7.5-month olds remember the location of a displaced object only if an agent acted on it

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Abstract

Most infant studies on location memory involve an agent hiding or retrieving the object. Recent work indicates that, for young infants, the presence of other agents enhances encoding of the targets of their actions and perceptions, and in a pilot study we did not find evidence for location memory with a paradigm where we removed agency cues. Here, we systematically compared whether 7.5-months-old infants remembered the location of an object better when it was placed there by an agent compared to a highly similar but non-social setting where a conveyor belt transports the object. Location memory was tested through infants' looking times in response to outcomes showing unexpected vs. expected absences of the object. Contrary to our preliminary results, at n=58/64 of this preregistered study we see no main effects of condition and outcome, as well as no interaction between them (all 95% credible intervals contain 0).