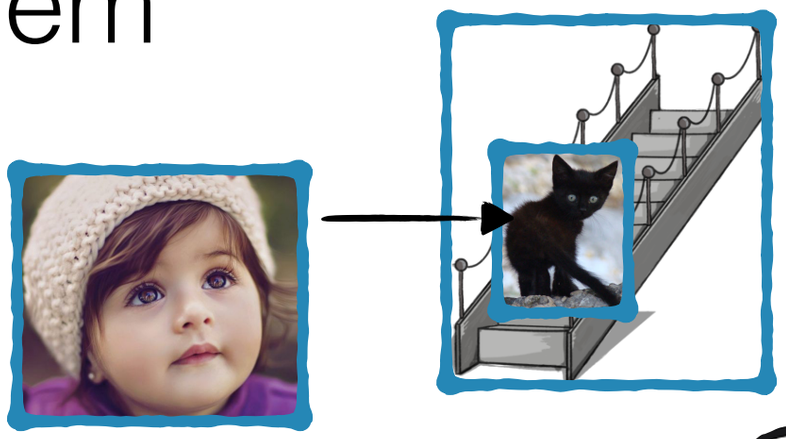
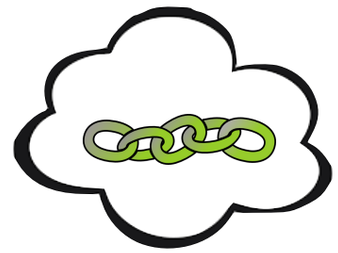
Arguments from acquisition for how to solve the linking problem



Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)



Lisa Pearl

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May 3, 2019

Linguistics Colloquium

University of Maryland, College Park

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Linking theories

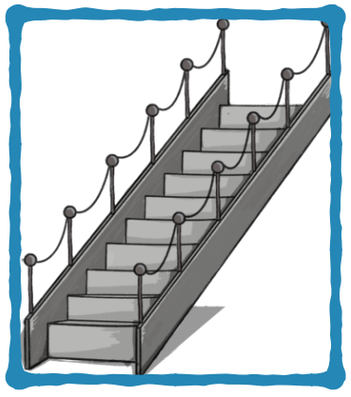
What is this likely to mean?

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Linking theories

What is this likely to mean?

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Event participants

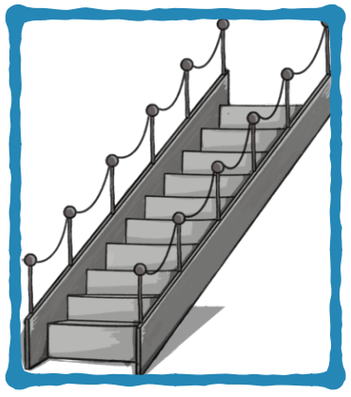
Linking theories

What is this likely to mean?

Syntactic positions

Subject | Object | Oblique Object

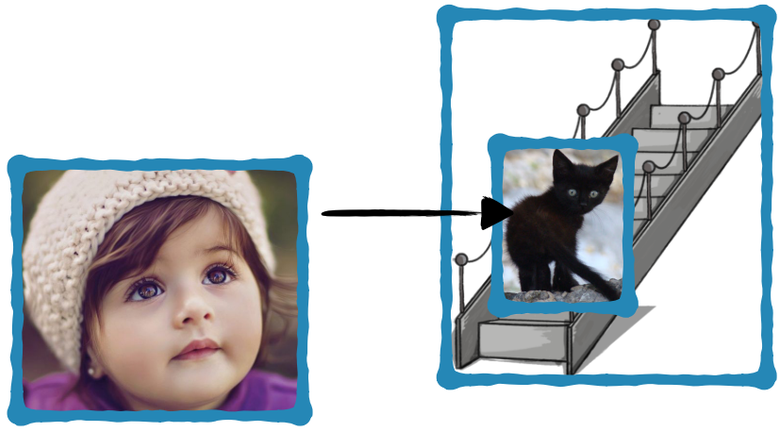
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Event participants

Linking theories

This event is much more likely…



Syntactic positions

Subject | Object | Oblique Object

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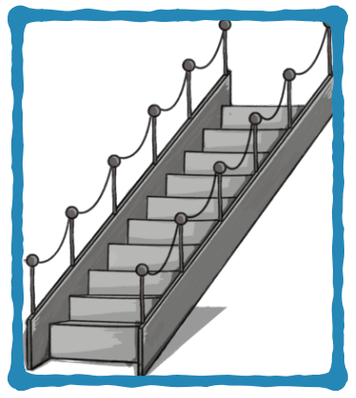
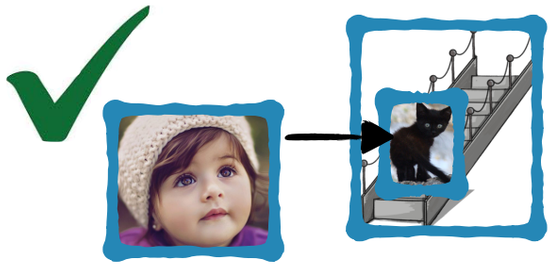
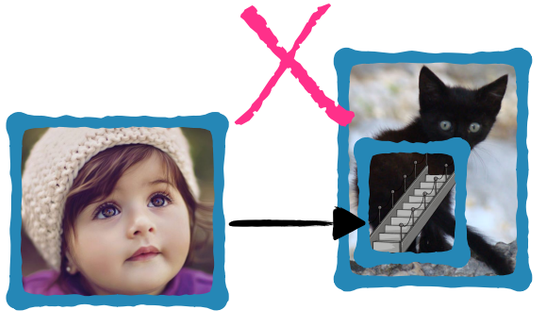
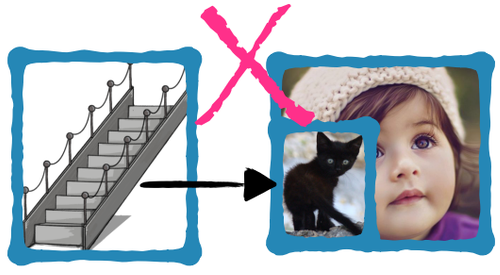


Event participants

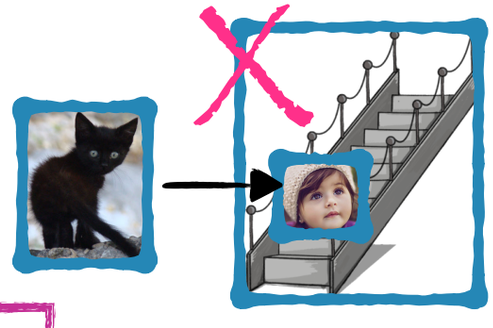
Linking theories







…compared to these.



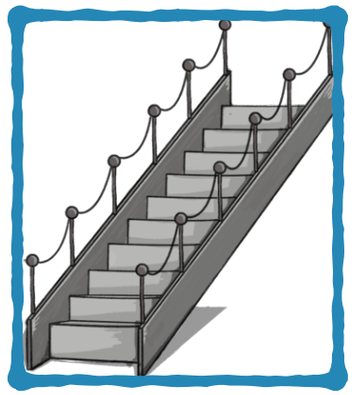
Syntactic positions

Subject

Object

Oblique Object

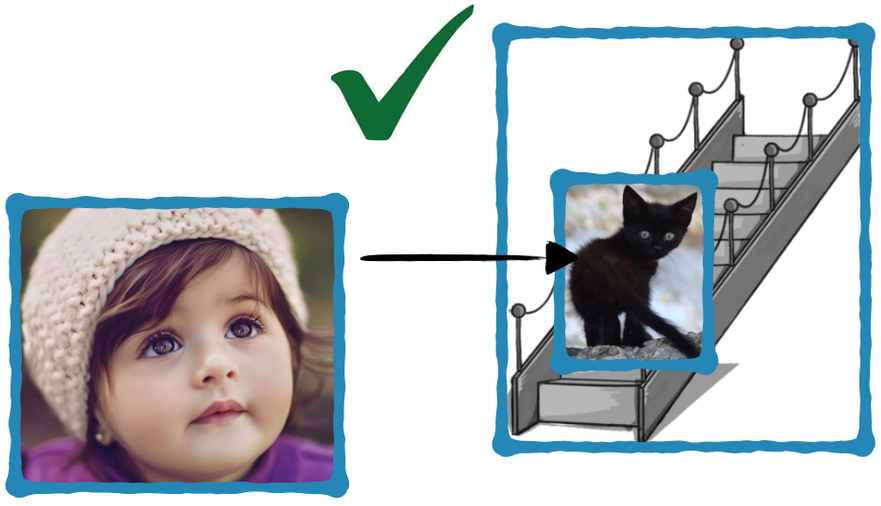
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Event participants

Linking theories

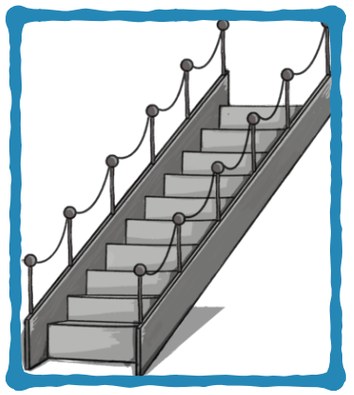
Why?



Syntactic positions

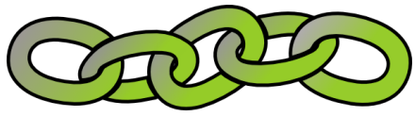
Subject | Object | Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

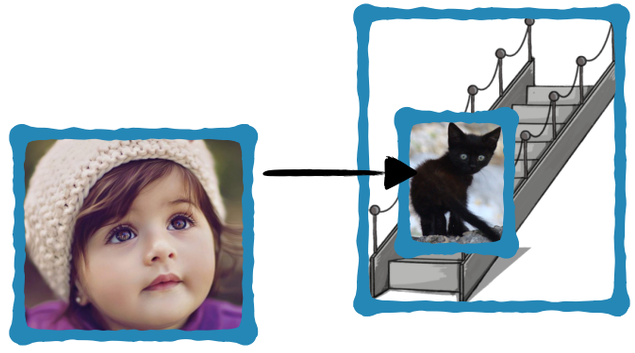


Event participants

Linking theories



We as adults have linking theories that help us interpret verbs in combination with their arguments.



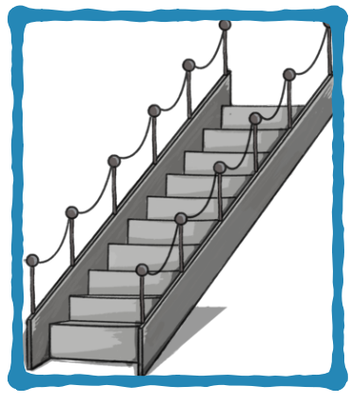
Syntactic positions

Subject

Object

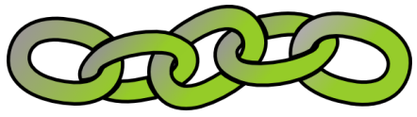
Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



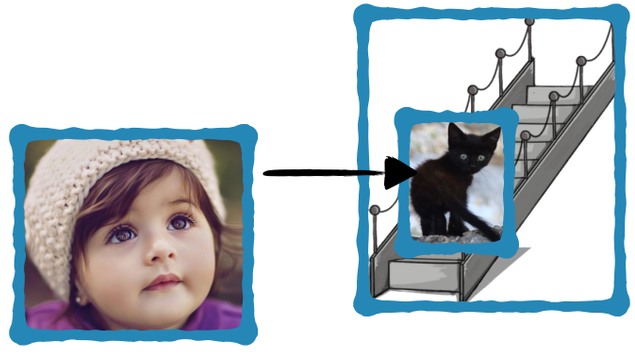
Event participants

Linking theories



We as adults have linking theories that help us interpret verbs in combination with their arguments.

We can also use these linking theories to produce verbs in combination with their arguments when we want to express a particular meaning.



Syntactic positions

Subject | Object | Oblique Object

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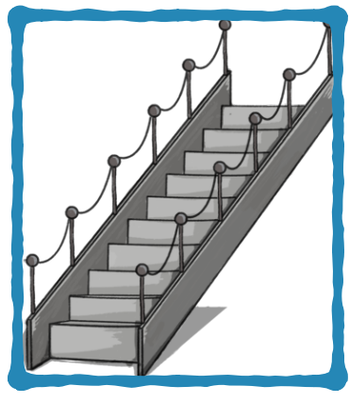


Event participants

Linking theories

These linking theories are mental representations that we as adults have developed. They let us link event participants and syntactic positions, so we know how to interpret an utterance — even when we don't know what the verb means.

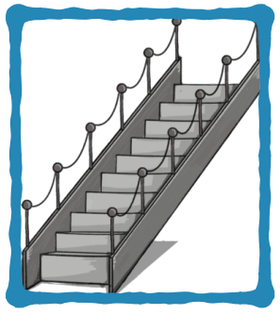
Syntactic positions

Subject

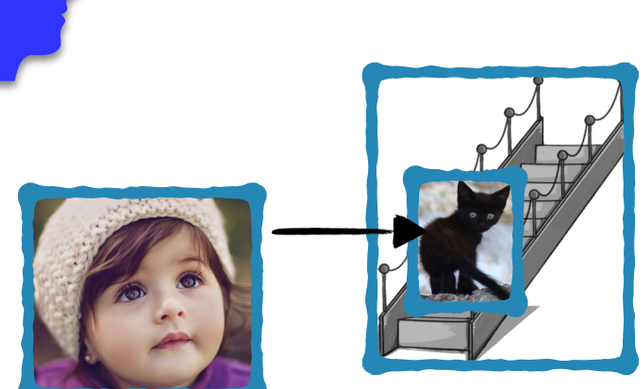
Object

Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Event participants

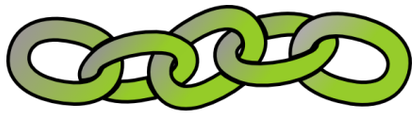


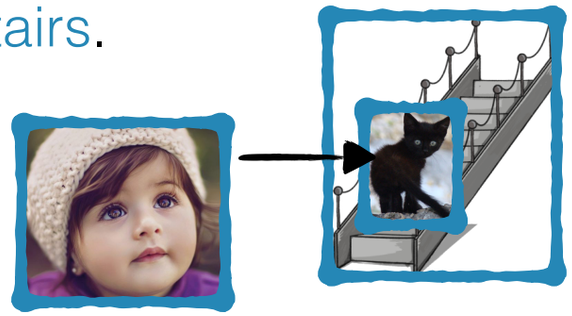
Linking theories

Subject Object Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

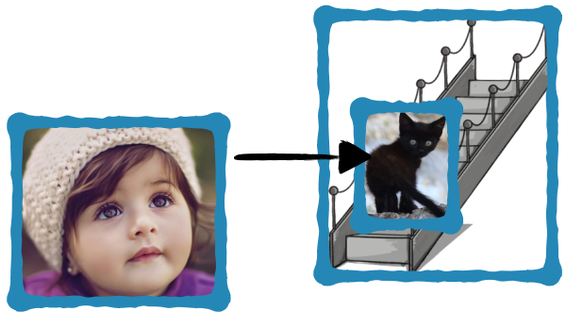
What does a linking theory look like?





