Background and context

PSYC 51.09: Human Memory
Spring 2021

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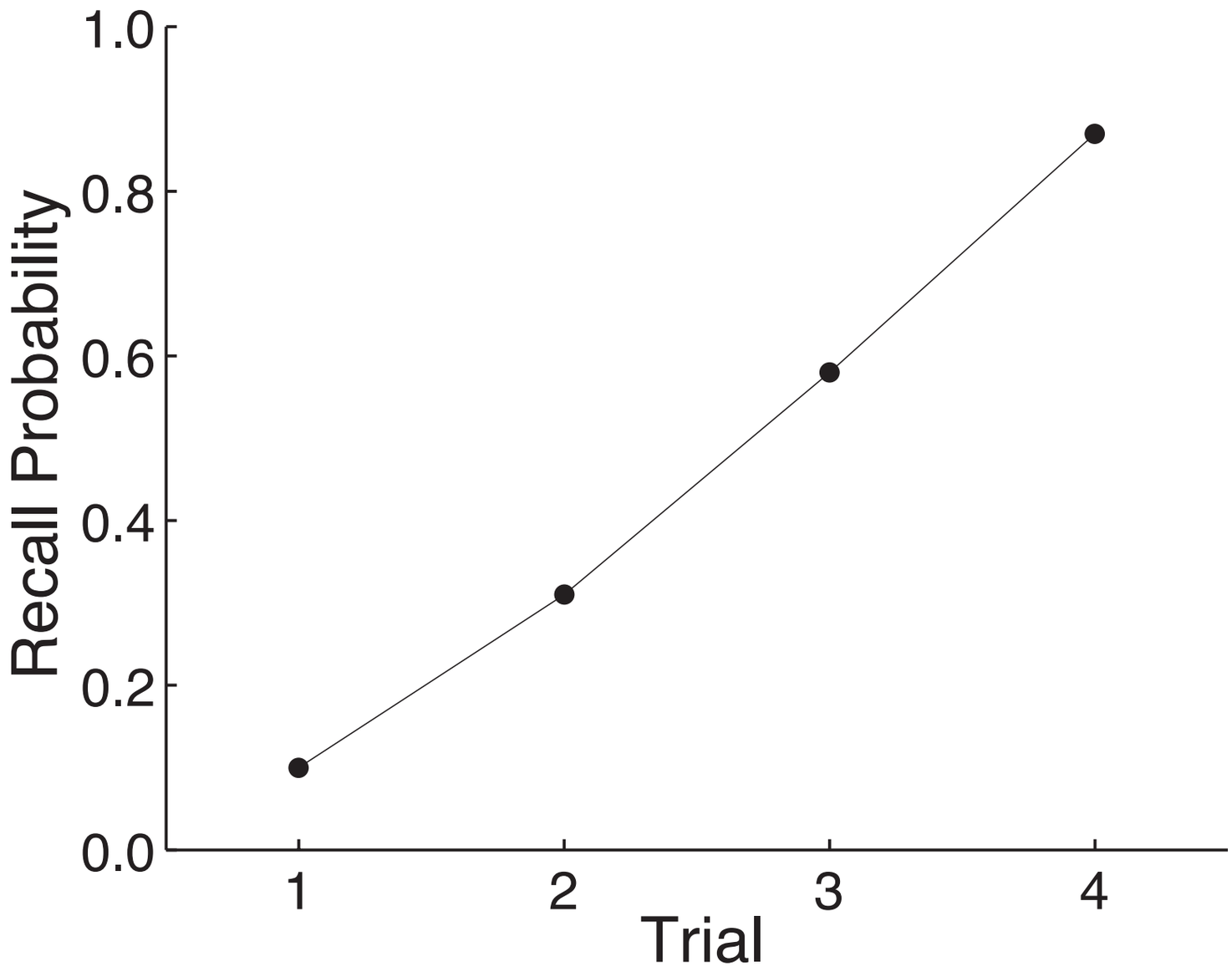
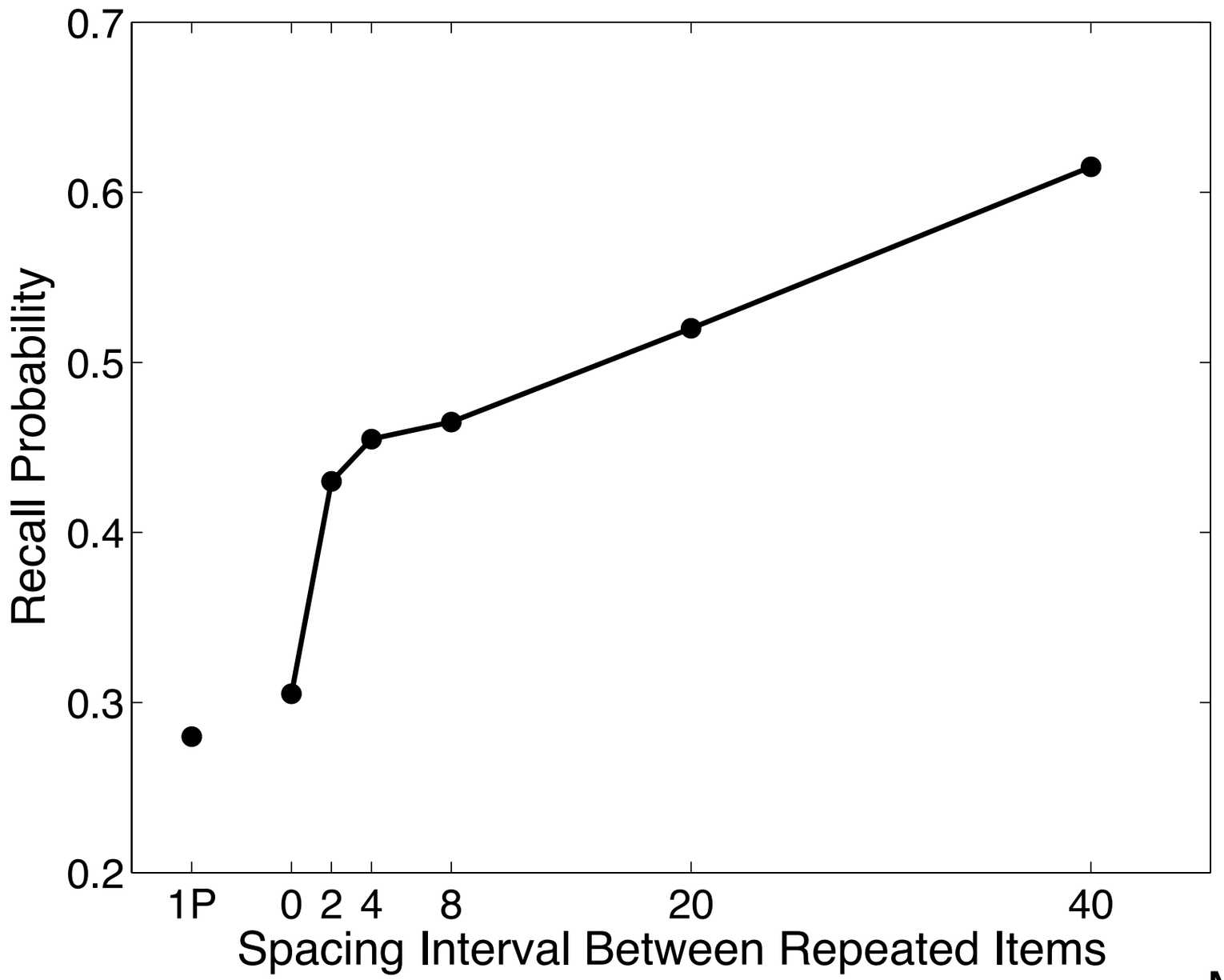
What have you heard about how memory works?

