Progress Since Previous Meeting

Since my previous progress review in September 2021, I have analysed and written up results from two experiments from that year as a manuscript, with the intention to submit this work for publication, pending ongoing revision after receiving feedback from my supervisors. In this manuscript, I describe how intrusions (when information about a non-target item is reported instead of a target item) has been conflated with guesses by previous source memory research, including my first publication (Zhou et al., 2021), and present a model which distinguishes errors due to intrusions from guesses.

I was invited to give a seminar on my PhD research to the Complex Human Data Hub, where I spoke about this current work as well as my previous publication. Not only was this good practice for my upcoming completion seminar, preparing for this presentation made me think more broadly about the narrative of my thesis and has helped me structure the introductory chapter of my thesis. Although my priority has been finishing the previously mentioned manuscript, the writing of my thesis introduction is ongoing, and I expect to have a draft of that chapter by mid-July.

Remaining Tasks

There are three unfinished chapters in my thesis plan, and tasks associated with each of these chapters that must be completed.

1. Third Study

My final research chapter is a straightforward follow-up to the previously described work on intrusions. I found that the spatial and temporal similarity of the study context of words affected intrusion probability, but not the orthographic or semantic similarity of the words themselves. This result was surprising because most existing models of memory would predict that both word and contextual similarity should influence retrieval. One possible explanation for this null result is that the between-word similarities were too low for word similarity to exert a noticeable influence on intrusions. In my final experiment, I test this explanation with stimuli drawn from lists of semantically and orthographically similar words (in contrast to my previous work in which lists were constructed without regard to orthographic or semantic structure).

In addition to the clear theoretical throughline between this and the previous experiments, this experiment is also pragmatically appealing: by simply substituting the stimuli, I am able to reuse all my existing experimental and modelling code without modification. This experiment is currently running online, and I expect data collection to conclude by May 31st. I plan to have this work written by the end of June. I believe I can keep to this short deadline in contrast to previous chapters because: 1) developing models has been the most time-consuming part of my previous research, which is avoided by fitting my existing models to new data and 2) I intend to write this work as a traditional thesis chapter instead of pursuing publication in a journal, which I expect to make the writing process quicker. I intend to hold my completion seminar once a full draft of this chapter exists.

1. Thesis Introduction & Literature Review

As previously mentioned, my literature review exists as an outline with key references. I recognise that much more work needs to be done to turn these points into a full introduction, but at this stage the high-level story of my thesis is clear to me regardless of what we find in the third study. I plan continue working on both the introduction and final body chapters in parallel, aiming to have a full draft of the introduction written by mid-June.

1. General Discussion

I have not started writing the general discussion of my thesis. I plan to start in July, at which stage the final study will have been finished.

Timeline

The expected date for my thesis submission was on the March 4th, which was the 4.0 year mark of my candidature- a deadline that I have missed. As part of my final progress review, I am requesting a six month extension from that point to September 2022. Because my progress review meeting is occurring later than scheduled, this leaves about 15 weeks to complete all my remaining tasks. Below is a schedule of when I plan to complete each task in those weeks:  
Table

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Some caveats: I have not factored in time spent revising the manuscript for Study 2 after it has been submitted, or time taken for my supervisors to read and give feedback on the full draft of my thesis. It is also possible I have underestimated the time taken to write the introduction of my thesis. When my goals deviate from this plan by a full week or more, I will meet with my supervisors to discuss how I can stay on track with my overarching goal to have a complete draft by September.