Are Recent Memories and Those from the Reminiscence Bump Anchors for the Overall Subjective Quality of Autobiographical Memories?

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Abstract

This study explores the differences between the phenomenology of memories from early adulthood and those from the last year and whether memories from these two periods predict the general sense of remembering as a function of age. In this study, 291 healthy participants aged from 31 to 80 years old assessed the phenomenology of their autobiographical memories through seven factors (vividness, coherence, reliving, rehearsal, scene, visual imagery, and life story relevance) in an online questionnaire, first in a general way and then for the two periods of interest (i.e., from 18 to 30 years old and the last year). Global Linear Models revealed that the phenomenology of recent memories is higher than the phenomenology of memories from 18 to 30 years of age. However, individuals preferentially refer to these remote memories rather than recent ones to determine the overall phenomenology of their autobiographical memories.

Keywords: autobiographical memory; phenomenology; recollective experience; subjective remembering; self-assessment memory questionnaire

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The retrieval of autobiographical memories (i.e., memories of events from one's personal history) is accompanied by a phenomenological experience of recollection (Rubin et al., 2003; Tulving, 1985), which is linked to memory satisfaction but also more generally to psychological well-being (Luchetti & Sutin, 2016; Werner-Seidler & Moulds, 2011). According to Berntsen et al. (2019), this subjective experience can refer to seven different dimensions (i.e., *vividness*, *narrative coherence*, *reliving*, *rehearsal*, *visual imagery*, *scene*, and *life story relevance*) that can be explored through the Autobiographical Recollection Test (ART; examples of items for each factor are presented in Table 1).

Interestingly, these subjective experiences of remembering appear to be relatively independent of objective memory performance (i.e., the quantity or specificity of details retrieved), especially in aging. Indeed, when asked to recall specific past events occurring at a particular period of life, older adults tend to retrieve less specific episodic details (e.g., Levine et al., 2002; Piolino et al., 2006), whereas their phenomenological judgments are frequently of similar or higher magnitude than those of younger adults (Comblain et al., 2005; Rubin & Berntsen, 2009). Unfortunately, most studies tend to focus only on some specific facets of subjective recollection (most frequently vividness and reliving) for specific autobiographical events. Nevertheless, it has recently been observed that the seven phenomenological dimensions of the ART also remain stable with age when people have to assess how well they think they remember their personal past in general – that is, when they do not focus on specific events or memories from a specific period of time (Billet et al., 2023). Exploring the phenomenology of autobiographical memories in such a general way raises the question of whether individuals are

referring to memories from a specific period of life when they assess the overall subjective quality of their autobiographical memories.

Indeed, autobiographical memories from different periods of life are not all equally accessible. Explorations of the distribution of autobiographical memories across the lifespan have revealed a recency effect and a reminiscence bump, which refer respectively to the greater accessibility of the most recent memories and of those from adolescence and early adulthood (Conway, 2005). The reminiscence bump covered the period between about 10 and 30 years old across studies, depending on the method employed for activating memories (for reviews, see Koppel & Berntsen, 2015; Munawar et al., 2018). It also depends on the type of memories recalled. For example, most memories retrieved from the period between 10 and 19 years old seem to be of public events, whereas the peak of personal memories concerns events experienced between 20 and 29 (Holmes & Conway, 1999). A systematic review also showed that, when individuals are asked to recall their most important autobiographical memories, the bump falls between the ages of 16 and 30 (Munawar et al., 2018). Therefore, the most distinct personal memories seem to be formed in early adulthood rather than during adolescence. This enhanced memory for this period can be explained by several factors, such as the occurrence of many novel, self-defining, and culturally normative important experiences at a time when cognitive abilities are at their peak (Koppel & Berntsen, 2015). Concerning the recency effect, it can be explained by increased frequency of recent rehearsals and reduced accumulation of interfering events, or simply by normal forgetting (Janssen et al., 2011; Svoboda & Levine, 2009). In addition to being easily accessible, memories from early adulthood and very recent memories have stronger phenomenological qualities, such as vividness or coherence (Fitzgerald, 1988; Sutin & Robins, 2007).

