weakness

a weakness of research into interference theoryis that it uses artificial stimuli

for example in a study that supports retroactive interference postman asked pts to memorise a list of paired words and then asked them to recall them.

this matters because the tasks do not reflect real life activities so we should be cautious about generalising them to real life memory tasks

therefore the research lacks mundane realism

strength

a strength of interference theory is that there is real life application

for example Danaher et al. found that both recall and recognition of an advertisers message were impaired when exposed to advertisements from two competing companies within a week they suggested running exposures of advertisements on one day rather than spread these out in a week

this matters because research on interference can help advertisers maximise cost effectiveness and reduce interference.

therefore research into interference theory is useful.

weakness

a weakness of interference theory is that there are individual differences.

for example Kane and Engle demonstrated that individuals with a greater WM span were less susceptible to to proactive interference. they tested this by giving pts three word lists to learn. pts with a low WM span showed greater proactive interference than the pts with greater WM spans

this matters because there is evidence that suggests that some people are less effected by proactive interference so it I not applicable to all people

therefore interference theory lacks population validity.

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