that Subjects can remember 86% of specific in an interaction. These studies demonstrate that a considerable amount of conversational information is stored in memory and subjects are able to retrieve it accurately.

The obvious difference between these studies is that Stafford and Daly use a form of recall (free recall) while the studies reporting a greater amount of remembering employ recognition test. Recognition test are generally accepted to be more sensitive than recall, as Behrick notes: "It has been found in most instances that recognition performances is superior to recall performance of the same target items." The free recall procedure employed by Stafford and Daly instructs the subjects at the end of their conversation "to write down (or orally report)
everything that he or she could remember from or about the conversation" (P.386). Stafford and Daly argue recognition tests are less useful because memory structures are not isomorphic with the form of these tests. They suggest that free recall procedures "more clearly tap mechanism that operate during every day conversations" (P.381) because interactants must access information quickly by drawing "freely from his or her store of memories" (P.398)

**IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSATION MEMORY:**

1. Conversation memory for various aspects of conversation is an important component of social interaction. Impression are often formed and social judgments made on the basis of what is remembered from verbal interactions.

2. Conversation memory may play a role in social bonding, exchanging and concurring on reactions and prospectives probably makes an interaction more enjoyable and a partner more likable.

3. The descriptive studies of conversation memory (Edward & Middleton, 1986 a,b; Tenny, 1989) Support the importance of personal reactions; exchange of personal information teach others about the person one is: what one likes, dislikes, cares about etc.

4. The purpose of conversation memory is to search for meaning to learn about other and explain ourselves, and to build and maintain social bonds.
DERIVATION OF THE PROBLEM: Conversations are part of everyday life, while central to the social life of an individual but very little attention has been paid to the rememberances people have of them. Keeping in mind the greater importance of conversation memory for understanding social interaction process; the problem of the present research is formulated as "conversation memory as a function of listener's emotional mood, status, version of conversation and Speaker's Status."

Verbal Communication is a central and ubiquitous feature of social interaction and researchers have paid increasing attention to the social Psychology of language (Clark, 1985; Higgins, 1981; Kraut & Higgins, 1984). A consideration of language is important because as Kraut & Higgins (1984) have suggested that verbal communication represents a rich intersection of social and cognitive Processes.

The social cognition of speakers and listeners play a crucial role in many different aspects of language use. For example the successful use of referential expressions depends on social knowledge that is shared by the interlocutors (Clark & Carlson, 1982; Clark & Marshall, 1981; Kraus, Vivekanathan & Wein Heimer, 1988). Moreover, social cognition plays an important role in the interpersonal aspects of language use. Speaker often talk differently as a function of various aspects of the social situations (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; Giles & St. clair, 1979) and certain characteristics of the listeners such as relative
Status (Cansler & stiles, 1981) and age (Depaulo & Coleman, 1986). This various features of language use may reflect the speakers view of his or her relationship with the listeners and situation they are in.

To address the question of what is remembered from a conversation, it is first necessary to consider what is potentially memorable from a conversation. In other words, it is necessary to first delimit some of the dimensions of language use. One important distinction is often made between the surface structure of a sentence (i.e. the exact wording) and the underlying meaning or propositional content of the sentence. However, in actual verbal communication there are other important dimensions in addition to surface structure and propositional content. When people talk, they are trying to do the things with their words (e.g., requesting, informing, promising etc.) That is, they are performing what are commonly referred to as Speech acts. Thus, Speech acts can be regarded as an important dimension of language.

An important point about speech acts is that depending on the context, the same speech act (e.g., to request x) can be performed with different syntactic forms (e.g; declarative- “I would like x”; interrogative-“could I have x”; imperative- “Give me x”) and with utterances having different propositional content (e.g. “I need x,” “I would like x” etc.). The various linguistic realizations for performing a directive (attempting to get the hearer to perform some action) can be roughly ordered on the dimension of assertiveness, or the force with
which the speech act is performed, on the dimension of politness (Clark, 1980); or on both. For example, the imperative ("Shut the door") is more assertive and less polite than the declarative ("you should Shut the door") and the declarative is more assertive and less polite than the interrogative ("could you shut the door?"). It should be noted that later two examples would be regarded as indirect request, an indirect requests are less assertive than direct requests. However, indirect requests themselves can vary in their assertiveness or politeness (Clark & Schunk, 1980).