Law of repetition



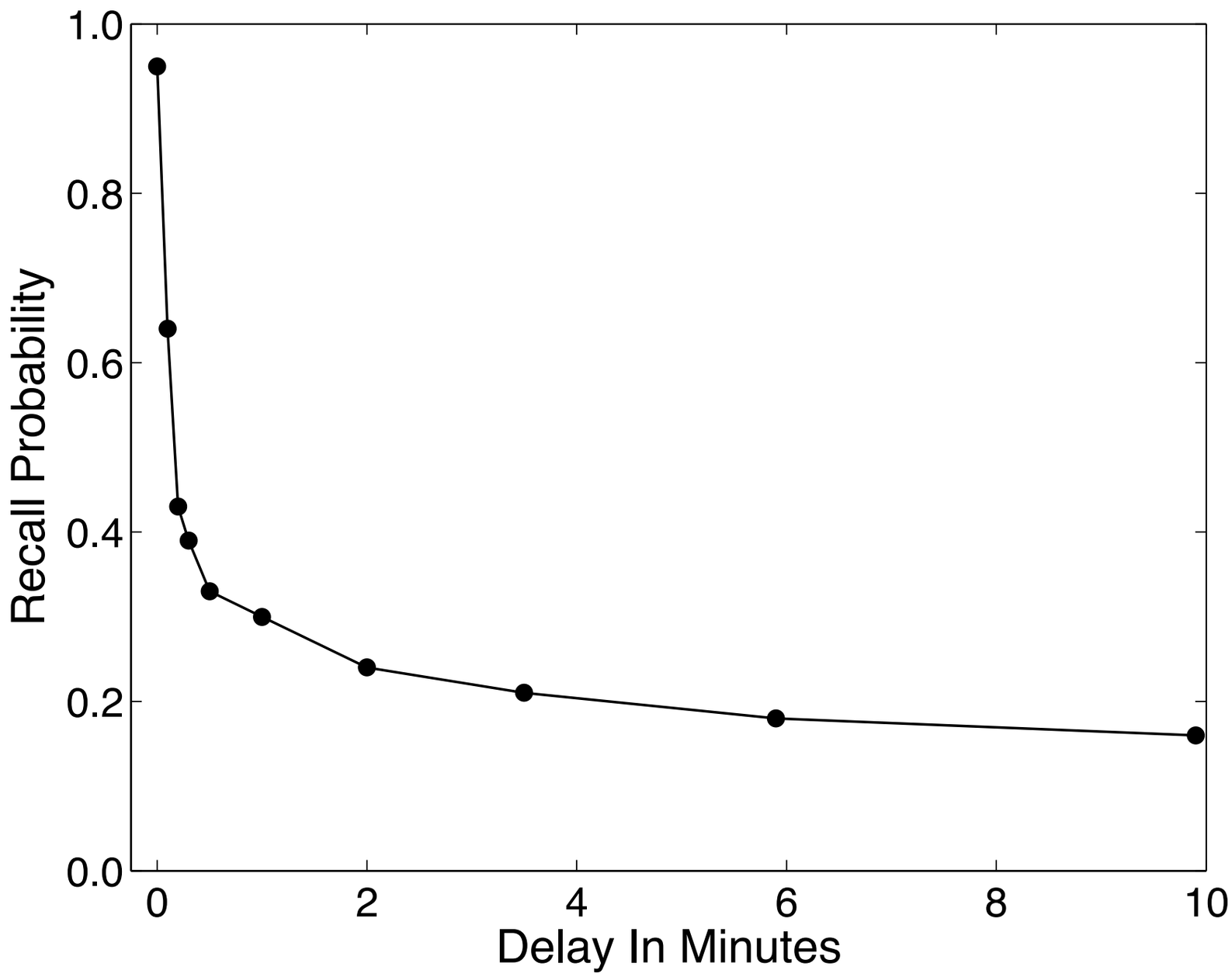
Murdock, 1989

Spaced vs. massed learning



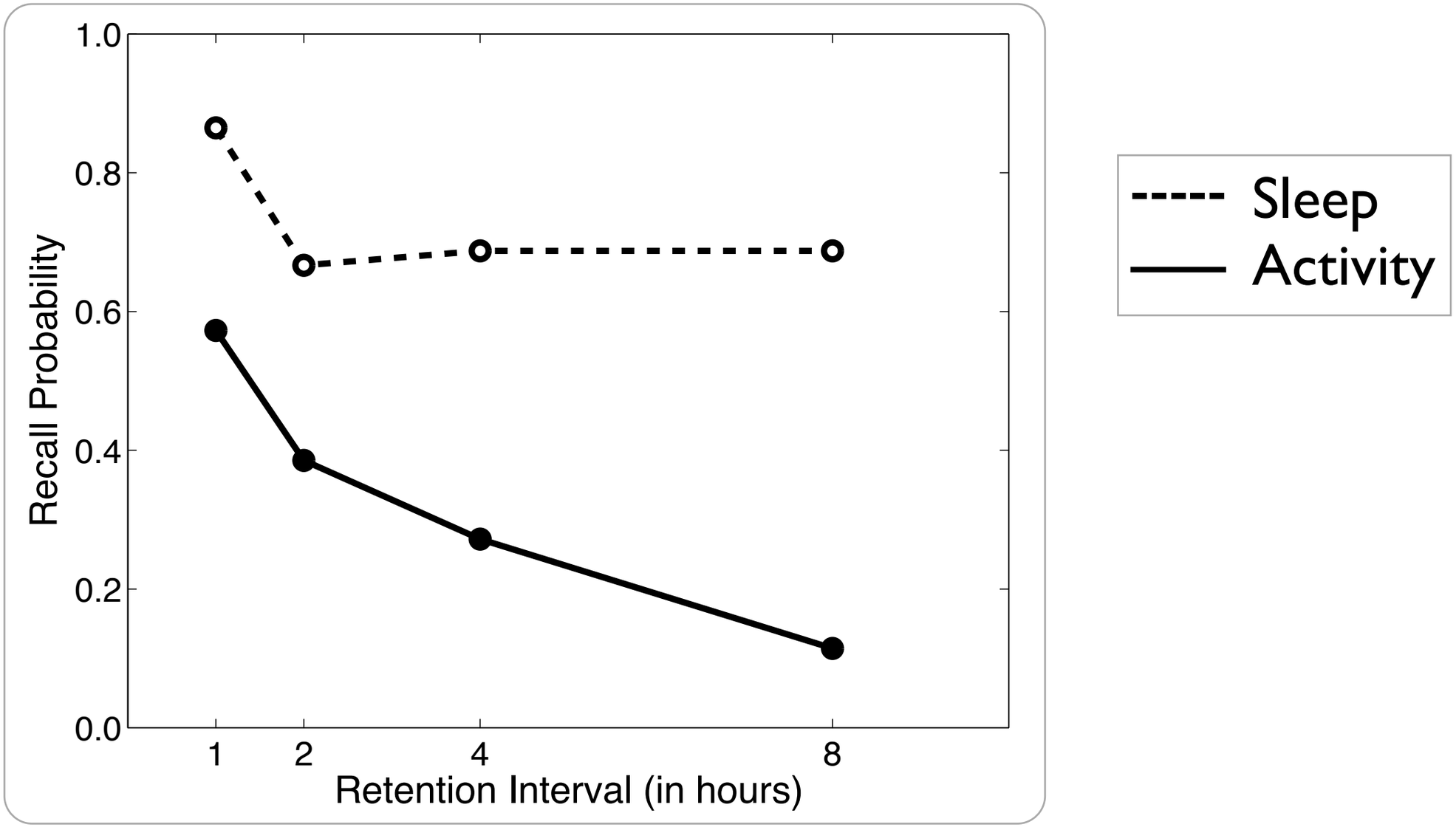
Madigan, 1969

Recency



Rubin et al., 1999

Sleep and forgetting



Jenkins & Dallenbach, 1924

Repetition, spacing, and recency

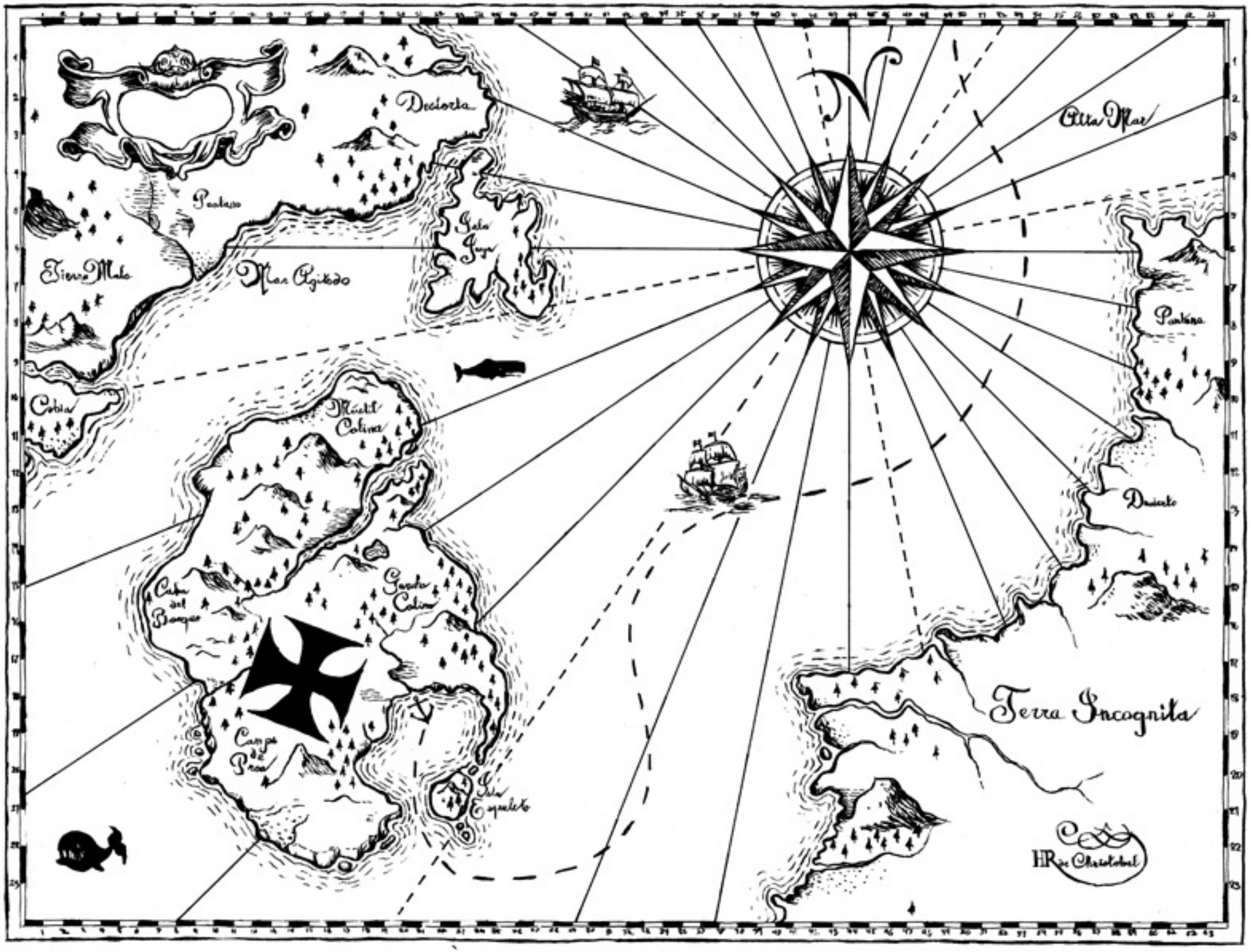
Duolingo

Memrise

Knewton

Rosetta Stone

Context is the set of **external cues** and **internal thoughts** that uniquely defines each moment


Declorda
Alta Mar
Peñasco
Isla Jaqr
Tierra Mala
Mar Agitado
Panáma
Costa
Mucell Colina
Darienlo
Costa del Blanqar
Garcia Colina
Terra Incognita
Campo de Brea
Isla Esquelete
HR de Christobal

Veniţi şi luaţi-le!

Veniţi şi luaţi-le!

Veniţi şi luaţi-le!

Music as context

- Music can evoke a variety of emotional responses
- These responses are often similar across people and cultures (sometimes they're learned)
- Movie directors exploit this to influence how we interpret what's going on in the movie and how we feel about it

JAGUAR XJ

Context in advertising

- If you buy the car, you'll fit in with the image the advertiser is selling
- Contextual cues in the commercial also help us understand what's going on in limited airtime

Why does context matter?