Linking theories

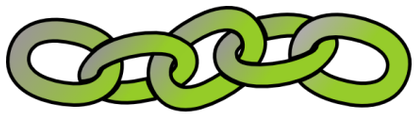
What does a linking theory look like?



Syntax

Subject Object Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



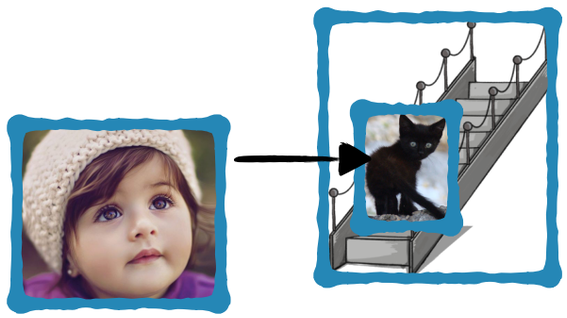
Current proposals involve prior (innate) knowledge

Event participant roles
=
Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

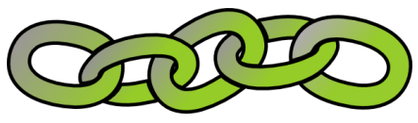
What does a linking theory look like?



Subject Object Oblique Object

Syntax The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Mapping to syntax



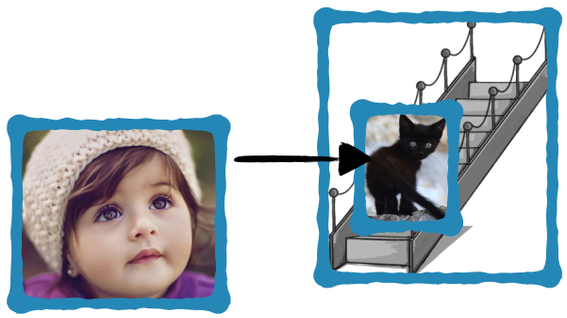
Intermediate representations

Event participant roles
=
Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



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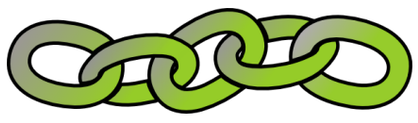

Intermediate representations

The **U**niformity of **T**heta **A**ssignment **H**ypothesis

Baker 1988, Baker 1997, Dowty 1991, Fillmore 1968, Grimshaw 1990, Jackendoff 1987, Perlmutter & Postal 1984, Speas 1990

Event participant roles
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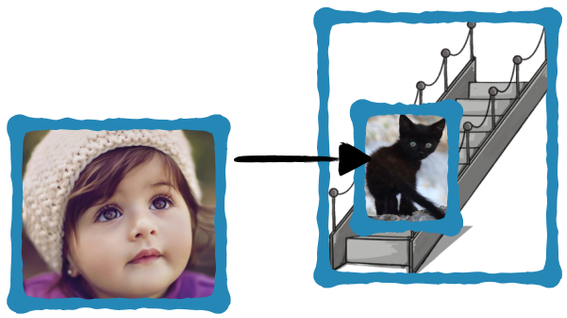
Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



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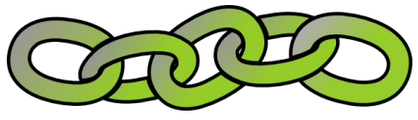
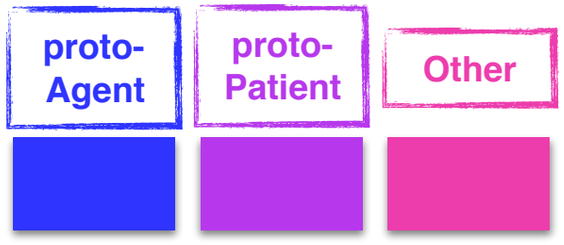


Intermediate representations

UTAH

Thematic roles map to one of three **fixed macro-roles**.



Event participant roles
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Thematic roles

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Linking theories

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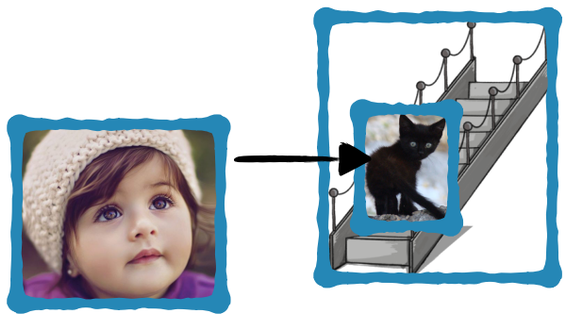

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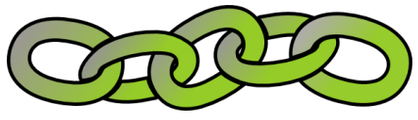
Mapping to syntax



Intermediate representations

UTAH

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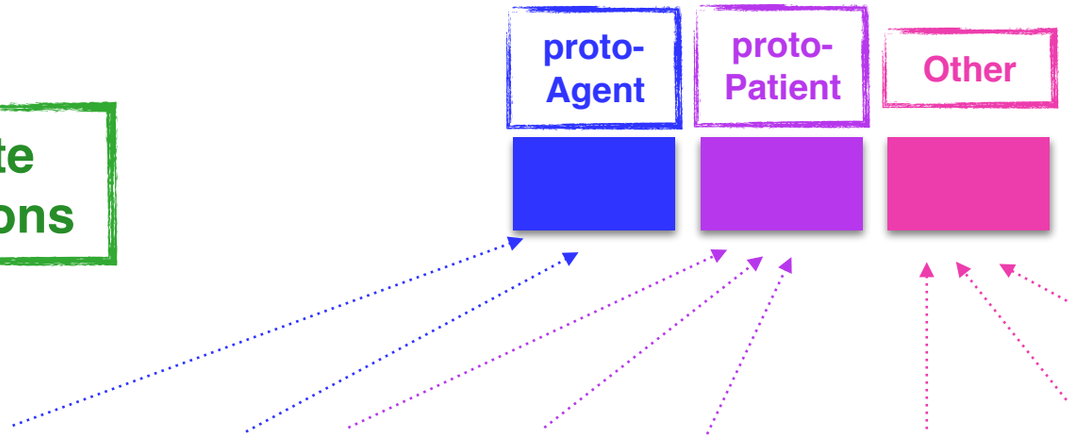
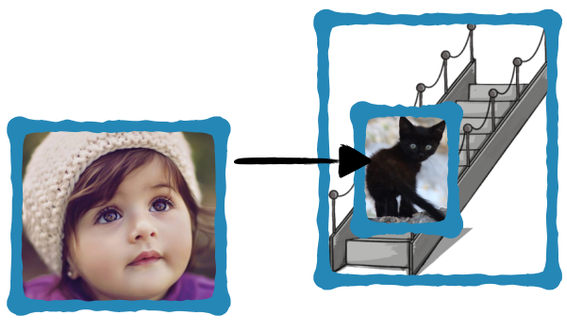


Event participant roles = Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

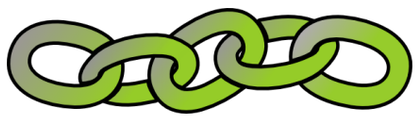
What does a linking theory look like?



Subject Object Oblique Object

Syntax The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Mapping to syntax

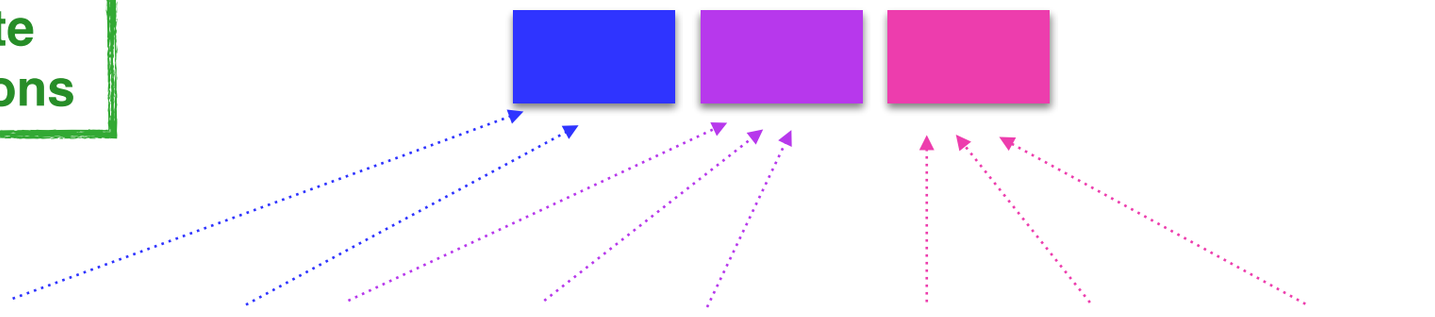


These map to syntactic positions.

UTAH

fixed

Intermediate representations

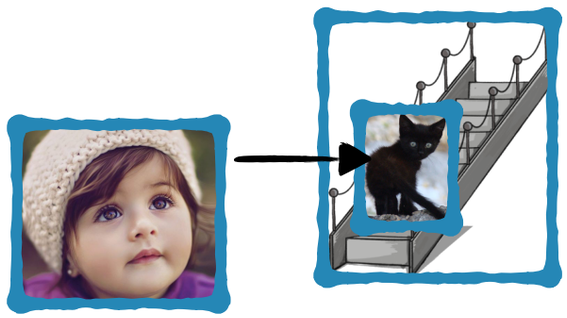


Event participant roles
=
Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



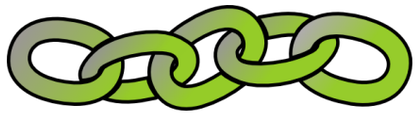
Syntax

Subject — Object — Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

These map to syntactic positions.

Mapping to syntax



UTAH

fixed

Intermediate representations

Event participant roles
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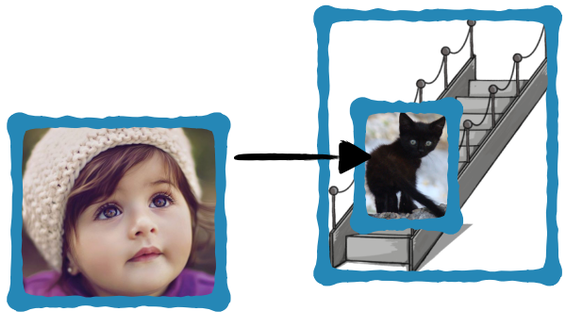
Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?

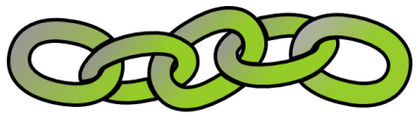


Syntax

Subject — Object — Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Mapping to syntax



Intermediate representations

UTAH

fixed

The (relativized) **UTAH**

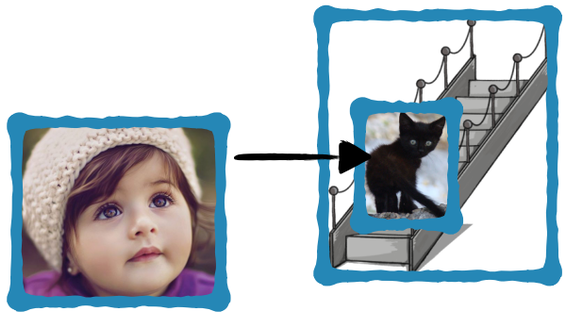
Larson 1988, Larson 1990

Event participant roles
=
Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



Syntax

Subject — Object — Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Mapping to syntax

rUTAH

UTAH

fixed

Intermediate representations

Event participant roles
=
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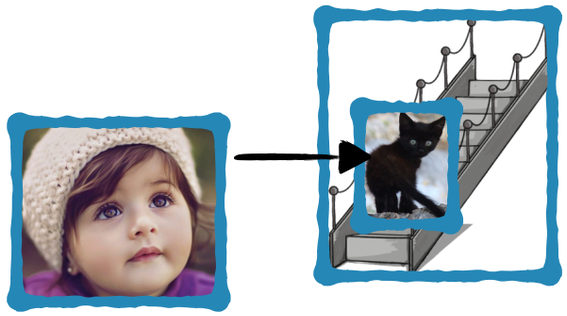
Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



Syntax

Subject — Object — Oblique Object

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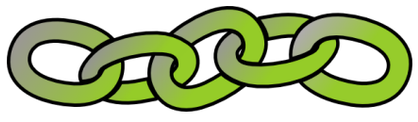


Intermediate representations

UTAH

fixed

rUTAH

Thematic roles are **ordered relative** to each other.

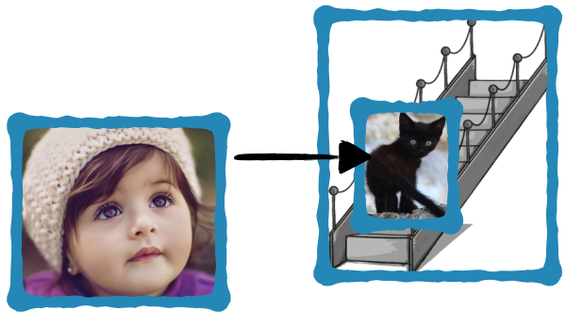
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Event participant roles = Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



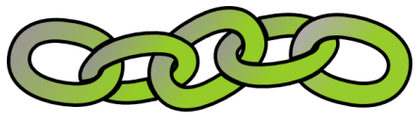
Syntax

Subject — Object — Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Whichever ones are present map in order to the available syntactic positions.

Mapping to syntax



Intermediate representations

UTAH

fixed

rUTAH

relative

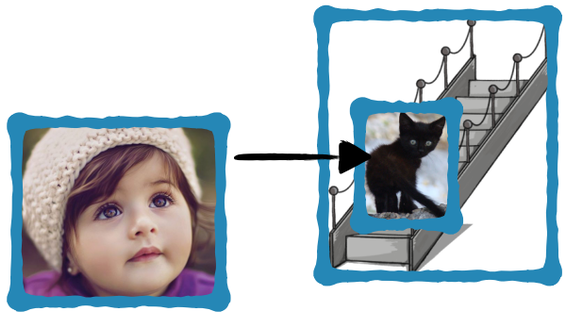
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Event participant roles = Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

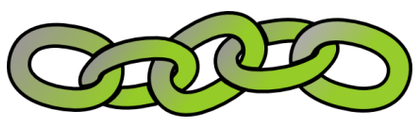
Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



Syntax

Mapping to syntax



Intermediate representations

Subject — Object — Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Whichever ones are present map in order to the available syntactic positions.

UTAH

fixed

rUTAH

relative

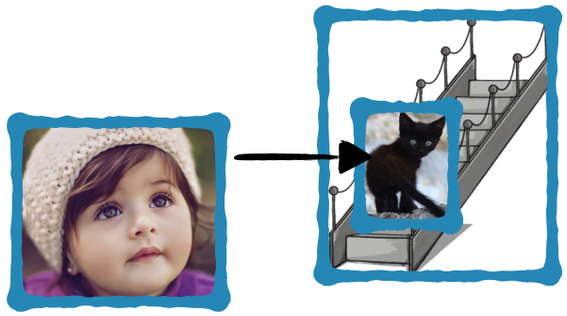
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Event participant roles = Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



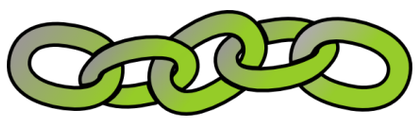
Syntax

Subject Object Oblique Object

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Mapping to syntax

UTAH & rUTAH assume the mapping to syntax is innate.