As described in the above paragraph about the fact that there are a number of dimensions of language; of these dimensions, assertiveness can be most clearly regarded as a social dimension of language and a number of theorists have been concerned with specifying how the various linguistic realizations for performing the some speech acts are related to social variables (e.g. Brown & Levinson, 1978; Clark & Schunk, 1980, Ervin-Trip, 1978; Lakoff, 1973) The most comprehensive account of these phenomena is provided by Brown & Levinson (1978) who have included in their model interpersonal variables (e.g. status & closeness) that are predicated to have an effect on language form. Thus there is some research suggesting relation between high status and speech form Conceptually similar to assertiveness such as powerful speech (Erikson, Lind, Johnson & O Barr, 1978), non-mitigated request (Wish, D’Andraid & Goodnow, 1978), and
presumptuousness (Canslor & Stile, 1981). These researches demonstrate that assertive or powerful speech reflect status information. In other words there is a language expectation that high status Speakers use or allowed to use assertive forms of speech. If such an expectation exists and is relavant feature of social knowledge then the expectation should have predictable effects on memory for the assertiveness of remarks.

Keeping the above mentioned ideas in mind Holtgrave, Socall & Srull (1989) carried out three experiments, to examine the effect of information about a speaker's status on memory for the assertiveness of his or her remarks. The findings of their study clearly demonstrated that information does affect conversation memory for the assertiveness of his or her remarks, i.e. under certain conditions the remark of the high status speaker were remembered as more assertiveness than the same remarks uttered by low status speaker. Subject in the high status speaker condition recalled both the assertive and non assertive remarks as more assertive than did subjects in equal status condition. These investigators also found that subject recalled assertive version of the remarks more than non assertive version of remarks. Though these findings provide evidence for the existence of relation between one speech form (assertiveness) and one interpersonal variable (Speaker's status), the result can't be taken for granted as these investigators have ignored two important variables i.e. listener's (Subject's) status and listener's (Subject's) emotional mood. Thus it is
possible that if the listeners himself has high status he might have not remembered the remarks of a high status speakers as more assertive. In other words conversation between high status speaker and a low status addressee is heard by a person who also occupies high status, his conversation memory might have been affected in different way i.e. he might have not recalled, the assertive and non assertive remarks as more assertive since social cognitions of both speaker and listener play a crucial role in the memorization of conversational remarks. We therefore hypothesize that subjects himself having high status will remember assertive remarks of high status speaker as non assertive just contrary to the findings obtained by Holtgraves, Socall and Srull. The present study is designed to test this hypothesis.

An important consideration that motivated us to undertake this proposed research is the existence of substantial body of evidence demonstrating the mood biasing effect in memory. Research on the relation between emotional state and cognitive processes has burgeoned in the past ten years. Although this area of research has a much earlier history of activity. Beginning in the mid-1970s, this research area began to accelerate to the point where it has now become a major area of activity. A number of articles, books, and edited volumes now attested to the validity of this research area (e.g. Clark & Fiske, 1982; Clark & Isen, 1982; Fiedler & Forgas, 1988; Isen, 1984) and a new journal appeared in 1987, Cognition And Emotion, which is devoted entirely and full
range of cognitive process typically studied by Psychologists.

While studying the relation between different emotional states and memory subjects are induced to feel happy or sad while learning list of words, recall those lists better if they are induced to be in the same mood at the time of recall than if they are induced in a different mood, an effect usually called mood dependent retrieval (Bower et al, 1978; Bartlet et al, 1982; Schare et al, 1984). The mood dependent retrieval effect is also demonstrated by the tendency for subjects in an induced mood to better or more quickly recall previous life experiences whose emotional association are consistent with that induced mood (Teasdale & Fogarty 1979; Taylor 1981; Natale & Hantans, 1982; Synder & White, 1982).

Recently S.R. Scmidt (1994) studied memory for humorous and non humorous version of sentences. Subjects recall performance affected by their emotional states. Those were in elated mood remembered humorous sentences more than non humorous version of sentences. But those who were in depressed mood recall non humorous version of sentences than humorous version of sentences.

The above mentioned well established finding make it crystal clear that emotional mood of the subjects is a potent determine of memory and hence, conversation memory is not an exception. Thus higher recall of the assertive version of the remarks as assertive as demonstrated by Holtgrave Socall & Srull, may not only be explained in terms of
speaker's status (Social cognition of the Speaker) but may also be explained in terms of the emotional state of the listener. It is therefore reasonable to assume (in the light of mood dependent effect in memory) that if the listener is in a state of elated mood, he may not recall assertive versions more than non-assertive versions of the remarks even under high status speaker condition. Similarly if a listener is in a state of depressed mood he may not recall non-assertive version more as compared to assertive versions of the remarks even under low status speaker condition. Accordingly, it is also highly reasonable to assume that subject in elated mood may not recognize non-assertive version of the remarks as assertive even under high status speaker condition. Similarly subjects in depressed mood may not recognize assertive version of the remarks as non-assertive even under low status speaker condition. The present study is designed to test these assumptions. The findings of the present study will not only open a new area of research in memory but will also provide significant information about the development of the inter-personal relations and will highlight the process of impression formation.