Given these particular qualities of recent memories and those from the reminiscence bump, they may serve as anchor points for determining the overall phenomenology of autobiographical memories, in the sense that individuals may rely more on these more accessible and highly salient memories when making their general subjective judgment. However, age-related differences may be observed. Indeed, individuals' age seems to have a differential influence on the phenomenology attributed to memories for these two periods. For example, Piolino et al. (2006) showed that older adults over 70 had a greater sense of reliving for remote personal events than for the most recent ones, a pattern that was not observed in younger adults. If older people use remote memories such as those from the reminiscence bump as an anchor point to determine the overall phenomenology of their autobiographical memories, this could explain why their subjective memory judgments remain high, even though their objective memory performance declines.

In this study, we first explored whether there were age-related differences in the phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump and those from the last year for the seven dimensions of the ART (Berntsen et al., 2019). Age was used as a continuous variable to explore the lifetime changes in subjective memory judgments. More specifically, we expected that the phenomenology of recent memories would be higher than the phenomenology of more distant memories for younger people. By contrast, as Piolino et al. (2006) observed, we expected that older people would attribute stronger phenomenological characteristics to remote memories than to recent ones. We then addressed the main objective of this study, which was to document which period of life (i.e., early adulthood vs. last year) best predicts the general sense of remembering as a function of age. In line with the preceding hypothesis and given the absence of an age effect observed on overall phenomenological judgments, we postulated that, with advancing age, participants would rely less on recent memories and more on remote ones. In

addition to improving our understanding of the development of subjective remembering throughout adulthood, these data could be valuable for understanding which period of life individuals are referring to when they fill in autobiographical memory questionnaires.

Methods

Participants

The sample comprised 291 healthy individuals aged from 31 to 80 years old (175 females; M_{age} = 55.68, *SD* = 13.29; *IQR* = 21). Although age was treated as a continuous variable in the analyses, here is an overview of the number of subjects by 10-year bins: 31-40 years (*n* = 39), 41-50 years (*n* = 79), 51-60 years (*n* = 70), 61-70 years (*n* = 41), 71-80 years (*n* = 62). Their mean years of education were 15.32 (*SD* = 3.01). They had to be French speakers, have no psychological or neurological history for the past 10 years, provide informed consent, and answer all the questions of the online survey. They had to be at least 31 years of age to ensure that memories from the reminiscence bump and those from the past year did not overlap. The survey was set online and shared on social networks for a 6-month period during which 226 participants completed it. An additional 65 participants completed this questionnaire as a part of a separate online study and were included in the present analyses. A sensitivity analysis revealed that this sample size could highlight very small effect sizes (f^2 =.02) in linear multiple regression analyses with three predictors (i.e., age, phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump, and phenomenology of memories from last year), with a statistical power of .80 and an alpha level of .05.

Procedure and Measures

The study was approved by the local ethics committee (reference number: 2223-036). Participants had to complete an online questionnaire in a single session lasting approximately 10 minutes through the survey system set up by the faculty of Psychology at the University of Liège.

No compensation was offered for their participation in the study. They were first invited to read and accept the consent form online. Then, they had to answer a few sociodemographic questions concerning their age, gender, level of education, and professional status.

Exploration of the Overall Phenomenology of Autobiographical Memories

Participants were then invited to complete the 21 items of the French version of the ART (Billet et al., 2023) to explore the overall phenomenology of their autobiographical memories through the seven factors of this questionnaire (vividness, coherence, reliving, rehearsal, scene, visual details, and life story relevance). This French version showed good psychometric properties, with good internal consistency (.94) and test-retest reliability (.83). In this original form, participants were invited to respond to the items by reflecting on how they remembered events from their past, without specifying a precise period. The instructions only say "*Please think about how you remember events from your past*" when answering the questions. They had to rate the degree to which they agreed with each of the 21 items on a 7-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Because there are three items per factor, the general feeling of remembering for each of the seven factors corresponds to the mean of these three items.