UTAH

fixed

rUTAH

relative

Intermediate representations

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Event participant roles

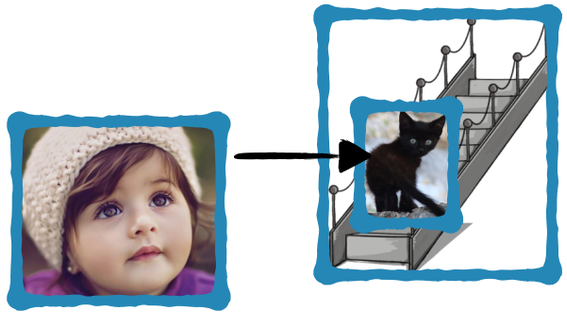
=

Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

What does a linking theory look like?



Subject Object Oblique Object

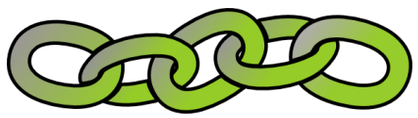
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Syntax

Mapping to syntax

But it could be that this mapping is derived from language experience.

UTAH **rUTAH**



Intermediate representations

fixed

relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

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Linking theories

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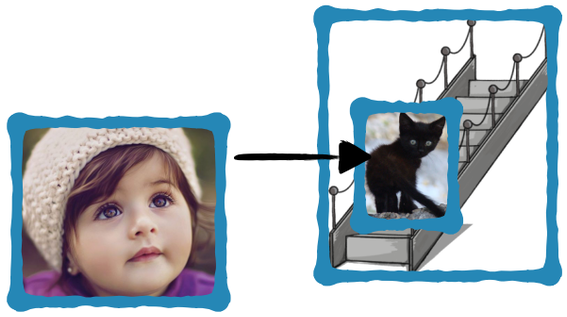

Syntax

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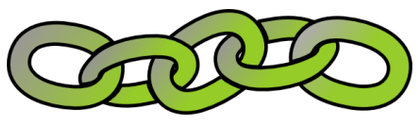
UTAH **rUTAH**



Mapping to syntax

Intermediate representations

fixed

relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

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Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

Linking theories

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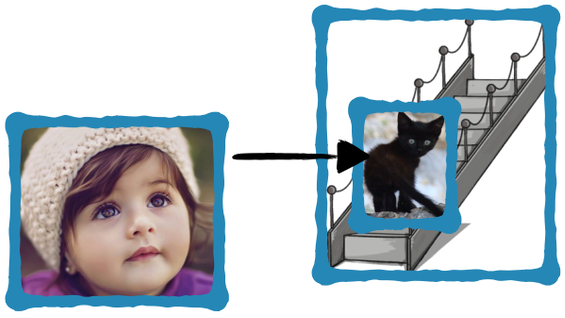
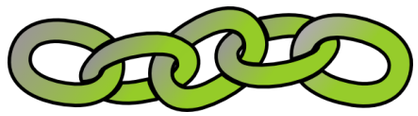


How do we tell which linking theory proposal is likely to be correct?



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

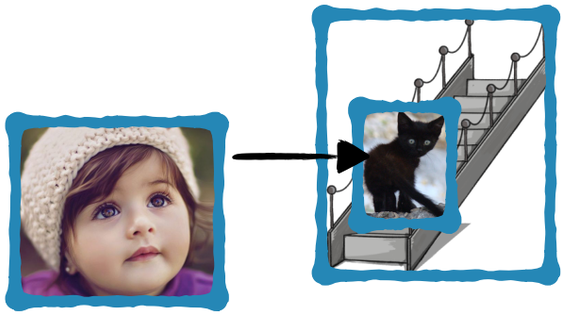
relative

UTAH

fixed

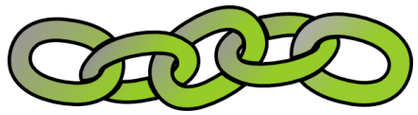
Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Argument from acquisition:
Which linking theory proposals are compatible with the observed development of this knowledge in children?

Pearl 2017, Pearl et al. 2017



rUTAH Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

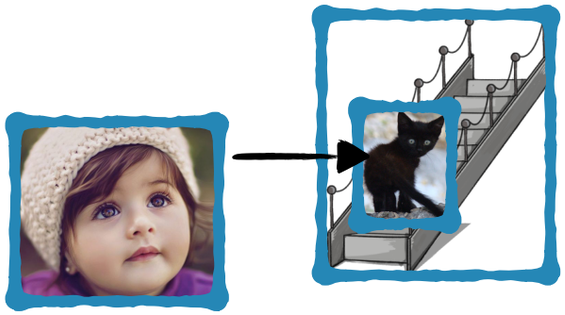
relative

UTAH

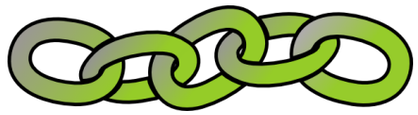
fixed

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Good news: These proposals make developmental predictions.



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

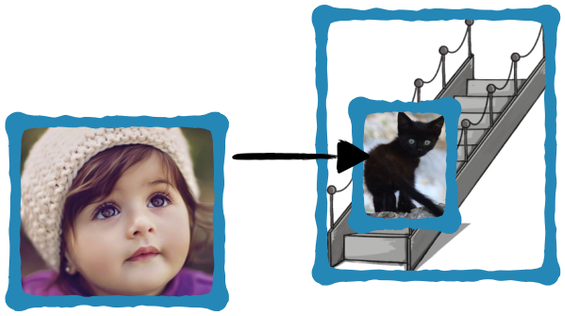
relative

UTAH

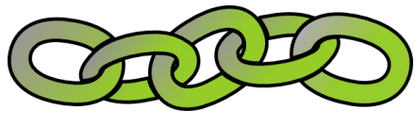
fixed

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Proposals relying on innate knowledge typically assume early maturation: the knowledge is **present as early as we can test for it**.

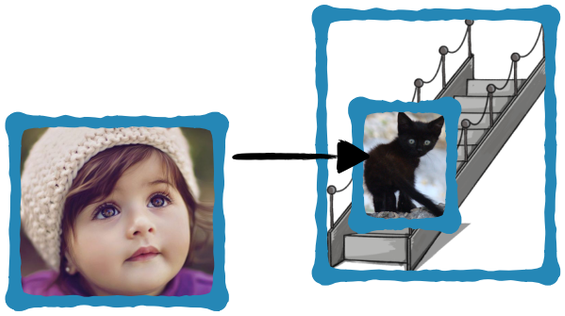


rUTAH Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location) **relative**

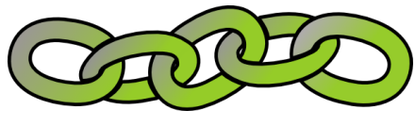
UTAH **fixed**

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Implication: A modeled learner who has knowledge of the mapping to syntax should always match real children's behavior best.

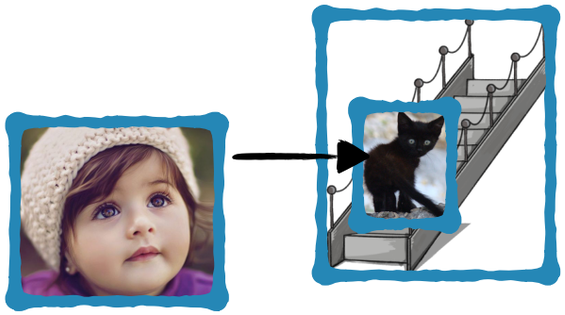


rUTAH Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location) **relative**

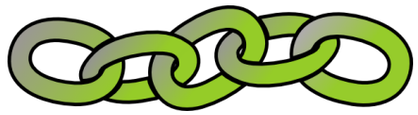
UTAH **fixed**

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Proposals relying on derived knowledge typically assume it **takes some time** for children to derive the knowledge from their input.



rUTAH

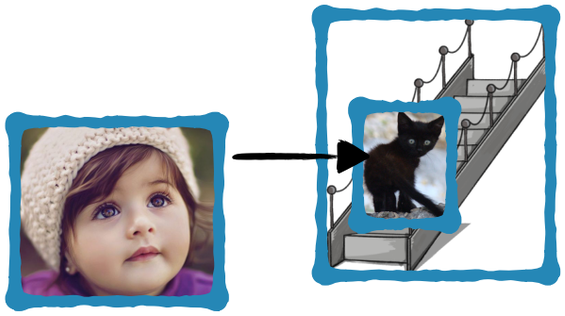
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed

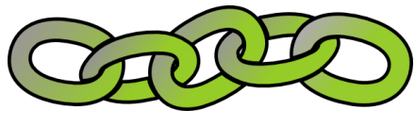
Linking theories



The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Implication: A modeled learner who has knowledge of the mapping to syntax should *not* always match real children's behavior best.

A modeled learner *without* this knowledge should match younger children best.



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

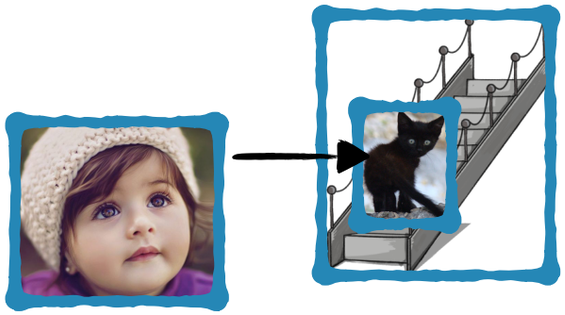
relative

UTAH

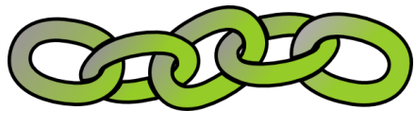
fixed

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



The same evaluation can be done for modeled learners who use a fixed thematic system vs. a relative thematic system. Which ones match real children's behavior best?



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

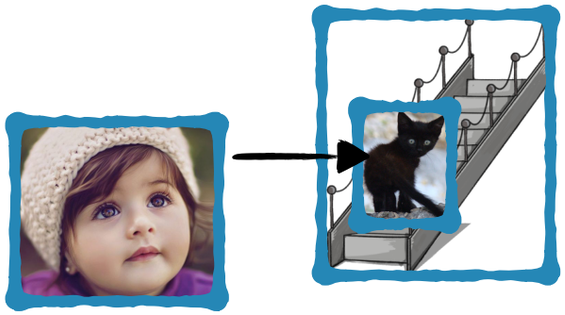
relative

UTAH

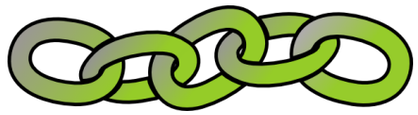
fixed

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



So what behavior should we look at that would leverage linking theory knowledge?



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

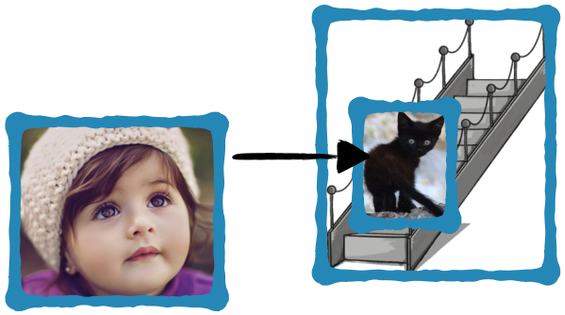
relative

UTAH

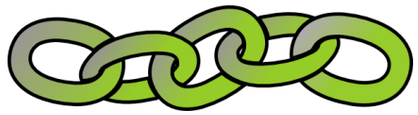
fixed

Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



One answer: The development of **verb classes** — how children cluster verbs together in order to generalize about verb linguistic behavior.



rUTAH

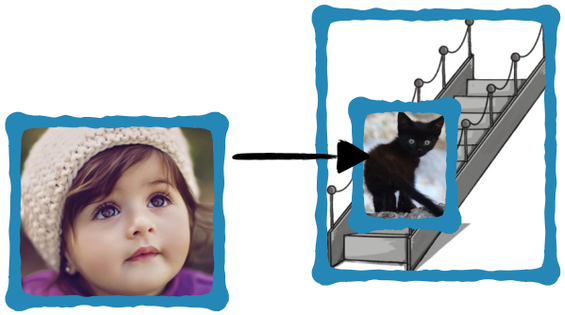
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed

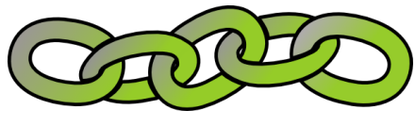
Linking theories



The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Why **verb classes**? Linking theories are precisely about one key aspect of verb behavior: how verb arguments are interpreted.

So, linking theory knowledge could affect how children cluster verbs together into verb classes.



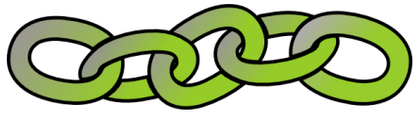
rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed



rUTAH

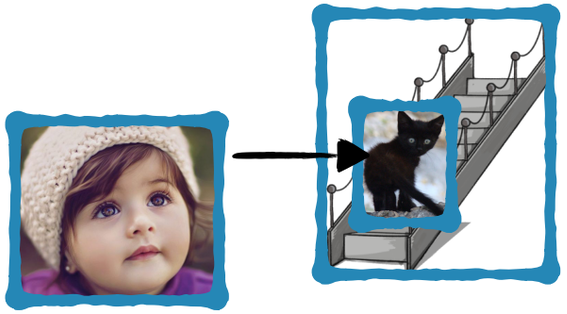
UTAH

relative

fixed

Linking theories

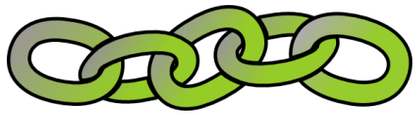
How does linking knowledge affect verb clustering in children?



