# Does Children's Visual Attention to Objects Influence their Verb Learning?

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**Abstract**

Children benefit from comparing events when learning verbs, but it is unclear whether variability across events is helpful or harmful. Additionally, no prior study has tested childrens visual attention to specific objects under different variability conditions. A Tobii x30-120 tracked 21/2-year-olds(n=36) and 31/2-year-olds(n=34) visual attention as they watched events that showed no change (control), events with varied tools (Tool condition) or events with varied affected objects (Affected Object condition) when learning a verb. Children pointed to one of two new events at test; repeated for two more verbs. Results showed children could extend the verbs, but were more successful with age. Analyses of looking patterns in the learning phase show childrens attention to specific objects varied by condition, and that reduced looking to the tool was linked to less success at test. Results are important to better understand processes that underlie verb learning, and language development as a whole.