- Context is reflected in the **statistical structure of our experience**
- **Our brains exploit this statistical structure** to help us remember what we need, when we need it
- **This plays a fundamental role in how we remember**

The dynamics of thought

Global pandemic

Ready for a nap

Need coffee

Today's class

Breakfast

Morning run

Wake up

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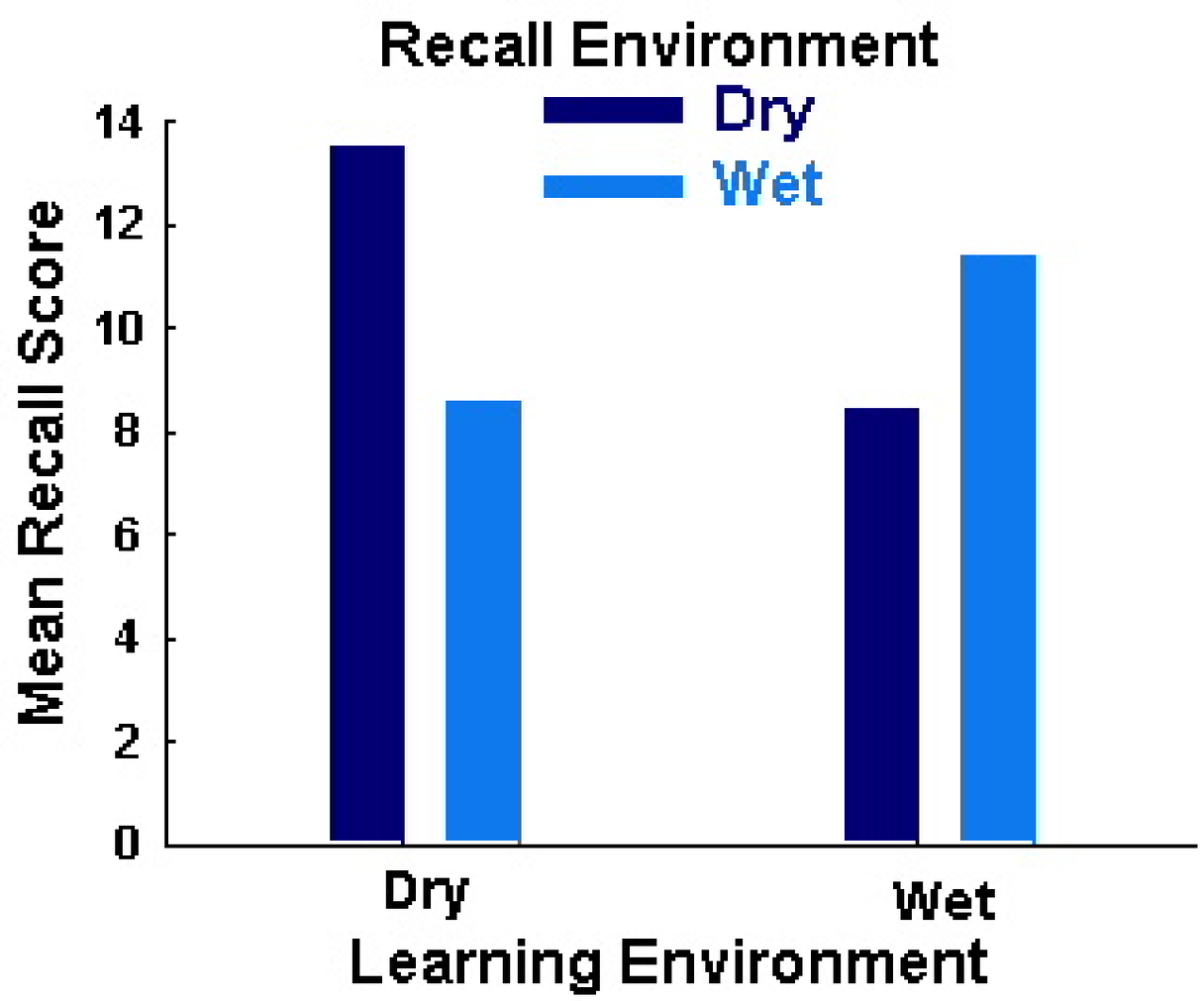