Subject

Oblique Object

The kitten was *blicked* by the little girl.



rUTAH

relative

fixed

Linking theories

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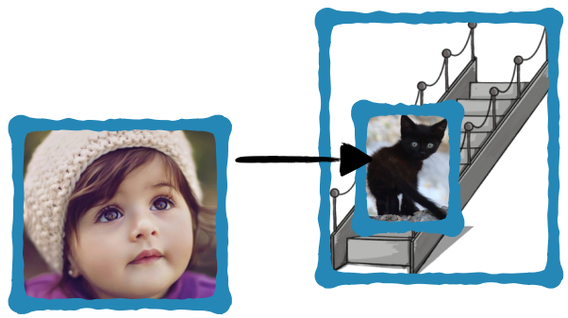

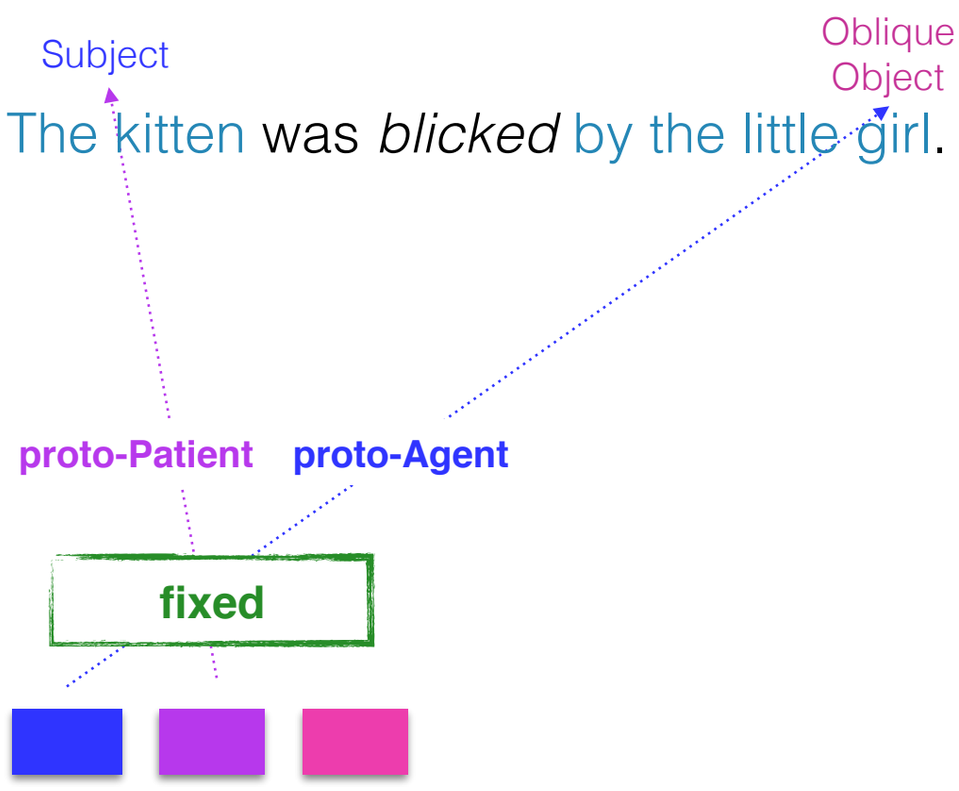

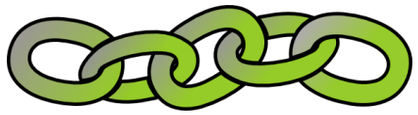

rUTAH

relative

fixed

Linking theories

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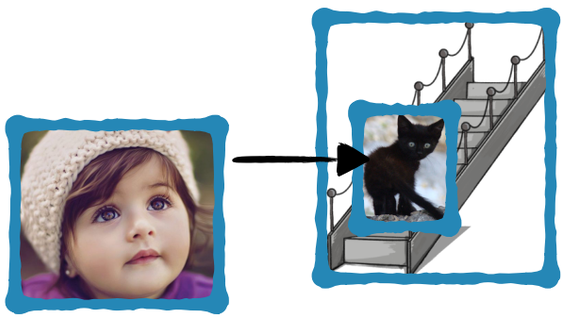
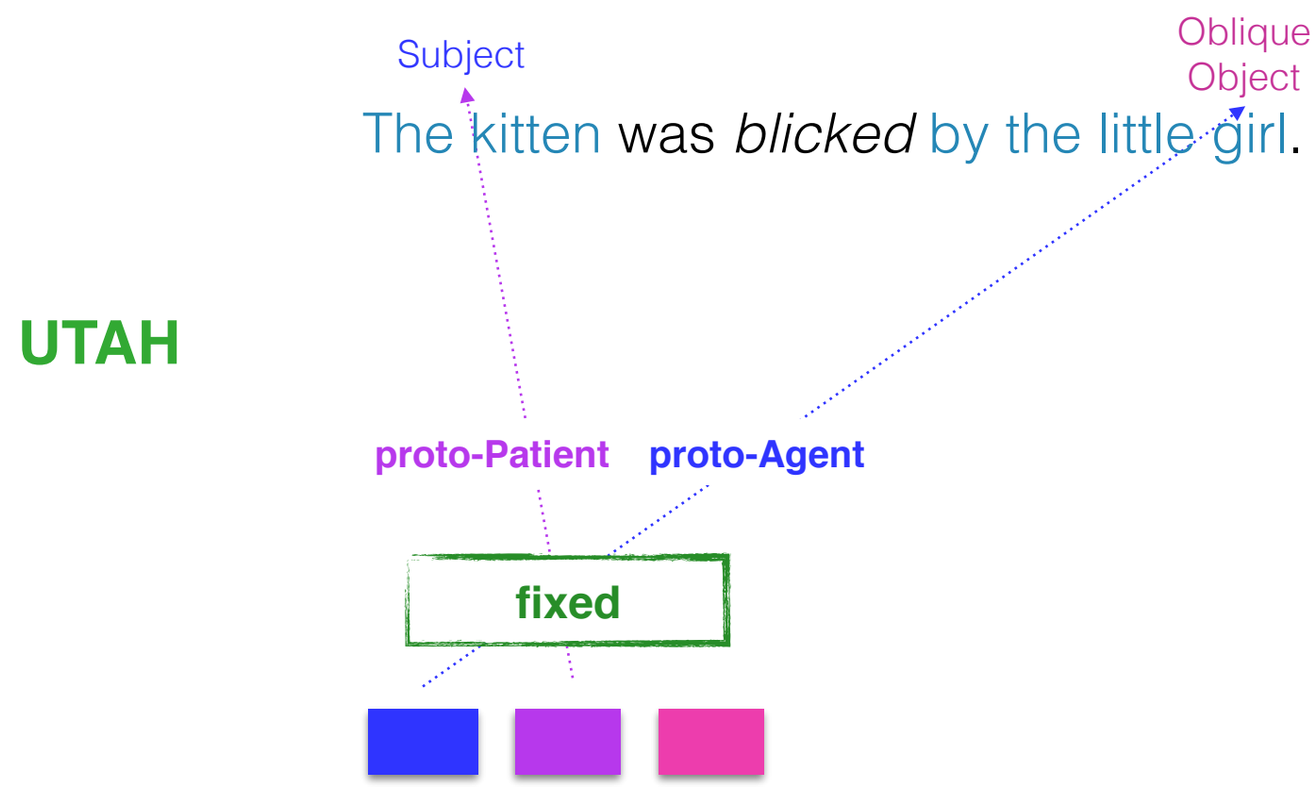
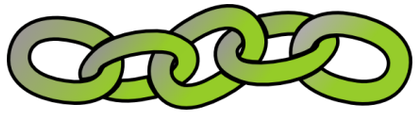


If children expect a mapping already, it's salient when the mapping doesn't hold.

Interpretation: movement, which is used to cluster verbs.





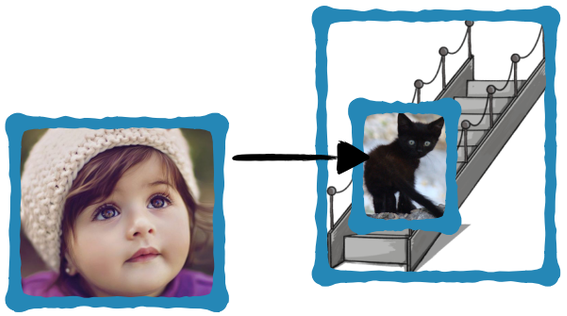
Linking theories

rUTAH

relative

fixed

How does linking knowledge affect verb clustering in children?



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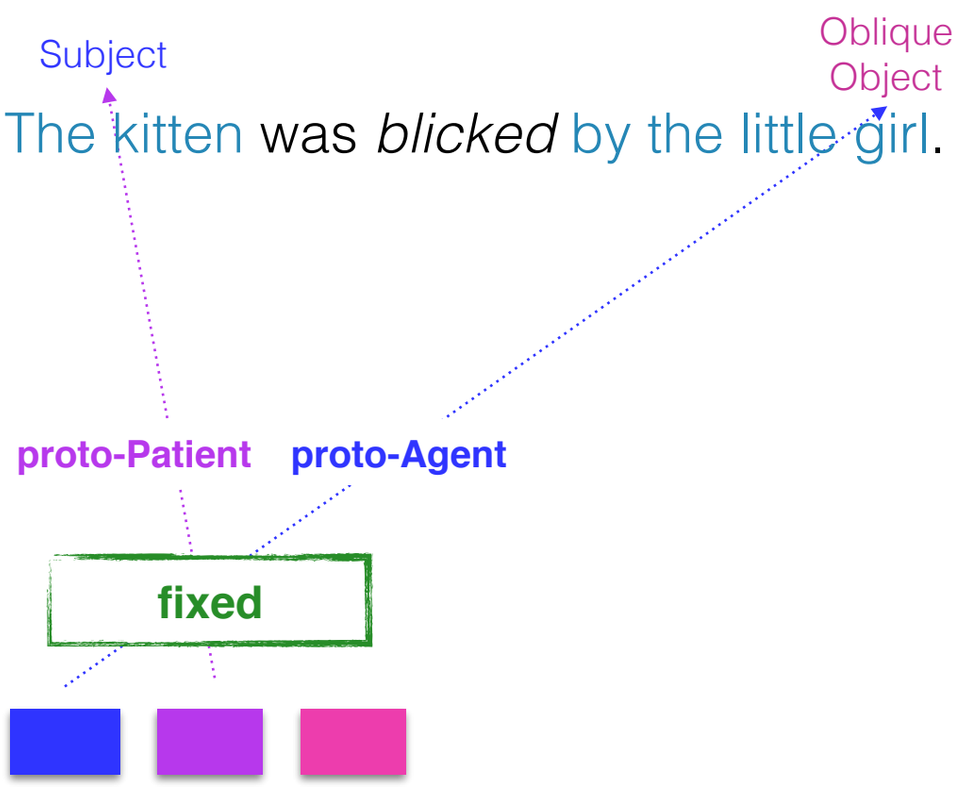
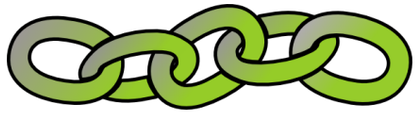




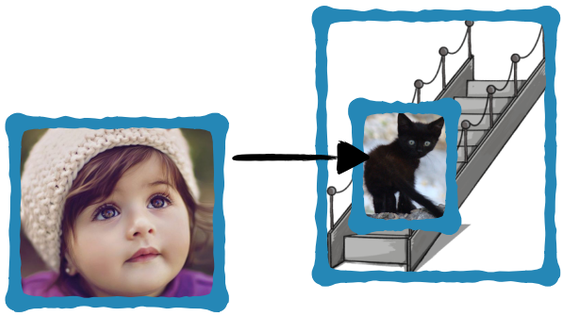
Linking theories

UTAH

relative

fixed

How does linking knowledge affect verb clustering in children?



If children expect a mapping already, it's salient when the mapping doesn't hold.

Interpretation: movement, which is used to cluster verbs.

blick: 2 movement

rUTAH

Subject

Oblique Object

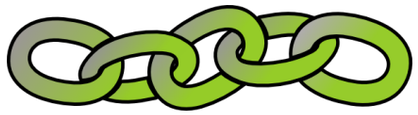
The kitten was *blicked* by the little girl.

2nd-Highest

Highest

relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)



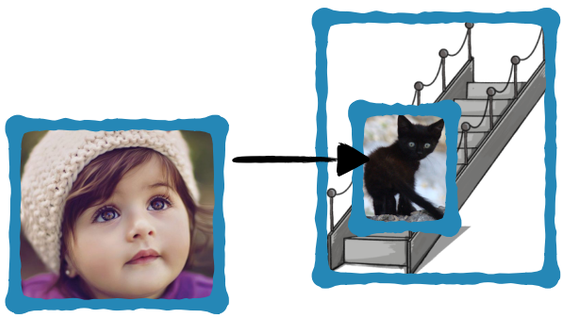
Linking theories

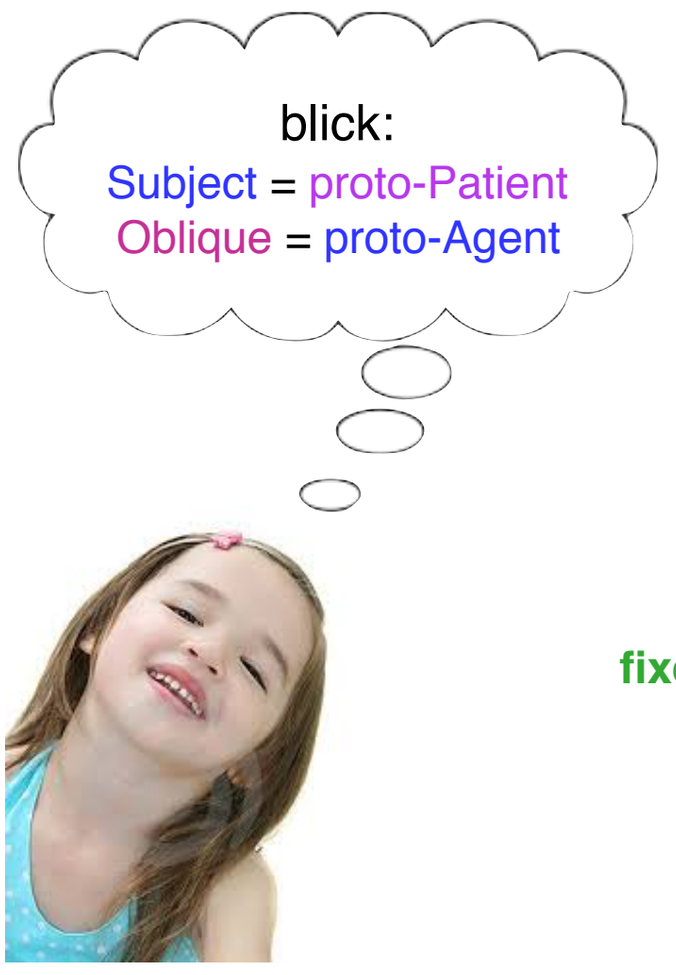
rUTAH

UTAH

relative

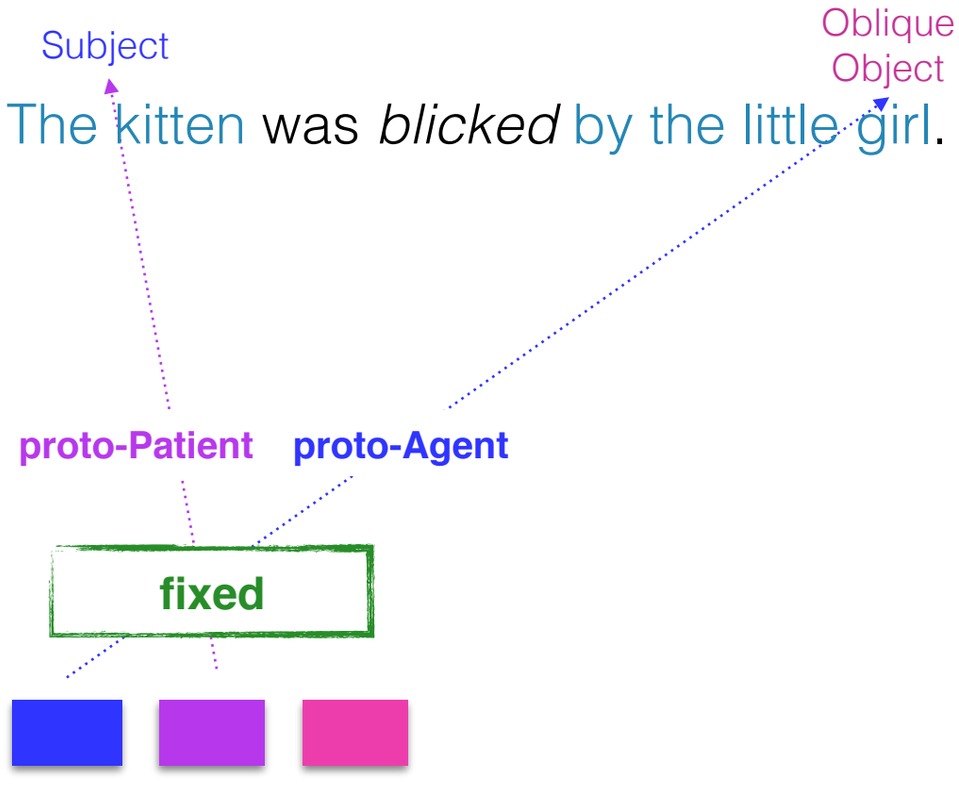
How does linking knowledge affect verb clustering in children?