Exploration of the Phenomenology of Memories from the Reminiscence Bump and the Last Year

After assessing the overall phenomenology of their autobiographical memories, participants had to answer questions about how they remember memories from specific life periods. These questions were always presented after the general assessment to prevent any possible influence on it. Although only the items exploring the phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump and those from the last year were of interest in the present study, questions were also asked about other life periods (i.e., childhood from 0 to 17 years, adulthood over 30, and the last 10 years). We did not explore the results for these other periods since not all

participants were interviewed for all periods, depending on their age. For example, a 35-year-old participant had experienced fewer life periods than a 70-year-old participant and therefore answered fewer questions. In addition, we ensured that there was no overlap between the life periods assessed (for example, a 35-year-old participant was not asked about their memories of the last 10 years, as this would have overlapped with their memories from the bump). Moreover, inclusion of these additional periods of life had the advantage of preventing participants from identifying which specific periods we were interested in. For half of the participants, the life periods were questioned in chronological order, whereas for the other half, it was counterbalanced in reverse order. The temporal location of the reminiscence bump was defined as from 18 to 30 years of age in this study because, in many studies, the peak of important personal memories begins at 16 or 20 years old and ends at 29 or 30 years old (Munawar et al., 2018). To avoid making the questionnaire too long or redundant, participants answered only seven questions – one for each factor of the ART – for each life period. These seven items were the ones that loaded the most on each factor of the general questionnaire (Billet et al., 2023; see Table 1 for the complete items). For memories from 18 to 30 years, the instruction was "*Please think about how you remember the events you experienced between the ages of 18 and 30*." For memories from the last year, the instruction was "*Please think about how you remember the events you have experienced this year, that is, over the last 12 months*." As in the first part of the questionnaire, participants had to rate the degree to which they agreed with each of the items on a 7-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree).

--- Insert Table 1 ---

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked a final explicit question regarding the period of life they typically refer to when evaluating the subjective quality of their memories in general ("*When you are asked to assess the quality of your memories in general, without*

specifying a particular period of time, which period do you think of?"). Participants could select multiple responses from the following options: childhood (0-12 years), adolescence (12-18 years), early adulthood (18-30 years), adulthood (30-50 years), the last ten years, and the last year.

Analysis Plan

All analyses were performed with Jamovi (The jamovi project, 2025). Before running the analyses addressing our main question, we generated descriptive statistics of participants' phenomenology ratings for the different periods of interest (i.e., in general, 18-30 years, and last year). After that, correlational analyses were conducted to determine whether we replicated the absence of age-related decline in the overall phenomenology of memories. Then, we performed General Linear Models (GLMs) to explore whether the phenomenology assessed with the seven dimensions of the ART differed depending on participants' age and the periods of life for which memories were investigated (i.e., 18–30 years old vs. last year). Seven separate analyses were carried out for each factor of the ART. These phenomenological judgments for the two specific periods of interest were used as dependent variables and the period of life and participants' age as categorical and metric predictors, respectively. We also conducted repeated-measures ANOVAs, with the period/level of specificity as the independent variable (with three modalities: general, bump period, and last year) and the different judgements (vividness, coherence, etc.) as dependent variables. We explored the post-hoc pairwise comparisons to ensure that participants could differentiate their overall phenomenological ratings from those for these specific life periods.

