

The Serial Position Effect and Recency Effect

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The aim is to conduct a simple experiment to investigate the effect of semantic questions on working memory recognition, and to test the relevance of recency effect, last five words, given in a list for recognition. This investigation replicates Craik & Tulving's (1975) study, Depth of Processing and the Retention of Words in Episodic Memory. This experiment took place in a secondary school located in the South East region of North America. The method used is a field experiment, which uses an experimental design in a natural setting, and the sampling method used is opportunistic. There were two conditions in the experiment: experimental and control. The control group viewed a slide of 20 words and took a time free test on recognition while the experimental group viewed 20 words with semantic questions that were answered with "yes" or "no". The dependent variable was the recognition of the last five words between the two lists, and the independent variable manipulated was the semantic participants' ability to recognize the last five words on the given presentation compared to simple memorization of the words with no support. The hypothesis predicts that by presenting a list of randomized common nouns to participants with semantic questions, they will recognize 25% of the last five words on the list more than the control group due to a deeper thought process. Results rejected the null hypothesis and showed that the serial position effect and recency effect influence the accuracy of remembering the most recent information presented, and how semantic questions can provoke high level thought processes.

Awards Won:

NC State College of Engineering: Scholarship to attend NC State Engineering Summer Camp