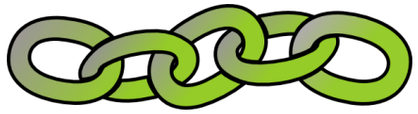




fixed

If children don't expect a mapping already, they may track the details of where certain thematic representations appear and use that to cluster verbs.





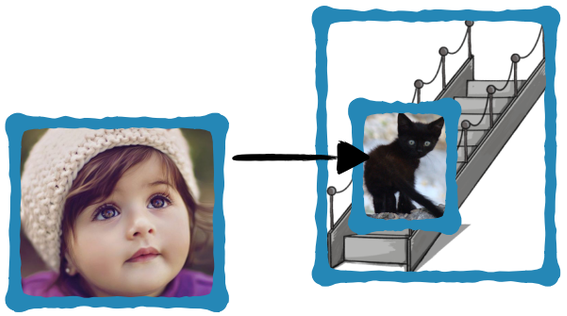
Linking theories

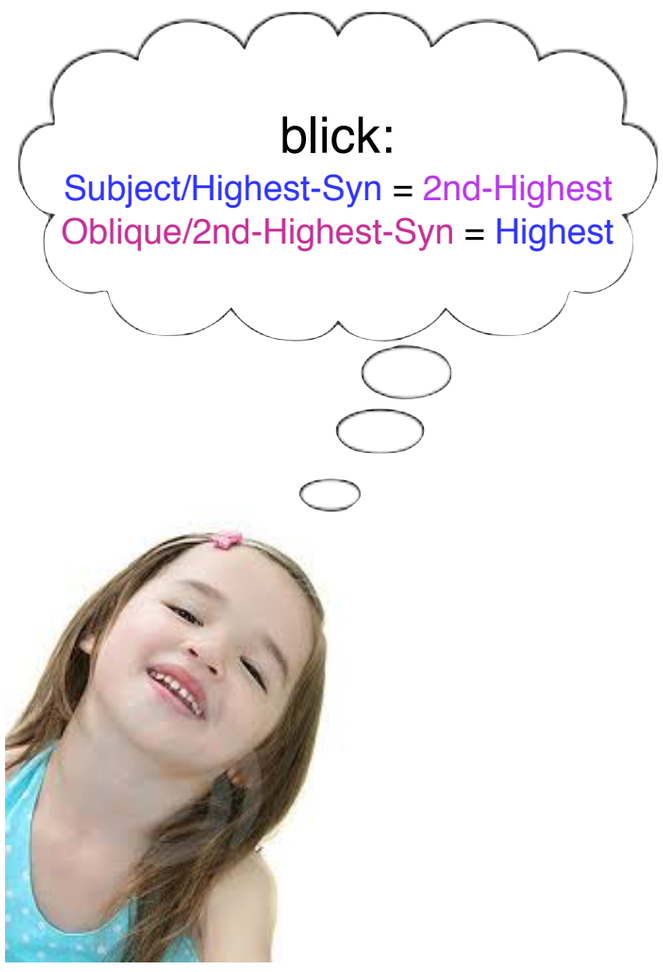
rUTAH

UTAH

fixed

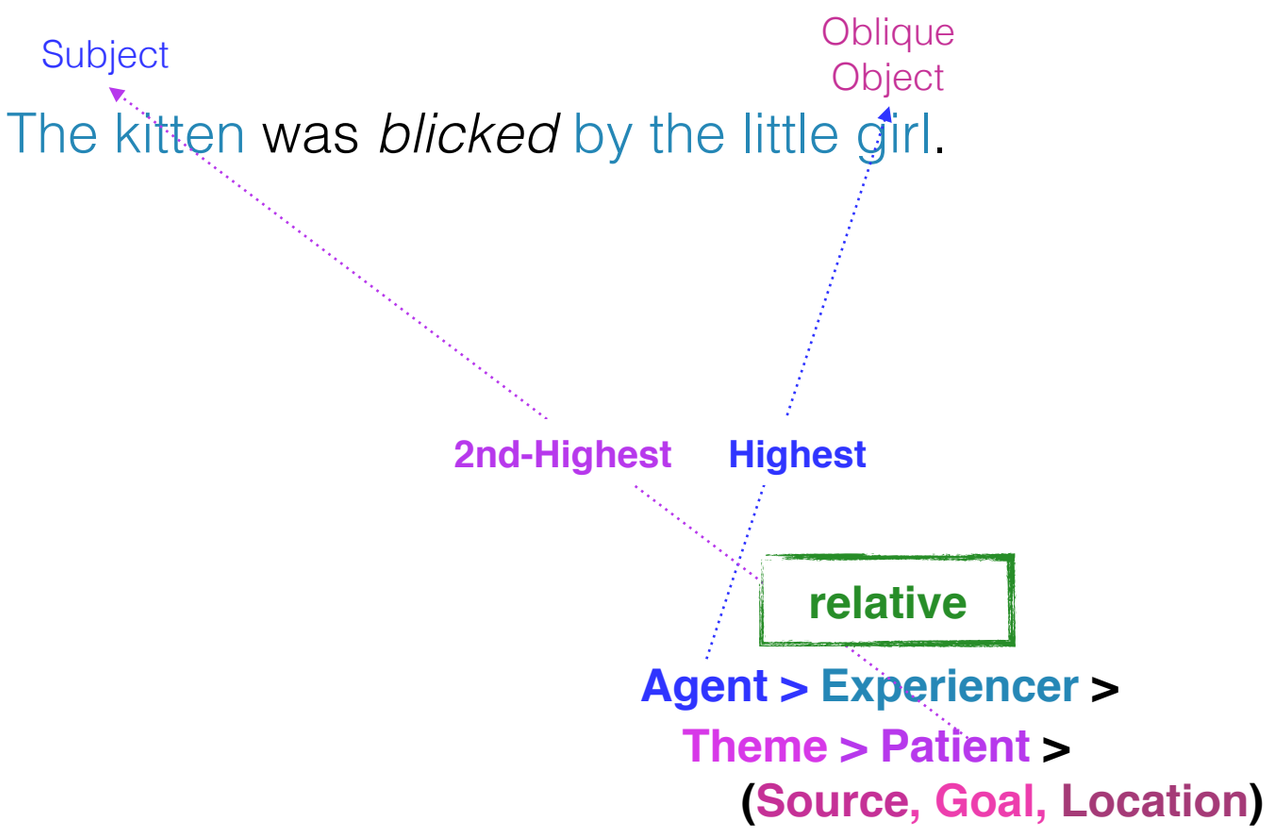
How does linking knowledge affect verb clustering in children?





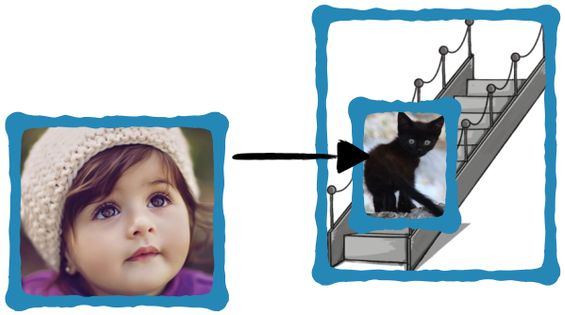
If children don't expect a mapping already, they may track the details of where certain thematic representations appear and use that to cluster verbs.

relative

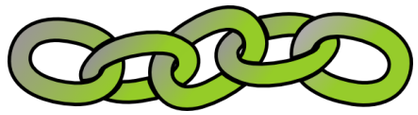


Linking theories

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Strong empirical foundation:
We have a lot of empirical data about the development of **verb classes**: experimental studies of children's behavior (output of acquisition) and corpus studies of their input.



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed

The Plan

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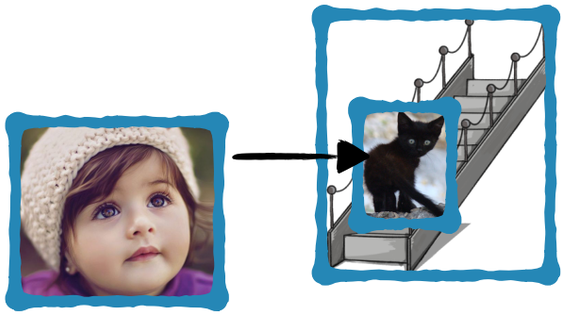
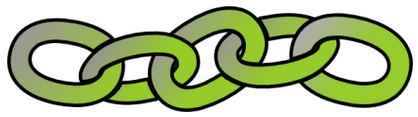


1. Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



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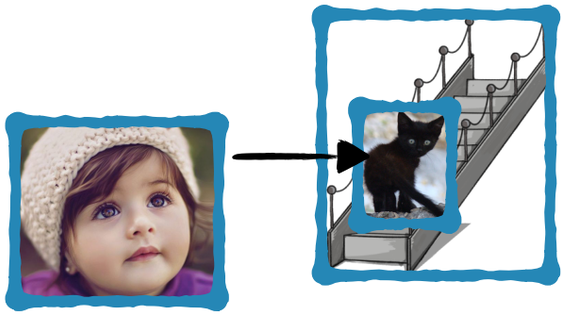

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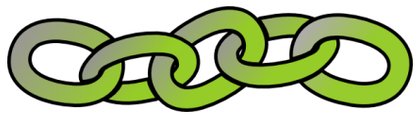

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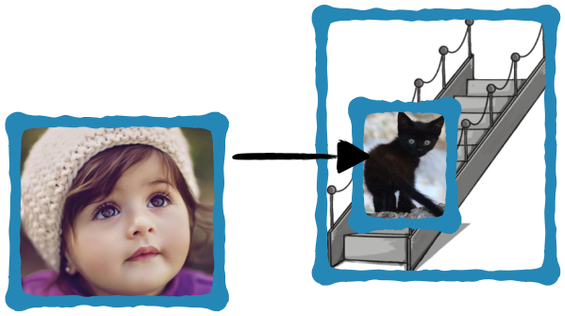

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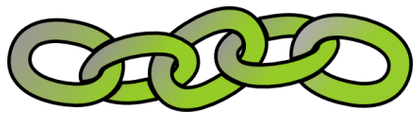

rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
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(Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed

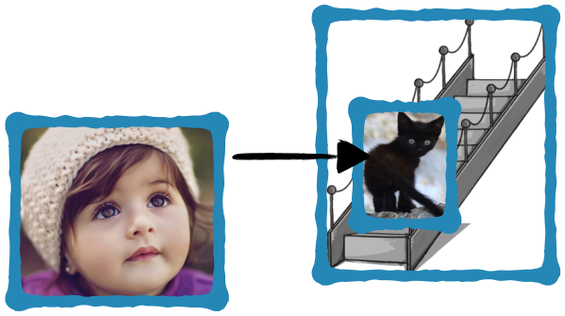
2. Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

relative

fixed

The Plan

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



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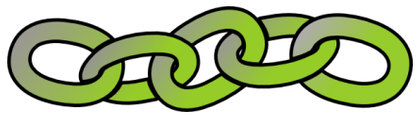
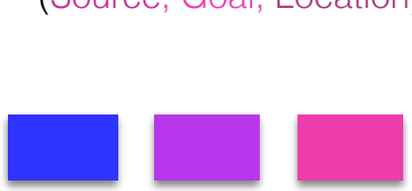


Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

UTAH



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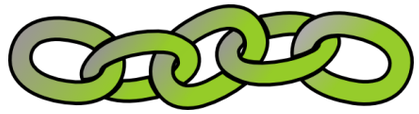
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



rUTAH

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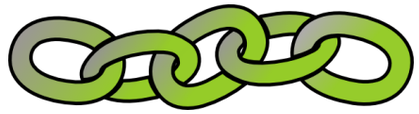
Goal:
Build a modeled learner who learns close enough to how real children learn to tell us something informative about these linking theory proposals

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



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Goal:
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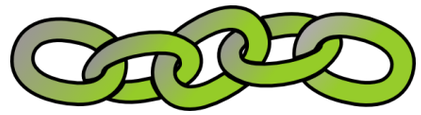
What's close enough?

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



rUTAH

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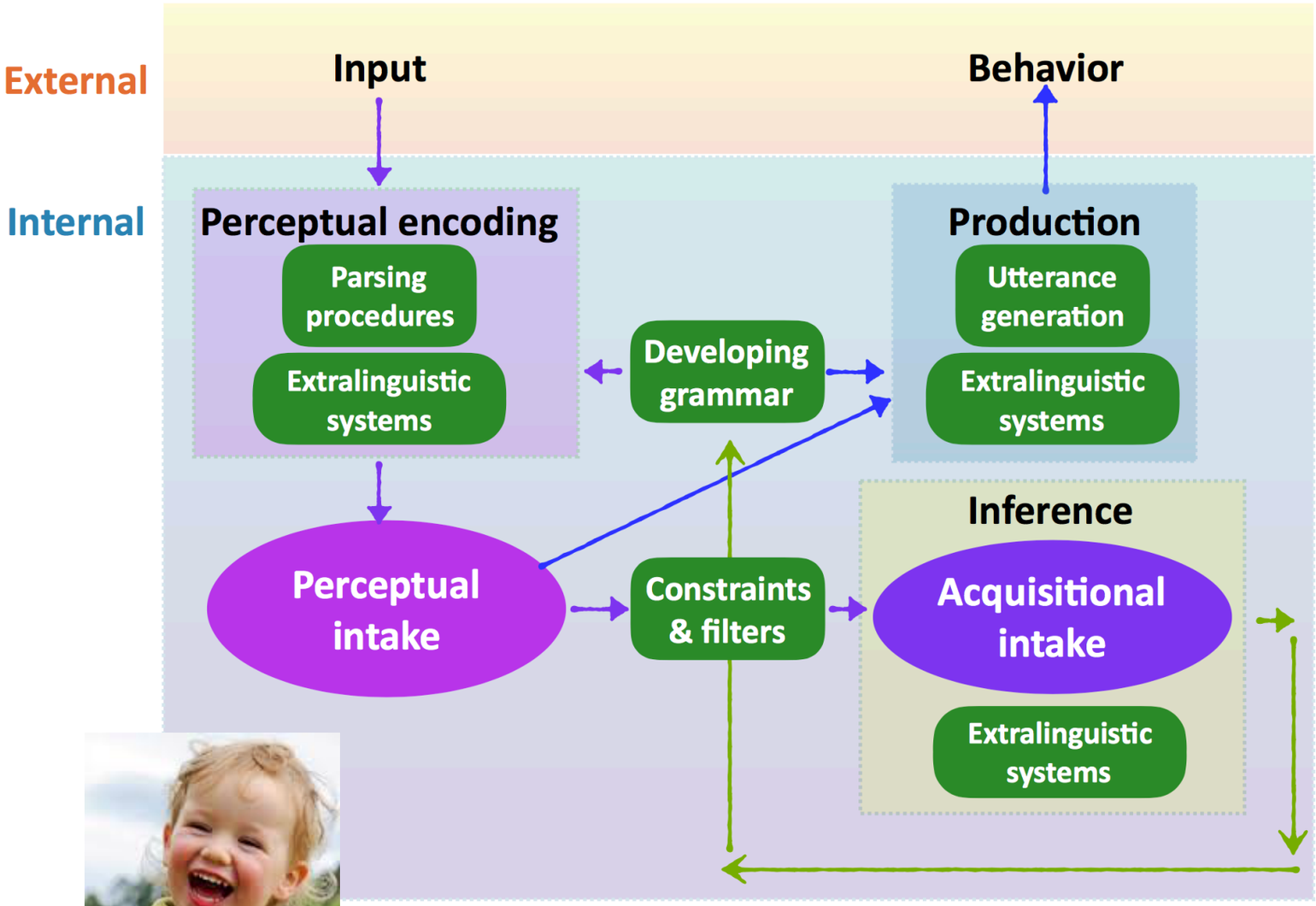
relative