After these exploratory analyses, seven other GLMs were performed to address our main question: whether the overall phenomenological judgments were predicted by the phenomenology of memories from the two specific periods of life and whether these effects were

moderated by age. In each analysis, the overall rating – the mean of the 3 items per factor – was used as the dependent variable. Age, the phenomenology of memories from the 18- to 30-year life period, and the phenomenology of memories from the last year were added as predictors. The latter two were converted into *z*-scores before being used in the analyses. Since our aim was to explore the potential moderator effect of age, the results of the interactions between age and the two specific periods of life were directly analyzed via simple slope analyses. Considering the high number of analyses, the significance level ($p < .05$) was corrected using the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995). Separate corrections were applied for our main vs. exploratory analyses.

Finally, responses to the explicit question regarding the time period participants typically refer to when evaluating the subjective quality of their memories in general were examined descriptively.

Results

Descriptive statistics for the overall phenomenological judgments and those of the two periods of interest (i.e., 18-30 years and the last year) were provided in Table 2.

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Correlations Between Age and the Overall Phenomenology of Autobiographical Memories

The results of the correlational analyses between the age of participants and the overall phenomenology of autobiographical memories explored with the original ART are presented in Table 3. Spearman correlations were used as the Shapiro–Wilk tests revealed a departure from normality for several variables. After the Benjamini-Hochberg correction, α was set at $p = .01$.

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These first analyses highlighted a significant positive correlation between age and the vividness judgments, but no association was found with all the other factors exploring the overall phenomenology of autobiographical memories.

Effects of Age and Period of Life on the Phenomenology of Autobiographical Memories

Table 4 presents the results of the GLMs exploring whether the seven phenomenological dimensions of the ART for the specific periods of life depended on participants' age and the period of life that was investigated (i.e., 18–30 years old vs. last year).

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The results revealed a significant effect of the period of life on all the phenomenological factors, except life story relevance. For the other six factors, the phenomenology of memories from the last year appeared significantly higher than the phenomenology of memories from 18 to 30 years old. No significant effects of age or interaction between age and life period were observed (α was still set at $p = .01$ after the Benjamini-Hochberg correction). The significant effect of the period, coupled with the absence of interaction with age, certifies that even younger participants, for whom the bump period and the last year are very close, discriminate the phenomenology of their memories from these two periods. To confirm this latter affirmation, Wilcoxon rank tests for repeated measures were performed only on subjects aged from 31 to 40 ($n = 39$). They revealed significant differences for all variables (all $p_s < .014$), demonstrating that these youngest subjects of the sample distinguish effectively between their memories of the past year and those of the bump. These results are presented in supplementary material (Table S3).

Moreover, post-hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted following repeated measures ANOVAs to explore whether participants' overall phenomenology judgments also significantly differed from their judgments for the two specific periods. These analyses are presented in supplementary materials (Table S1). They revealed that all the overall subjective judgments were significantly lower than those about memories from the last year, except for the life story factor – for which the difference was not significant. Overall judgments were also significantly lower than those for the 18-30 years period on the vividness, coherence, visual, and life story factors. These results demonstrate that participants are able to distinguish their general judgements from those for specific periods.

Relations Between the Phenomenology of Memories from Specific Periods of Life, Overall Phenomenology, and the Moderating Effect of Age

Table 5 presents the results of the GLMs exploring the moderating role of age on the relation between the phenomenology of memories from the 18- to 30-year life period and the overall phenomenology. For these main analyses, α was set at $p = .04$ after the Benjamini-Hochberg correction.

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These analyses revealed that the overall phenomenology of memories is predicted by the phenomenology of memories from the 18- to 30-year life period at all ages and for all factors.

Table 6 presents the results of the GLMs exploring the relations between the phenomenology of memories from the last year, overall phenomenology, and the moderating effect of age.

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These results revealed that participants' general judgments concerning their rehearsal tendency were predicted by their memories from the last year across all ages. However, their general judgments of vividness, coherence, reliving, scene, and visual details were predicted by their memories from the last year only with increasing age. η^2 values revealed almost exclusively small effect sizes for all the analyses on the last year period (η^2 values varying from <.01 to .05), contrary to the analyses on the 18- to 30-year life period, which exhibited much higher effect sizes (η^2 values from .07 to .25).