Therefore, conversation memory is important in terms of knowledge representation and on-line Processing. For example, memory for prior conversations provides one with a store of information that may be drawn on for the generation and interpretation of remarks in a current conversation. Similarly, when the purpose of a communication is to have
some effect on listener's future actions, what the listeners remember from the conversation will determine the success of the communication. Thus if conversation memory is biased or incomplete in some manner, both future actions and interactions will be affected.

Finally having all the above described assumption in mind; and making a critical analysis of Holtgrave, Socall and Srull study regarding conversation memory and its limitations; we have formulated the problem of the present research i.e. "Conversation memory as function of listener's emotional mood, status, version of conversation and speakers's status."

**GENERAL PLAN OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH:** The present study is designed to investigate the influence of listener's emotional mood, status, version of conversation and speaker's status on conversation memory. A 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 factorial designed of experiment in which two socio-economic variables (Listener's socio-economic status, speaker's socio-economic status), one personality variable (emotional mood of the listener) and one task variable (version of the conversation remarks) each varying in two ways were used. The two values of socio-economic status were (a) high socio-economic status (b) low socio-economic status; for both speaker as well as for listener. The two values of emotional mood were (a) elated mood (b) depressed mood; and two value of version of conversation of remarks were assertive and non-assertive. The present research is dealing with one dependent variable
and four independent variables and each independent variable each varied at two levels. A brief description of these variables are as follows.

**Conversation Memory**: As it has been earlier defined that conversation memory is the ability of an individual to recall or recognize the contents of the conversation. In present experiment subject’s recall scores of the target items of fictional conversation was an index of conversation memory.

**Speaker’s Status**: This independent variable is manipulated by instructing the subjects (listeners) that speakers participating in the fictional conversation either having high socio-economic status (executives of a company) or having low socio-economic status (low level employee of a company).

**Listener’s Status**: On the basis of scores obtained on socio-economic status scale [SESS], subjects were divided into two categories; subjects having high socio-economic status in one category and subjects having low socio-economic status [SES] in other category.

**Listener’s emotional mood**: Before reading the fictional conversation subject mood were manipulated (elated or depressed) through Modified Velton Mood Induction Technique (MVMIT).

**Version of Conversation**: This independent variable is manipulated by changing the assertiveness of the target remarks of the fictional conversation. Though the fictional conversation was similar in all respect except one; fictional conversation having assertive remarks and fictional conversation having non-assertive remarks.
So there were sixteen groups of subjects each group consists of twenty five subjects. The sixteen groups of subjects were given different experimental treatment. These sixteen groups are as follows:

Group I - Speaker's high SES, Listener's high SES+ elated mood and assertive version.

Group II - Speaker's high SES, Listener's high SES+ elated mood and non-assertive version.

Group III - Speaker's high SES, Listener's high SES+ depressed mood and assertive version.

Group IV - Speaker's high SES, Listener's high SES+ depressed mood and non-assertive version.

Group V - Speaker's high SES, Listener's low SES+ elated mood and assertive version.

Group VI - Speaker's high SES, Listener's low SES+ elated mood and non-assertive version.

Group VII - Speaker's high SES, Listener's low SES+ depressed mood and assertive version.

Group VIII - Speaker's high SES, Listener's low SES+ depressed mood and non-assertive version.

Group IX - Speaker's low SES, Listener's high SES+ elated mood and assertive version.

Group X - Speaker's low SES, Listener's high SES+ elated mood and non-assertive version.

Group XI - Speaker's low SES, Listener's high SES+ depressed mood and assertive version.
Group XII- Speaker's low SES, Listener's high SES+ depressed mood and non-assertive version.
Group XIII- Speaker's low SES, Listener's low SES+ elated mood and assertive version.
Group XIV- Speaker's low SES, Listener's low SES+ elated mood and non-assertive version.
Group XV- Speaker's low SES, Listener's low SES+ depressed mood and assertive version.
Group XVI- Speaker's low SES, Listener's low SES+ depressed mood and non-assertive version.

In this way each group was asked to read a fictional conversation and experimental treatment were given to each group according to the design of the experiment. Later on subjects of each group was tested for conversation memory by recall method. The data were tabulated group wise and were analysed by means of four ways analysis of variance to draw necessary inferences.