UTAH

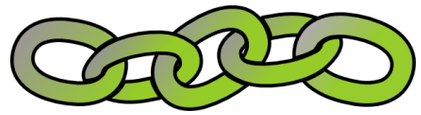
fixed

Close enough to this process



Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



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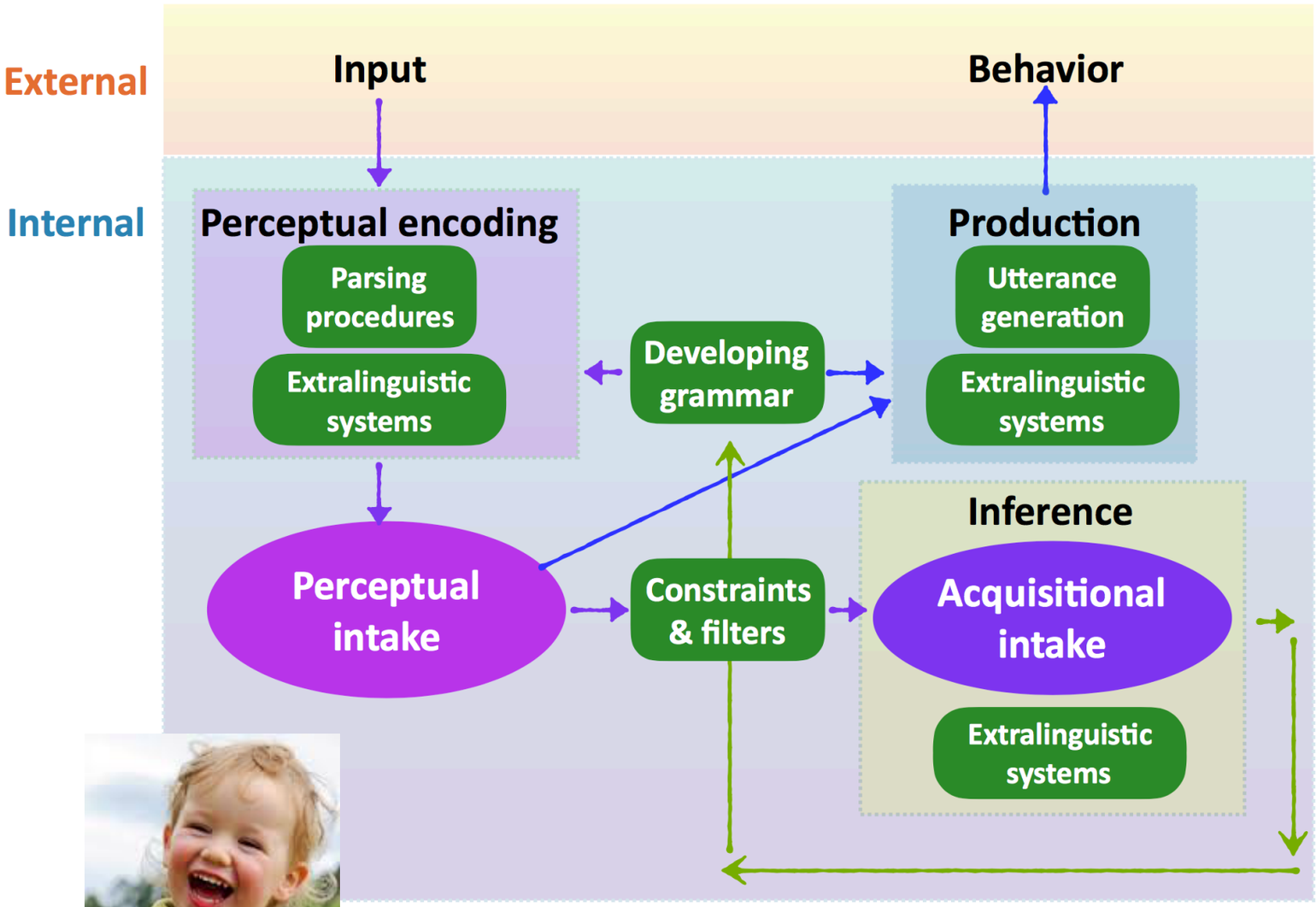
relative

UTAH

fixed

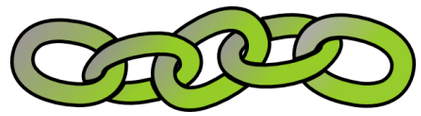
Close enough to this process

…which has a lot going on. It can be helpful when acquisition modeling to think about five main parts.



Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

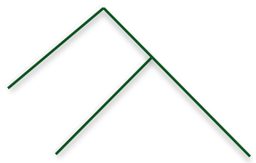
UTAH

fixed

five main parts

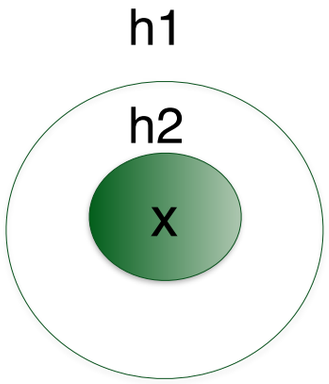
initial state

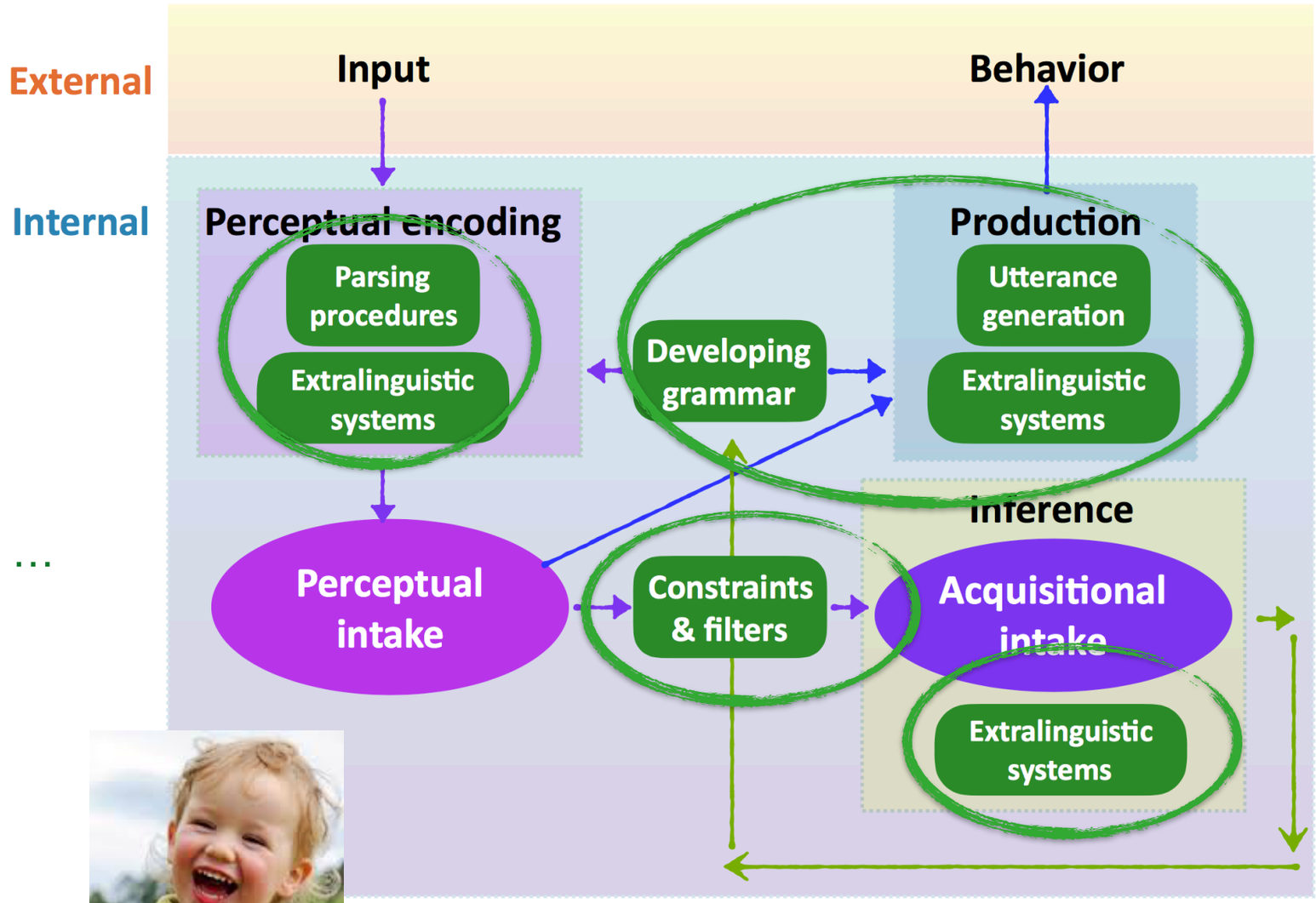
What does the child **start with**?
What knowledge, abilities, and learning biases does the child already have?



N, V, Adj, P, …

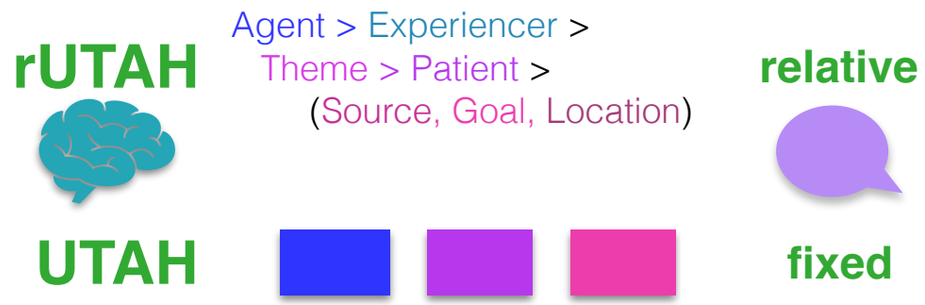
Agent, Patient, Goal, …





Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



five main parts

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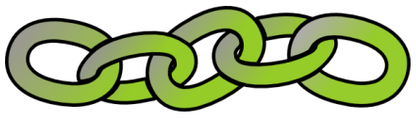

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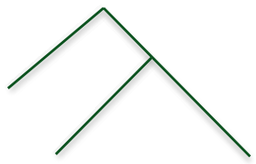
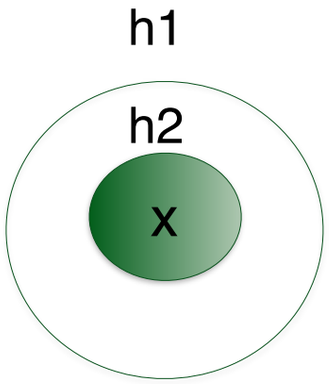
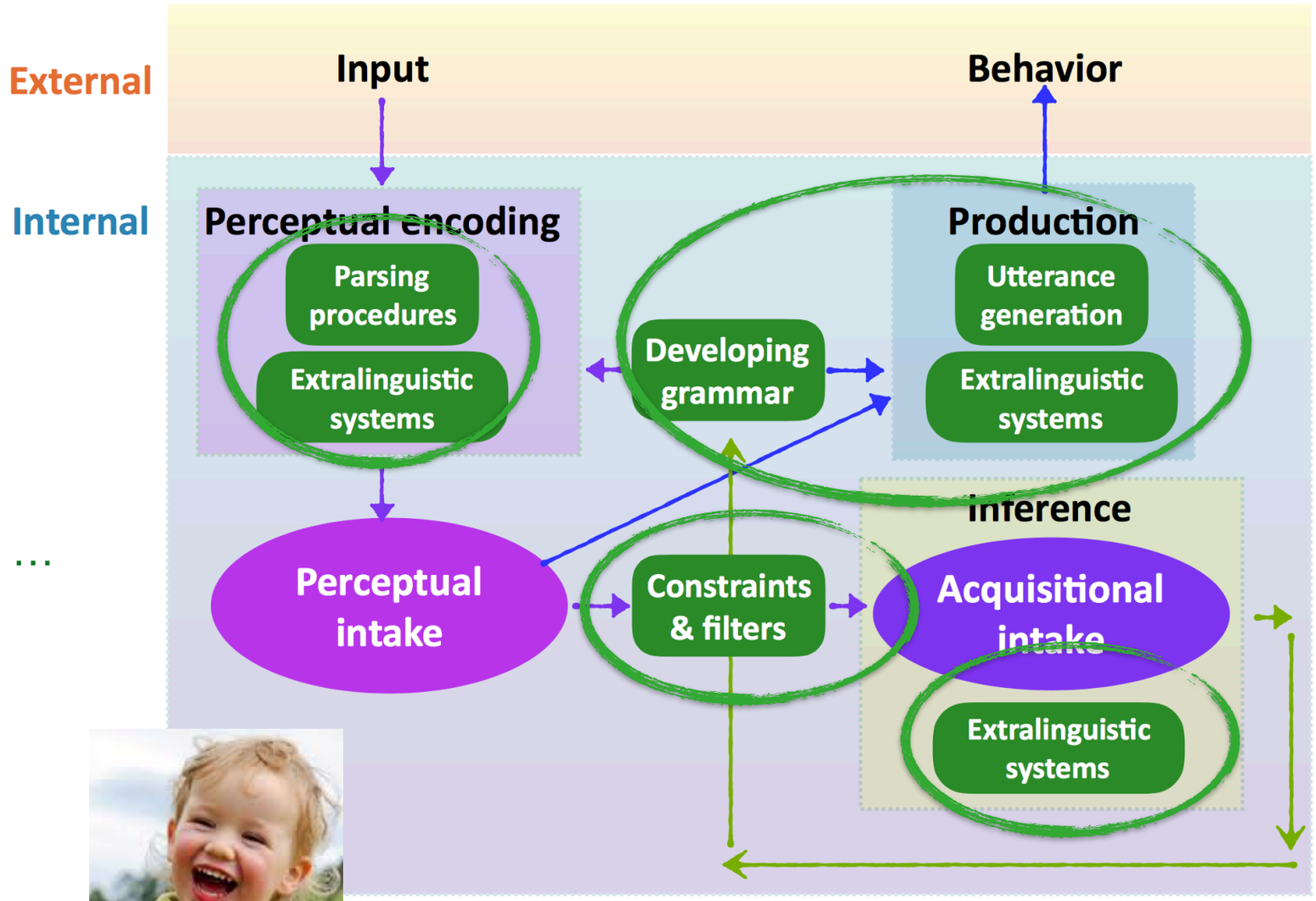