Finally, Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics of participants' answers to the explicit question ("*When you are asked to assess the quality of your memories in general, without specifying a particular period of time, which period do you think of?*"), both for all participants together and by 10-years bins.

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When looking at all the participants, percentages indicate that the majority of them (62.4%) based their general ratings on memories from the bump period. Memories from other periods, such as adolescence and adulthood, are also often reported, but to a lesser extent. When looking at participants' responses according to their age, we observe that the adulthood period was also more frequently reported. Interestingly, from a general perspective, memories from the last year appeared to be those on which the fewest participants reported basing their decisions.

Discussion

This study explored the differences between the phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump and those from the last year, and their evolution with age. Because differences were expected between the phenomenology of memories for these two periods of life,

we wanted to explore which of the two periods was best related to the general sense of remembering and the potential moderator effect of age on these relations. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenological experience of remembering the past, we used the ART questionnaire, which explores seven factors: vividness, narrative coherence, reliving, rehearsal, visual imagery, scene, and life-story relevance (Berntsen et al., 2019).

First of all, this study replicated the absence of an age-related decline in the phenomenological characteristics of autobiographical memories. Although a decrease in the retrieval of specific episodic details with advancing age has been widely reported (e.g., Levine et al., 2002), many studies have shown that the subjective quality of personal memories remains stable or even increases as people get older (Comblain et al., 2005; Folville et al., 2021; Luchetti & Sutin, 2018), which is consistent with the positive correlation observed in this study between age and vividness judgments. This phenomenon has mainly been demonstrated for specific past events, but this study confirms that it also seems to be the case for the subjective overall assessment of autobiographical memory using the ART (Billet et al., 2023). In addition, we did not observe any age effect on the phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump and from the last year for all the factors explored.

We also explored whether significant differences exist between the phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump and those from the last year. Our results revealed that subjective quality was higher for memories from last year than for those from the reminiscence bump. This recency effect is in line with what had previously been observed (Luchetti & Sutin, 2018; Sutin & Robins, 2007) and could have different explanations. Recent memories could objectively contain more details simply because less time has elapsed since the events occurred, but this could also reflect a general belief according to which individuals think that they should remember recent events better than earlier ones. These two explanations are not mutually

exclusive and can jointly contribute to higher phenomenological judgements. The absence of age effect could indicate that either of these processes remain stable across the lifespan or there may be a shift in the process involved with age (e.g., younger adults would rely more on the amount of detail, while older adults would rely more on their beliefs). However, we did not find this recency effect on the life story relevance factor. This suggests that memories from the reminiscence bump period are as important as recent ones for life history. This makes sense given that many crucial experiences for the formation of identity and stable self-esteem take place during this period (Conway, 2005).

Beyond the differences in the phenomenology associated with the memories from the two life periods, many of these specific ratings were also distinct from general memory judgements. This result is consistent with findings of Aytürk et al. (2024) who showed that general memory judgments account for only 15% of the variance of specific memory ratings. Together, these results seem to confirm that memory judgments differ according to the memories or the specificity level under investigation.

After this examination, we addressed our main question: whether individuals refer to recent memories or those from the reminiscence bump to determine the overall subjective quality of their autobiographical memories. The results revealed that the phenomenology of memories from the reminiscence bump predicted the general phenomenology for all factors regardless of the participants' age.

When we explored whether memories from the last year also predicted the overall phenomenology, we found age-related differences. Among the youngest participants, only the rehearsal factor predicted general judgments. However, as age increased, the vividness, coherence, reliving, scene reconstruction, and visual detail of recent memories also appear to serve as a reference point for evaluating the phenomenology of memories in general. One

possible explanation is that, with advancing age, individuals' conception of their memory may become less stable and more context-dependent. Since changes in memory functioning can be observed with age, older adults may rely more on the phenomenological qualities of their recent memories when forming general evaluations compared to younger adults. The latter may hold a more stable conception of their memory abilities, reducing the extent to which recent experiences inform their overall judgments. Concerning the life story factor, memories from the last year did not predict the general life story relevance at any age. Only memories from the bump predicted the broader life story relevance of autobiographical memories, suggesting that recent memories require time before being considered as an integral part of one's life narrative.

