

THE EFFECTS OF SPACED PRACTICE ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: A META-ANALYSIS

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KEY TERMS

Spaced Practice:

It refers to a type of learning that the target learning items are studied repeated with periodic intervention of other activities / items

KEY TERMS

Massed practice:

Massed practice refers to studying the same item continuously without the intervention of other activities / items

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM THIS SECONDARY RESEARCH?

To what extent and in what way spacing can influence second language learning?

WHAT EVIDENCE IS SUMMARISED?

A total number of

37

studies which include

48

experiments were analysed in this meta-analysis

WHAT DOES IT FIND?

- Spacing can be more effective for adults than young learners in the short term, while in the long term, young learners seem to benefit more from spacing
- For adults, the longer the spacing is, the better retention will happen. For young learners, longer and shorter spacing were similarly effective
- Considering the subskills, spacing is more beneficial in learning and retention of L2 vocabulary, in comparison to L2 grammar
- Shorter spacing is more effective for the learning of L2 pronunciation and grammar. On the other hand, longer spacing is more effective for learning L2 grammar and L2 vocabulary
- A single-session spacing can improve the immediate performance of L2 significantly. However, multiple-session spacing leads to better retention
- Spacing can improve retention regardless of feedback provision. However, longer spacing associated with feedback can produce better retention
- In spacing, delayed feedback results in greater retention than immediate feedback
- Spaced practice is proven to be more effective in learning and retention than massed practice

HOW CAN I USE THE FINDINGS IN MY TEACHING?

- Language teachers are highly recommended to incorporate spaced practice in their teaching
- For L2 vocabulary teaching, teachers should revisit target vocabulary periodically, preferably in a single session
- Teachers need to consider learners' age and the target language skill to determine the duration and frequency of spacing
- Teachers can also consider providing feedback in conjunction with spaced practice