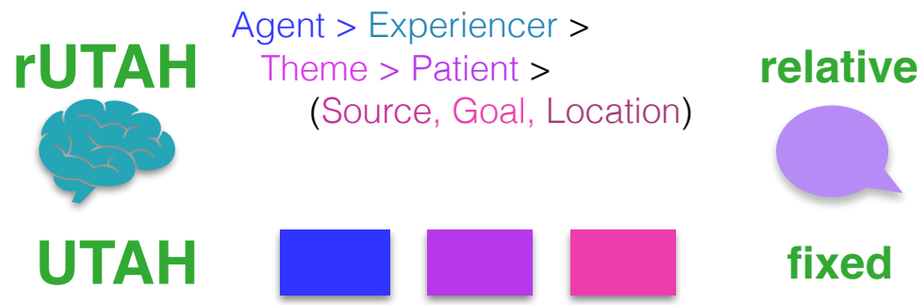
Agent, Patient, Goal, …





Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

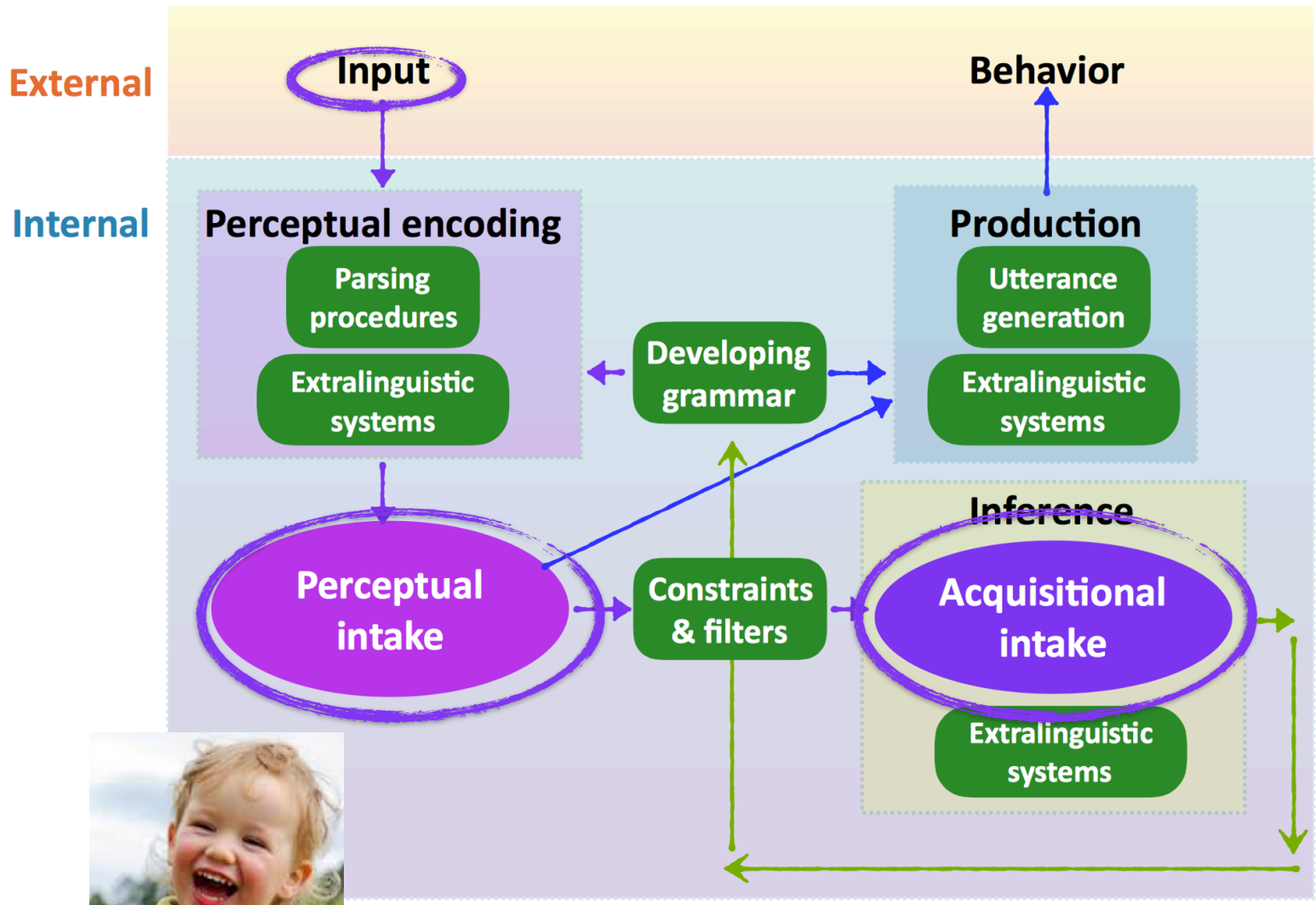


five main parts

initial state 

data intake

How does the modeled child perceive the input (= perceptual intake)? What part of the perceived data is used for acquisition (= **acquisitional intake**)?



Pearl *in press*

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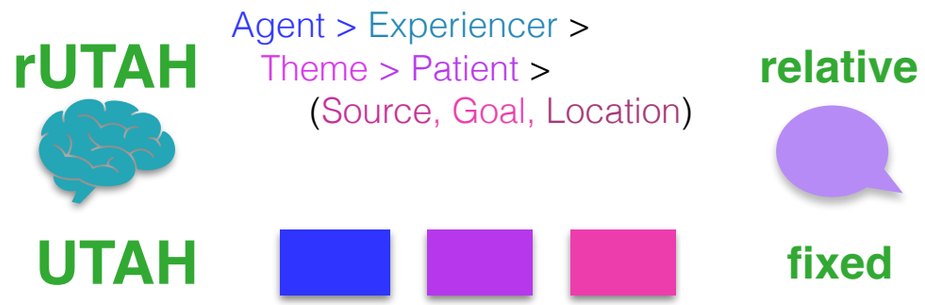

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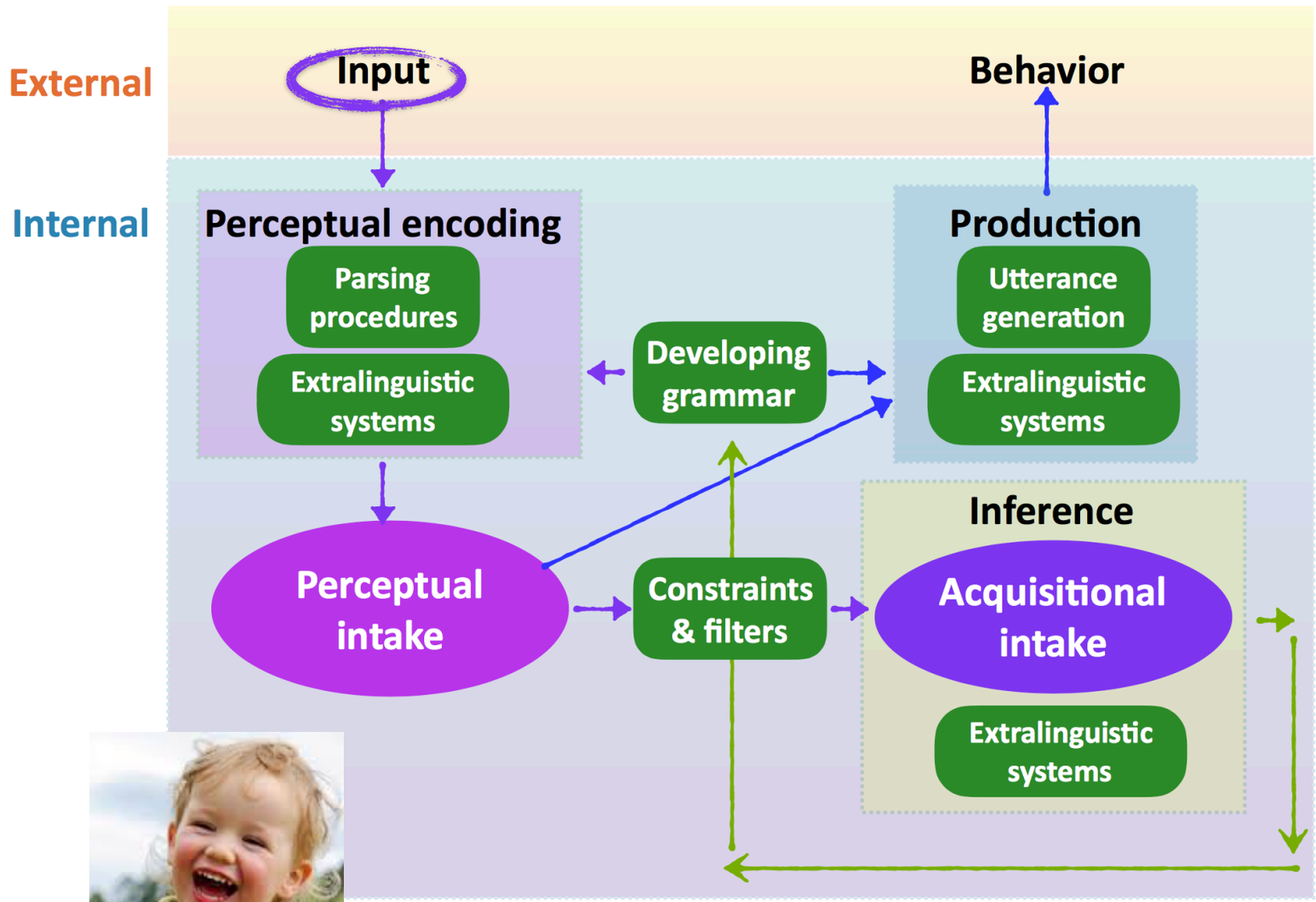

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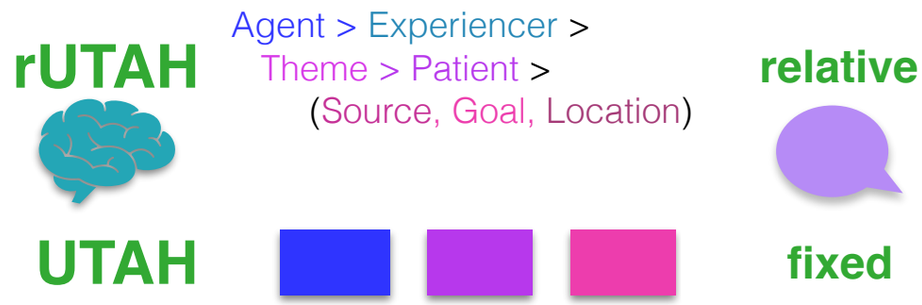

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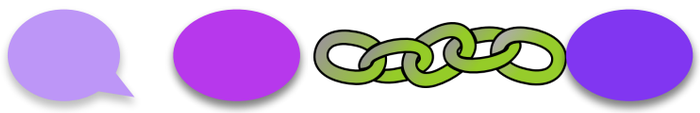

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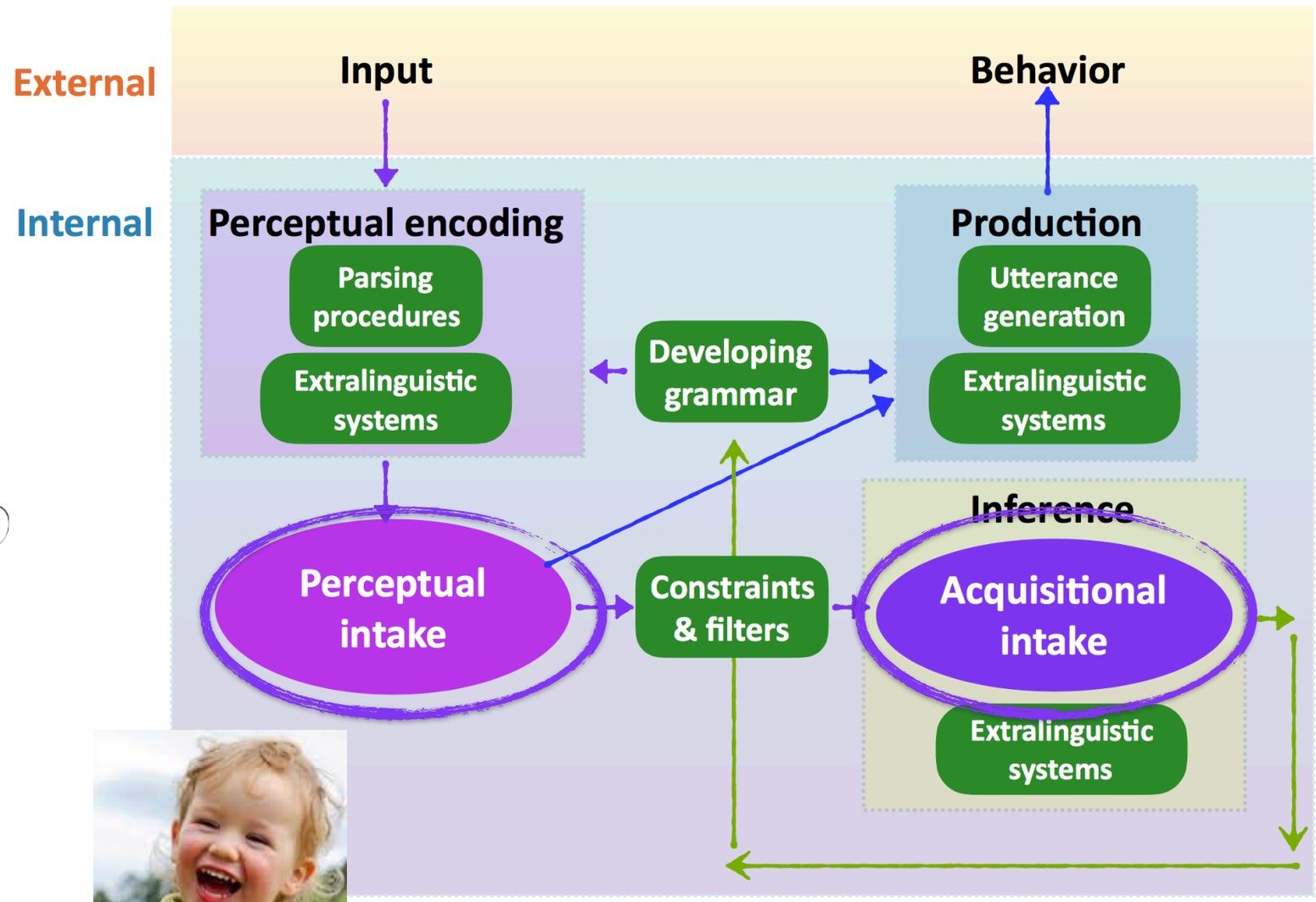