Interestingly, the predictive effects of memories from the last year on the overall phenomenology were much smaller than those of memories from the bump. Therefore, the results from our study suggest that individuals preferentially refer to memories from the reminiscence bump rather than recent ones to determine the overall phenomenology of their autobiographical memories, even if the phenomenology of those remote memories is not as strong as that of recent ones. This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the participants' responses to the explicit question about the period to which they refer for their general judgments. The vast majority responded that they referred to the memories from the bump period, while a minority responded that they relied on their memories of the past year. We made sure that the strongest associations of the ratings from the bump period with ratings in general were not explained by the longer time frame of the period of the bump (12 years) compared to the last year period (only 1 year). More specifically, we conducted the same GLM analyses by replacing the judgments for the last year time period with those for the last 10 years, and we obtained the same results (η^2 values varying from <.01 to .05 for the last 10 years period, compared to .07 to .25 for the bump period). This analysis is presented in the supplementary material (Table S2). Moreover, the relationship

between judgments for the bump period and general judgments cannot be explained by a common process that would be at work in making more global judgments (over large periods), since post-hoc pairwise comparisons following repeated measures ANOVAs confirmed the presence of significant differences between general judgments and those made over the specific 18-30 period (see Table S1). These findings are in line with what is observed when individuals have to generate their most important memories spontaneously: the recency effect is considerably attenuated or even absent, and only the reminiscence bump remains (Koppel & Berntsen, 2015). According to the life script account, the enhanced memory for events from late adolescence and early adulthood is explained by the occurrence of many important and culturally normative events during this period (Berntsen & Rubin, 2004). Recent events are not expected to have the same distinctiveness. As a result, we are less likely to refer to recent memories when thinking about the past in general. At a theoretical level, our findings are in line with the Multiple Trace Theory, whereby each reactivation of a memory creates a new memory trace in the hippocampal complex (Nadel et al., 2000; Nadel & Moscovitch, 1997). This leads to a greater number or more widely distributed traces for remote than for recent memories, making them more easily accessible. This may explain why individuals preferentially refer to remote memories when asked to assess their overall phenomenology at all ages, but even more so as they get older.

Finally, the fact that individuals of all ages preferentially base their overall subjective memory judgments on memories from the same distinctive period (i.e., early adulthood) may explain why overall phenomenological judgments remain stable with advancing age. However, this observation does not really explain the lack of an age effect on the phenomenological judgments for specific memories. It would be interesting to explore whether these specific phenomenological judgments depend exclusively on online monitoring of the quality of those specific memories, or whether they are also influenced by more general beliefs about the

functioning of one's personal memory. This would help us to determine whether the lack of age effect on specific phenomenological judgments is explained by metacognitive changes with age or by long-standing beliefs. On a very practical note, our results also suggest that the instructions of the ART should be adapted if we are interested in assessing the subjective quality of autobiographical memories from a more current period, for example if the aim is to explore the change since neurological damage, in both research and clinical settings.

Concerning the limitations of this study, we can first mention that we had little control over compliance with the inclusion criteria due to the online nature of the study. For example, while the absence of any psychological or neurological history was required to participate in this study, the presence of potential symptoms of anxiety and/or depression was not assessed via a validated questionnaire but determined based on participants' self-report. As such psychological symptoms have previously been linked to phenomenological memory judgments (Sutin & Gillath, 2009), they should have been more carefully controlled in our analyses. Nevertheless, the proportion of individuals presenting such symptoms was probably limited in the present sample, since it was clearly stated that a history of psychological problems was an exclusion criterion. A second limitation of this study concerns the fact that participants had to make all their subjective judgments for the different periods consecutively. Although there was no overlap between the periods investigated and we counterbalanced the order of the periods, it is still possible that participants' judgments were influenced by their previous responses and thus do not perfectly reflect judgments that would have been made if each period was assessed alone.