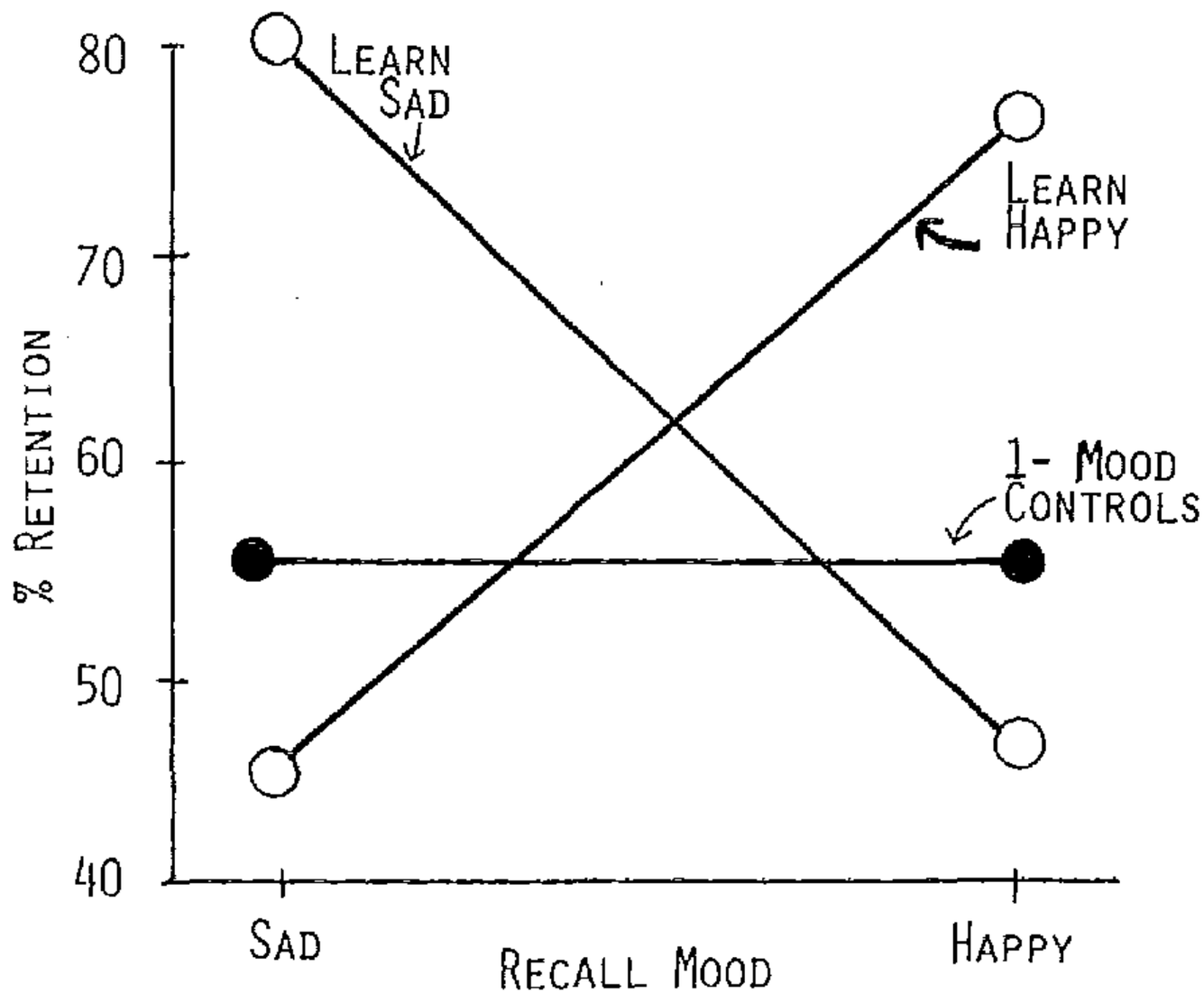
Context and memory



Godden & Baddeley (1975)

Context and memory



Bower, 1981

Context-based explanations for…

- Practice makes perfect
- Efficacy of massed vs. spaced practice
- Recency and forgetting
- Study/test context effects

For Friday

- Keep working on PS 1 (due Monday)
- Start reading Chapter 2 in FoHM