

Introduction

People often think that achieving beneficial study results involves only the number of hours spent studying. Yet, knowing how much time is available does not mean that the student will learn well. Planning is one thing, and doing things is quite another. Many students plan their studies wisely but still choose to procrastinate, reread their notes one more time, or prepare for exams just a few hours before them. Many studies show that implementation intentions can help in making the student's dreams real and that retrieval practice and spaced study techniques can help one retain information even in the long run (Wang, Wang & Gai, 2021; Dunlosky et al., 2013; Carpenter, Pan & Butler, 2022). Thus, no wonder the problem of study management can be considered as two interrelated issues.

Part 1: Study Timetable / Study Schedule

The timetable below is designed around the principle that academic work must coexist with ordinary life. Fixed commitments are placed first, followed by focused study, shorter retrieval sessions, exercise, family/social time and sleep. The schedule deliberately contains buffer periods because a timetable that assumes every hour will go exactly to plan is unlikely to remain useful.

Day	8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.	Around 4:00 p.m.	Evening
Monday	Work	Home / rest / prepare	University class 5:00–8:00 p.m.
Tuesday	Work	Home / rest	Study + retrieval
Wednesday	Work	Home / rest	Study + retrieval
Thursday	Work	Home / rest	Study + retrieval
Friday	Work	Home / rest	Weekly self-test / free time
Saturday	Personal time / errands	—	Assignment / deep study
Sunday	Family / personal time	—	Weekly planning / retrieval

Implementation intentions are built into the timetable by attaching retrieval sessions to a stable cue: 'If it is 8:00 p.m. and dinner is finished, then I will complete a 20-minute retrieval session before free time.' Spaced retrieval is represented by returning to the same learning material several times during the week rather than treating Friday evening as the first serious revision session. The timetable also protects sleep,

movement and social/family time. This is important because sustainable academic performance depends on a routine that can be repeated, rather than a short burst of extreme study.

Part 2: Using Microsoft 365 Copilot to Explore Study Techniques

2.1 First Stage Prompt

The exploration started with employing Microsoft 365 Copilot in its role as a research tool. The aim of the first stage prompts was to keep the questions broad in order to identify various potential study methods from which to choose the most suitable ones later. The prompt was:

“I am a Level 4 student at university looking to enhance my study habits. Suggest evidence-based study methods that can help in the areas of procrastination, organization, concentration and long-term learning. Briefly explain each method and show how evidence-based studying differs from general advice on productivity.”

The selected prompt was meant to ensure that the Copilot reply does not automatically favor popular productivity strategies as potentially the most useful in academic studies. The prompt made it necessary for the Copilot to differentiate between those methods based on scientific evidence and methods based on general advice that people can find on websites dealing with productivity. Such a differentiation was of great importance, given that success in study requires more than just managing one's time effectively. A student may be good at planning but still be using ineffective techniques while studying. The Copilot reply contained a number of various methods. The methods seemed to be meant to target various features of learning. For instance, implementation intentions are about bringing intentions into specific behaviors and retrieval practices are about retrieving previously learned materials. Spaced practicing is less about cramming all the necessary materials into one long session of learning. The generated information may contain unverified claims, lack of support or incorrect citations. This means that Copilot's output has been considered a point of departure for additional research, and not as a source of information itself.

2.2 Refined Prompt

After examining the initial recommendations, the question was revised to create a more targeted and comparative study:

“Compare the use of implementation intentions, timeboxing, retrieval practice, spaced practice, and interleaving for a university student with limited study time. Address issues such as how these techniques work, what problems they solve and their strengths and weaknesses based on research findings.”

The revised version of the question proved to be more effective since it brought in criteria for working with the techniques. Instead of simply asking about which method is the “best,” it required analyzing the problem targeted by each of the techniques and the strength of the evidence. This was especially important for the learning outcomes of the module because critical thinking involves questioning knowledge and not simply following advice. The comparison also proved that each study problem has its solutions. For example, if a student postpones studying for certain reasons, this may mean that he/she needs a cognitive technique. In contrast, if a student studies regularly but forgets most of the information he/she learned, it calls for a change in the learning methodology.