Despite these limitations, this study on phenomenological memory judgments sheds new light on how these judgments vary across different periods of life (more specifically, the bump period and the last year). Our results demonstrate that individuals, regardless of their age, adjust their judgments according to the to-be-evaluated time period, but also according to the general or

specific nature of the investigation. In addition, they seem to base their general judgments more on earlier memories than on more recent ones. Taken together, these results underscore the need to adapt the ART instructions depending on the period of interest.

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Tables

Table 1. Items to Assess the Phenomenology of Memories from the Reminiscence Bump and Those from the Last Year

Factors	Items
Vividness	My memories of events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year* are clear, not fuzzy or clouded. (item 15)
Coherence	My memories of events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year* are coherent and connected, not a collection of isolated, disconnected fragments. (item 9)
Reliving	While remembering events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year*, it is as if I am mentally traveling back to the time they occurred. (item 10)
Rehearsal	I often think back to events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year* in my mind and think or talk about them. (item 4)
Scene	In my memories of events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year*, I remember where the actions, objects, and people are located in the events. (item 5)
Visual	While remembering events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year*, I can see with my mind's eye what took place. (item 13)
Life story	My memories of events experienced *from 18 to 30 years of age/this year* are a central part of my life story. (item 7)

Table 2. Descriptive statistics (*mean* (*SD*)) for the Phenomenological Judgments in General and of the Different Time Periods

	Vividness	Coherence	Reliving	Rehearsal	Scene	Visual imagery	Lifestory
Overall	4.84 (1.26)	4.76 (1.26)	4.73 (1.38)	4.59 (1.21)	4.95 (1.21)	5.20 (1.21)	5.38 (1.25)
18-30 years old	5.01 (1.36)	4.94 (1.42)	4.80 (1.56)	4.76 (1.53)	5.02 (1.32)	5.02 (1.36)	5.65 (1.37)
Last year	5.88 (1.25)	5.92 (1.20)	5.56 (1.48)	5.37 (1.47)	5.90 (1.14)	5.84 (1.22)	5.42 (1.54)

Table 3. Spearman Correlations Between Age and the Overall Phenomenology of Autobiographical Memories (*p-value*)

	Overall phenomenology
Vividness	**.19 (.001)**
Coherence	.11 (.05)
Reliving	.08 (.18)
Rehearsal	.08 (.17)
Scene	.02 (.73)
Visual imagery	.09 (.14)
Life story	.03 (.65)

Table 4. Effects of the Period of Life (18–30 Years Old vs. Last Year) and Age on the Phenomenology of Autobiographical Memories for Specific Life Periods

		SE	β	*t*	*p*	η^2
Vividness	**Period**	**.11**	**–.63**	**–8.03**	**<.001**	**.10**
	Age	.05	.08	1.91	.06	.006
	Period*Age	.11	.09	1.10	.27	.002
Coherence	**Period**	**.11**	**–.69**	**–8.97**	**<.001**	**.12**
	Age	.05	.01	.27	.79	<.001
	Period*Age	.11	.07	.85	.40	.001
Reliving	**Period**	**.13**	**–.49**	**–6.03**	**<.001**	**.06**
	Age	.06	.03	.72	.47	.001
	Period*Age	.13	.03	.34	.73	<.001
Rehearsal	**Period**	**.12**	**–.40**	**–4.97**	**<.001**	**.04**
	Age	.06	–.09	–2.35	.02	.01
	Period*Age	.12	–.01	–.16	.87	<.001
Scene	**Period**	**.10**	**–.67**	**–8.66**	**<.001**	**.11**
	Age	.05	–.06	–1.63	.10	.004
	Period*Age	.10	.03	.39	.70	<.001
Visual imagery	**Period**	**.11**	**–.61**	**–7.67**	**<.001**	**.09**
	Age	.05	–.001	–.01	.99	<.001
	Period*Age	.11	.04	.53	.60	<.001
Life story	Period	.12	.16	1.91	.06	.006
	Age	.06	–.03	–.79	.43	.001
	Period*Age	.12	–.11	–1.32	.19	.003