The concept of implementation intentions plays a major role in transforming good intentions into action. An implementation intention is an “if-then” plan that links a particular situation with an intended action. Instead of saying “I will study more this week,” a student refers to a specific cue and planned action for example, deciding what to do at the beginning of a study session. Implementation intentions and some techniques from the mental contrasting approach have been studied as tools of goal attainment. According to Wang et al. (2021), the results of their meta-analysis indicate a significant effect, but the authors emphasize the need to consider such methodological issues as the study design and publication bias.

In retrieving practice, a different challenge is taken on and instead of going over information over and over again, the person is required to pull information out of memory on his or her own. This may consist of using flashcards, employing a technique of self-testing or question exercises or trying to explain a concept without referring to notes. Studies indicate that retrieval practice helps improve learning, but the degree of its efficiency depends on the specifics of its performance. Spaced practice has added yet another crucial dimension. Learning is distributed over time instead of taking a long time in a single session. Carpenter, Pan, and Butler (2022) refer to spaced and retrieval practices as effective learning techniques that can certainly be applied in education. At the same time, participants may feel that spaced practice is not as effective because they may find it more difficult to recall something after some time, making research significant in showing the difference between a technique that seems easy and the one yielding durable result.

2.3 Source-Identification Prompt

Because Copilot's suggestions could not automatically be considered valid academic sources, additional requests were made with regard to finding supporting literature:

“Please provide peer-reviewed references or systematic reviews for each main argument in your previous answer. Give name of the author, year of publication, title of the article, journal name, DOI or stable identifier. Make sure you separate original research articles from review articles and flag the sources that cannot be verified.”

This stage was necessary because AI-generated references need verification. Therefore, source identification became a stage of critical evaluation instead of just accepting the references from Copilot. Then the identified sources were verified against credible academic sources. Research conducted with university students examined whether implementation interventions can have a positive impact on study behavior, while spaced retrieval investigations examined whether it may increase long-term retention. The example illustrated another important disadvantage of generative AI being used for conducting academic research. Although Copilot may speed up the search of literature by proposing ideas, vocabulary, and relevant literature hints, the researcher stays responsible for actually determining the existence of the source, its peer-reviewed status, and its relevance to the topic under consideration.

2.4 Final Selection

The techniques that were chosen for application are spaced retrieval practice and implementation intentions. These techniques were selected as they belong to different phases of the study process opposite to being synonymous. Implementation intentions deal with a behavioral problem which is the question of how to motivate oneself to start studying. An implementation intention differentiates itself from a general intention with the fact that it not only indicates that studying is needed but also provides a list of conditions of the materialization of the studied behavior. It is particularly useful when the motivation to start studying is low and there are a lot of other activities that could distract the student from studying. As for spaced retrieval, it deals with a learning problem. The question addressed by this technique is what actions should be taken before and after studying in order to guarantee that the obtained information will stay with the learner for a long time. Spaced retrieval practice consists of two aspects. It is based on the idea that learning occurs with time intervals and that the student is trying to recall the information actively as opposed to rereading it many times. The complementary relationship between the strategies forms the

basis of the thesis statement of the current portfolio. While implementation intentions can help a student protect the study time and ensure that the study is taking place, spaced retrieval ensures that the study remains productive and contributes to learning. Thus, the two strategies function on different levels: the first helps one to go from intention to action, while the second allows the transition from the act of studying to long-term memory.

This difference is important because being able to study effectively is not about simply increasing the hours spent studying. Students may spend many hours rereading their notes without achieving long-term retention anyway. The other point is that students know about effective learning techniques but may not use them due to the procrastination or competing obligations. Therefore, one may say that the introduction of both behavioral strategy and evidence-based learning strategy helps create a more comprehensive approach to managing the scarcity of time for studying. The study also shows that neither strategy can be regarded as a universal solution. Individual differences, requirements of the subject, prior knowledge, and type of assessment will influence the results of the application. Therefore, both techniques should be considered useful tools that can be tried, assessed, and modified in someone's studying routine. In general, the research using Copilot allowed the author to find and test two different ways of solving the issue; however, the final choice was made by means of a critical assessment and independent verification of scholarly sources. Thus, the study proves that AI can assist in the beginning stages of the research process, while the final responsibility of evaluating the evidence, providing the interpretation of the research results, and making the final academic decision belongs to the student.

2.5 Discussion of the two techniques

Implementation intentions refer to plans that entail a certain situation and the desired behavior of a person connected to it in the sense of 'if-then'. For instance, a student could decide, 'After having dinner at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, I will sit at my desk and take a 20-minute retrieval test' instead of stating the general purpose 'I will study this week'. The success of this technique lies in the fact that it helps to create a plan based on the expected result and define a signal for action. Studies assessing the effect of mental contrasting combined with implementation intentions showed the positive influence of this technique on achieving goals in 21 case studies, while it should be noted that there is a chance of publication bias and the necessity of carrying out more research. For example, research conducted with students demonstrated that those who learned about mental contrasting with implementation intentions performed better in achieving study goals after a month compared to the control group. Thus, planning can help in bridging the gap between the intention to study and the real activity.

The practice of spaced retrieval merges two concepts: the retrieval of information and the distribution of retrieval efforts over time. Unlike just rereading the notes, retrieval requires a learner to find the answer before looking at the relevant material. As a result, spacing ensures that the practice is not done in one single session. A comprehensive study published in Nature Reviews Psychology considers spacing and retrieval as scientifically grounded teaching approaches and discusses how they can be used in different educational contexts. A real-life study involving 185 undergraduates showed that the students who practiced spaced retrieval not only did it more often but also earlier throughout their course had higher course achievement compared to those who studied closer to the date of assessments. Additionally, research in calculus shows that spacing can have a short-term cost of practice while improving subsequent learning and retention.

The methods in question thus serve distinct but sisterly objectives. The creation of implementation intentions helps provide a firm launching mechanism, while the spaced retrieval method enhances learning quality. These two principles do not eliminate the need for reading, attending classes, completing assignments and getting feedback, but they help make regular study time more effective. This is especially true for a student who has to handle numerous things at the same time.

2.6 Reflection on using Microsoft 365 Copilot

Utilizing Microsoft 365 Copilot altered my approach to the first stage of this project because it enabled me to investigate different study methods before choosing which two are suitable for my task. Initially, I formulated a quite broad prompt, which produced a great list of possible ways to study. This answer revealed the main limitation of general AI responses: various study techniques were grouped together despite referring to different needs. Some techniques were about effective time management, while others were about effective learning. This taught me that picking up two of the most popular techniques does not guarantee a good academic discussion. I had modified my prompt and asked Copilot to evaluate the techniques in terms of their mechanism, the way they can be applied in practice, the evidence supporting them and their limitations. This led to a more effective decision-making process and the selection of implementation intentions and spaced retrieval as a pair of complementary techniques. I did not, however, consider Copilot's answer to be trustworthy. I had asked it to name the sources supporting its claims and then verified these references independently. This was particularly important because AI can provide reliable-sounding citations without providing any evidence.