Table 5. Moderating Effect of Age on the Relations Between the Phenomenology of Memories from 18 to 30 Years Old and the Overall Phenomenology

	Mean age –1 SD					Mean age					Mean age +1 SD				
	SE	β	*t*	*p*	η^2	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*	η^2	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*	η^2
Vividness	.09	.44	5.93	**<.001**	.07	.06	.53	10.46	**<.001**	.23	.09	.62	8.99	**<.001**	.17
Coherence	.09	.53	7.20	**<.001**	.10	.06	.57	11.52	**<.001**	.25	.08	.60	9.20	**<.001**	.16
Reliving	.12	.67	7.92	**<.001**	.13	.08	.60	10.48	**<.001**	.23	.11	.53	6.57	**<.001**	.09
Rehearsal	.10	.42	5.28	**<.001**	.07	.07	.42	7.69	**<.001**	.14	.08	.43	6.14	**<.001**	.09
Scene	.10	.55	6.54	**<.001**	.09	.07	.52	9.56	**<.001**	.19	.08	.49	7.14	**<.001**	.11
Visual	.07	.62	8.09	**<.001**	.12	.05	.58	11.21	**<.001**	.24	.06	.54	7.93	**<.001**	.12
Life story	.11	.50	6.18	**<.001**	.09	.07	.53	9.72	**<.001**	.22	.08	.56	8.35	**<.001**	.16

Table 6. Moderating Effect of Age on the Relations Between the Phenomenology of Memories from the Last Year and the Overall Phenomenology

	Mean age –1 SD					Mean age					Mean age +1 SD				
	SE	β	*t*	*p*	η^2	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*	η^2	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*	η^2
Vividness	.09	.12	1.73	.08	.01	.06	.15	2.94	**.004**	.02	.10	.18	2.28	**.02**	.01
Coherence	.09	.12	1.62	.11	.005	.06	.18	3.61	**<.001**	.02	.09	.24	3.44	**<.001**	.02
Reliving	.11	-.13	-1.59	.11	.005	.08	.03	.48	.63	<.001	.12	.19	2.20	**.03**	.01
Rehearsal	.10	.22	2.87	**.004**	.02	.07	.23	4.22	**<.001**	.04	.10	.24	2.95	**.003**	.02
Scene	.10	.16	2.01	.04	.01	.06	.19	3.47	**<.001**	.03	.09	.21	2.84	**.004**	.02
Visual	.07	.07	1.03	.30	.002	.05	.16	3.15	**.002**	.02	.07	.25	3.42	**<.001**	.02
Life story	.08	.14	2.02	.05	.01	.07	.09	1.65	.10	.006	.10	.04	0.51	.61	<.001

Table 7. Percentage of Answers to the Explicit Question

Age	**Childhood (0-12)**	**Adolescence (12-18)**	**Bump (18-30)**	**Adulthood (30-50)**	**Last 10 years**	**Last year**
All	30,97%	48,23%	62,39%	49,12%	36,28%	27,43%
31-40 (*n* = 20)	30%	55%	75%	25%	40%	20%
41-50 (*n* = 57)	29,83%	52,63%	57,90%	35,08%	26,32%	15,79%
51-60 (*n* = 60)	33,33%	48,33%	66,67%	60%	33,33%	26,67%
61-70 (*n* = 33)	33,33%	48,49%	57,58%	54,55%	42,42%	39,39%
71-80 (*n* = 56)	28,57%	41,07%	60,71%	57,14%	44,64%	35,71%