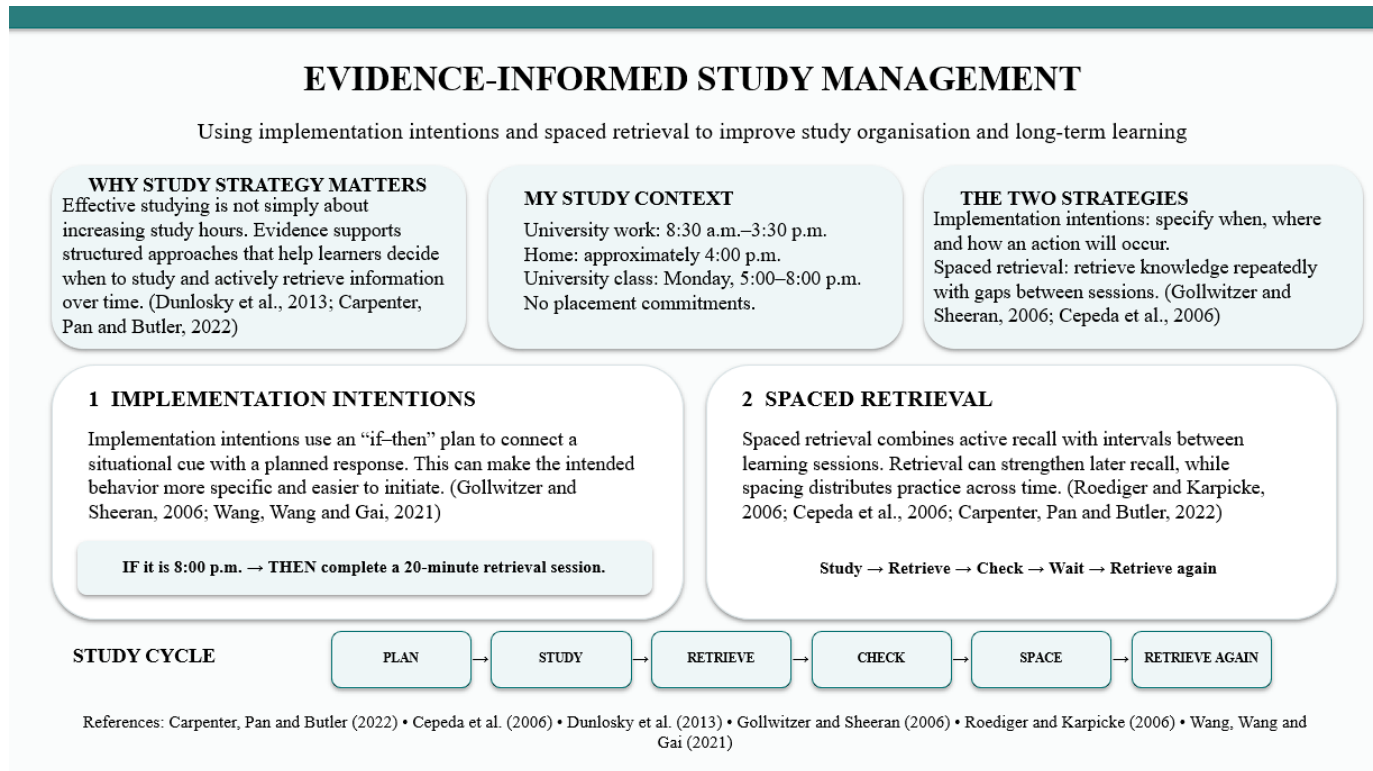
The primary benefit of Copilot was not 'doing my research' for me, but rather facilitating the stage of exploration and comparisons. With Copilot's help, I had formed keywords like implementation intentions,

retrieval practice, spacing, attainment of goals, and self-regulation in learning. However, there were also downsides to this software. Artificially generated information can condense complicated information into concise information. For instance, just because a technique is indicated as producing better results does not mean that it is able to guarantee high grades. The experience reached has changed the way I plan to use AI in my academic activities. I will utilize it for brainstorming, constructing theoretical concepts, improving keywords, and organizing my thoughts on my ideas while verifying crucial points against primary scholarly sources. I will also preserve the messages I wrote and mark the difference between **assistance provided by AI software and other written pieces submitted for evaluation.**

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Part 3: PowerPoint Poster



https://drive.google.com/file/d/14qxp4_DezpT_htRQCny1M3gO6iQdvO1p/view?usp=drive_link