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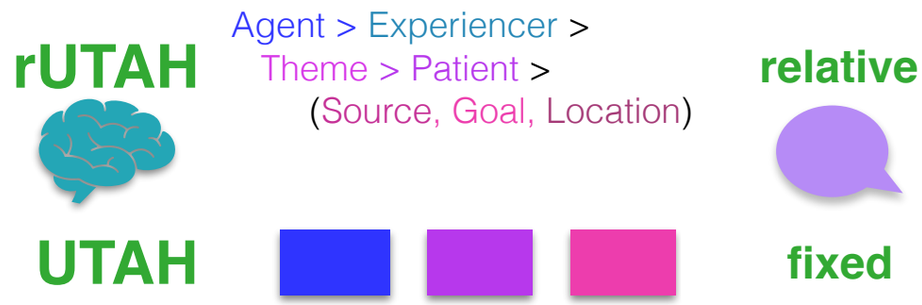

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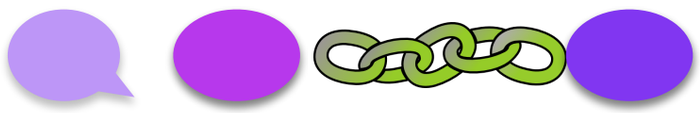

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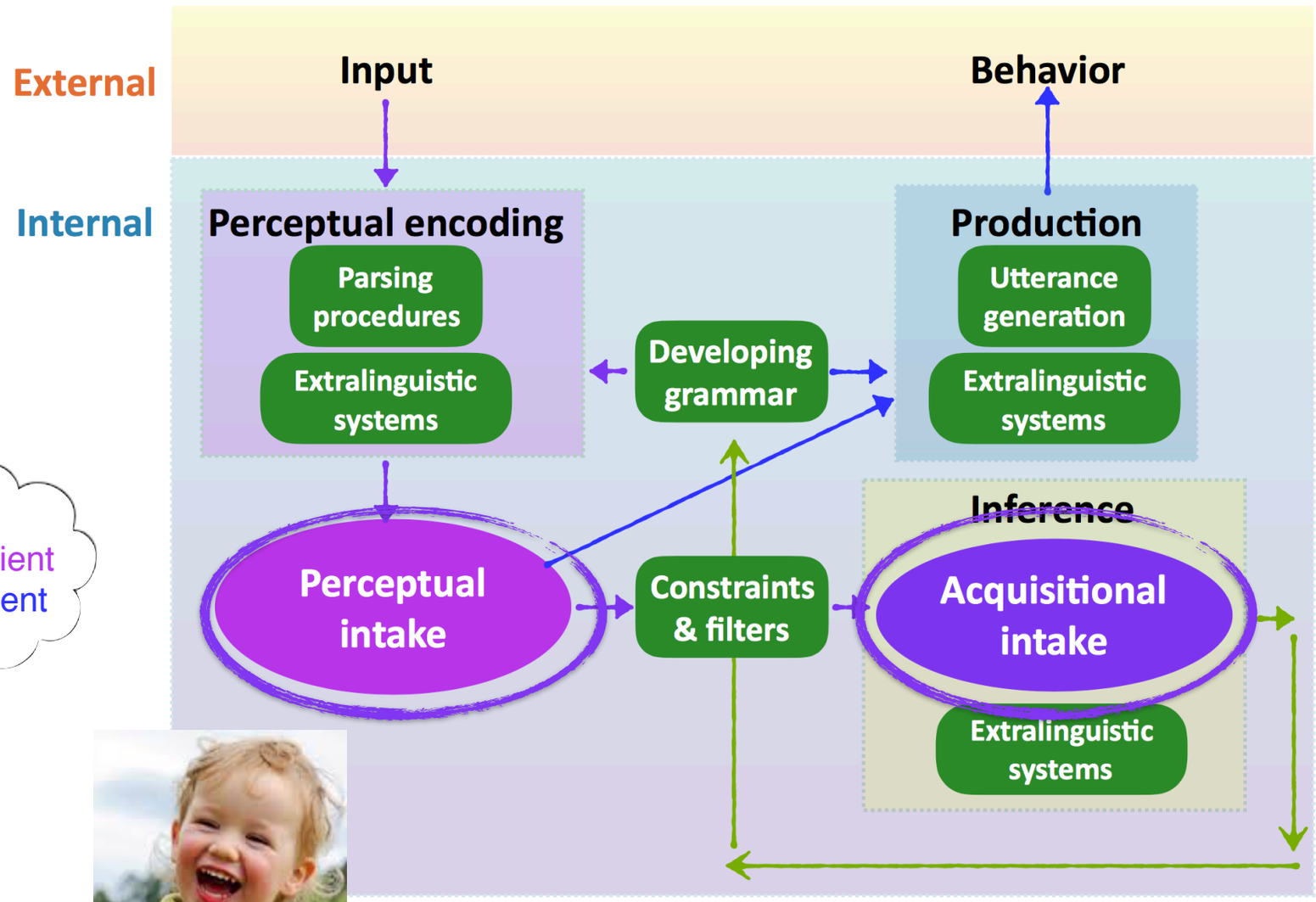
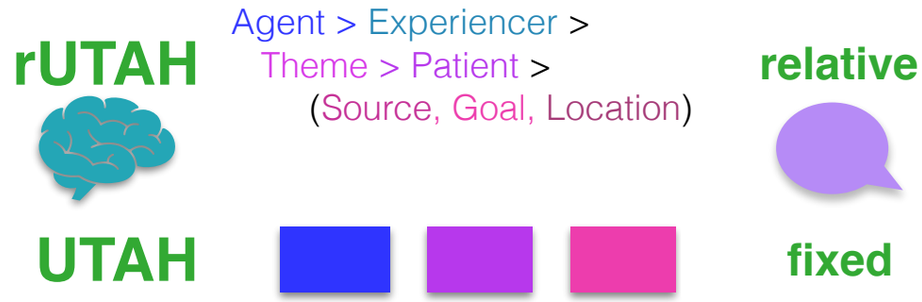


Pearl *in press*

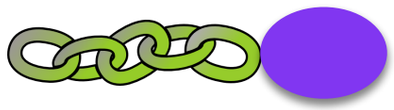
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



five main parts

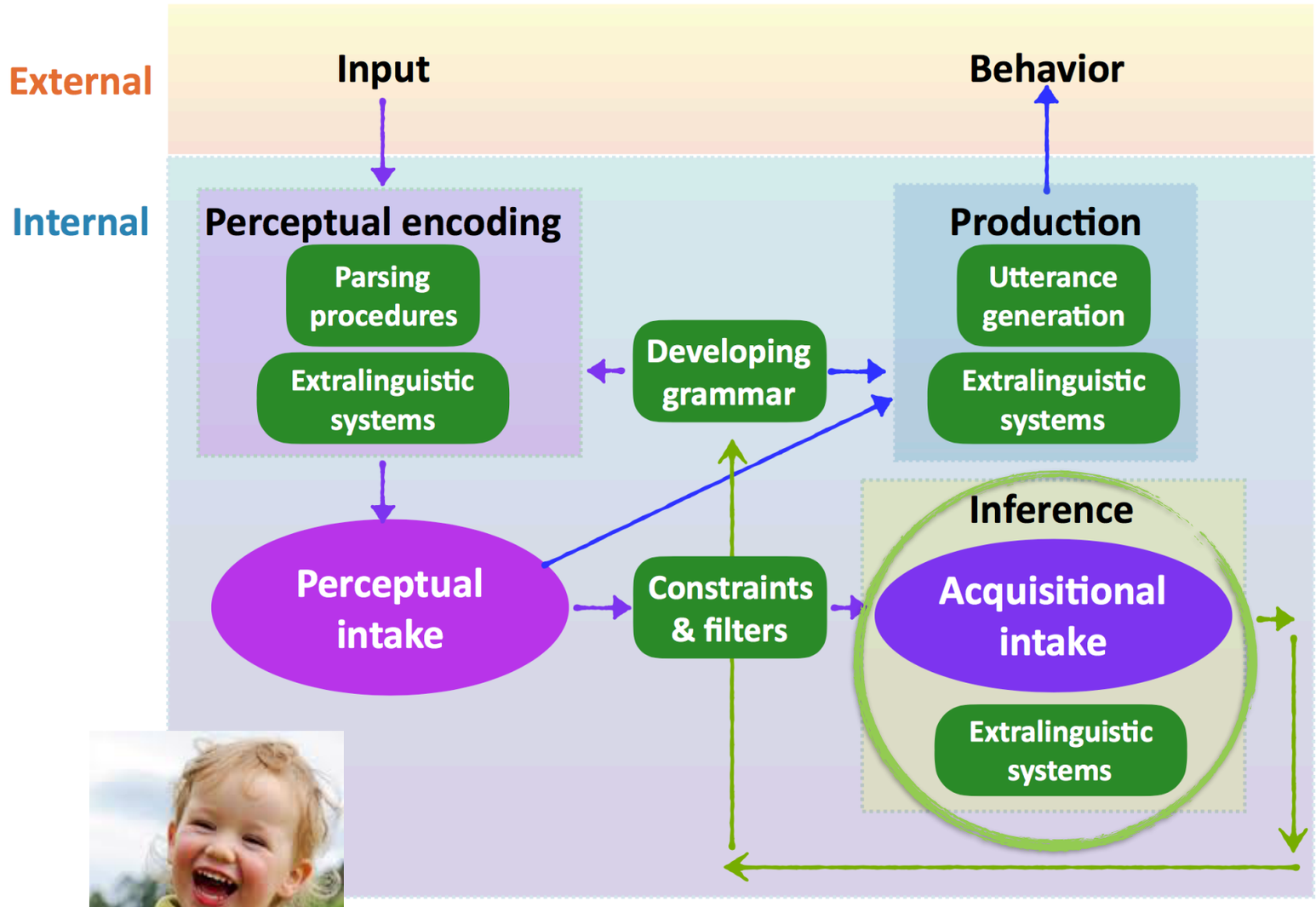
initial state

data intake



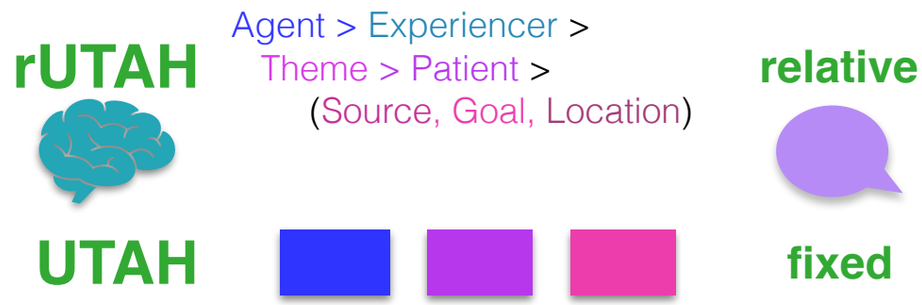
inference

How are updates made to the modeled child's internal representations?



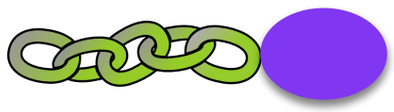
Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



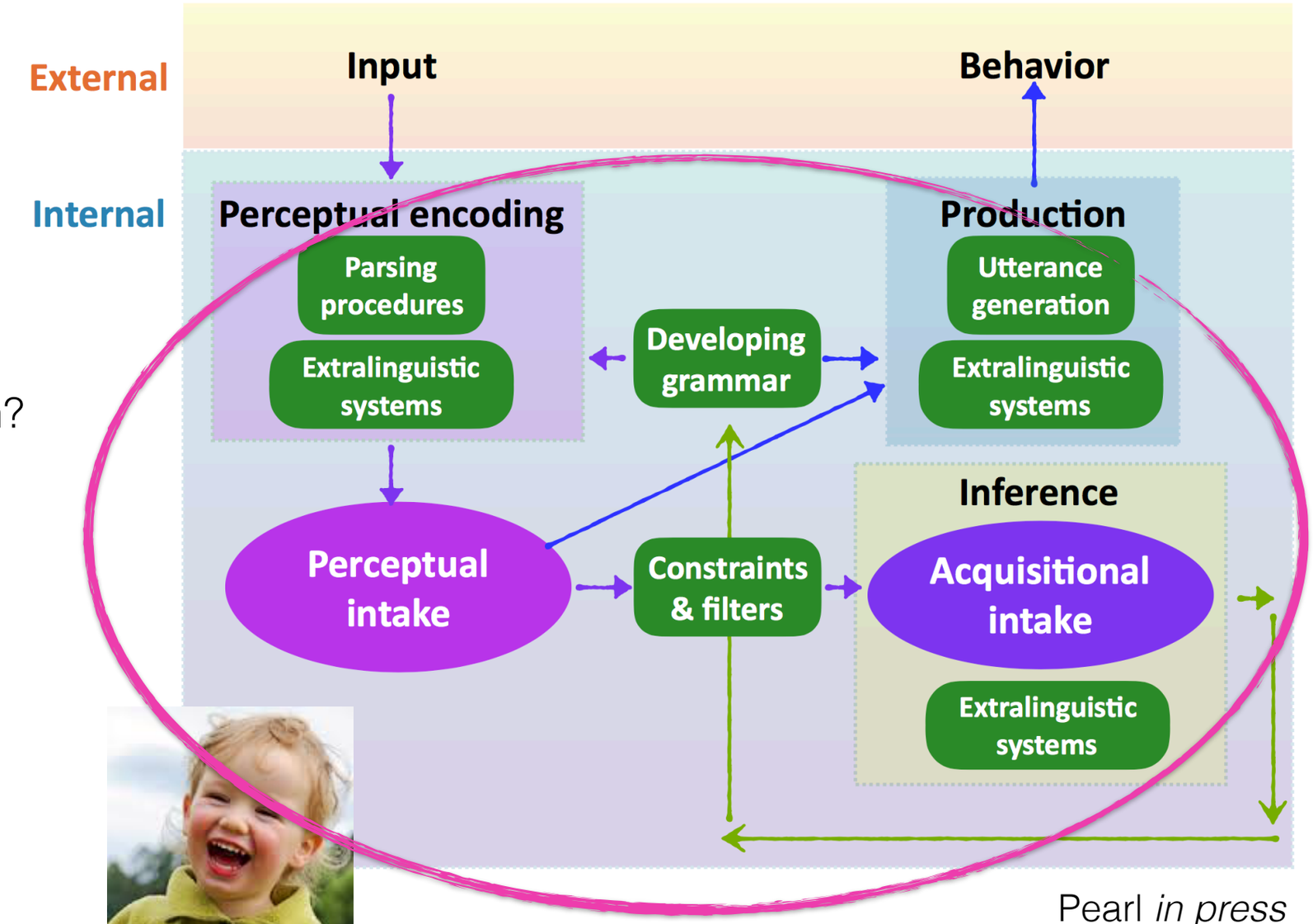
five main parts

initial state



data intake

inference



Pearl *in press*

learning period

How long does the child have to learn?

ex: 3 years, ~1,000,000 data points

ex: 4 months, ~36,500 data points

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

rUTAH

UTAH

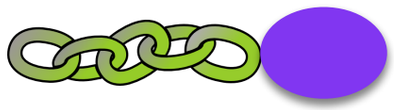
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

relative

fixed

five main parts

initial state



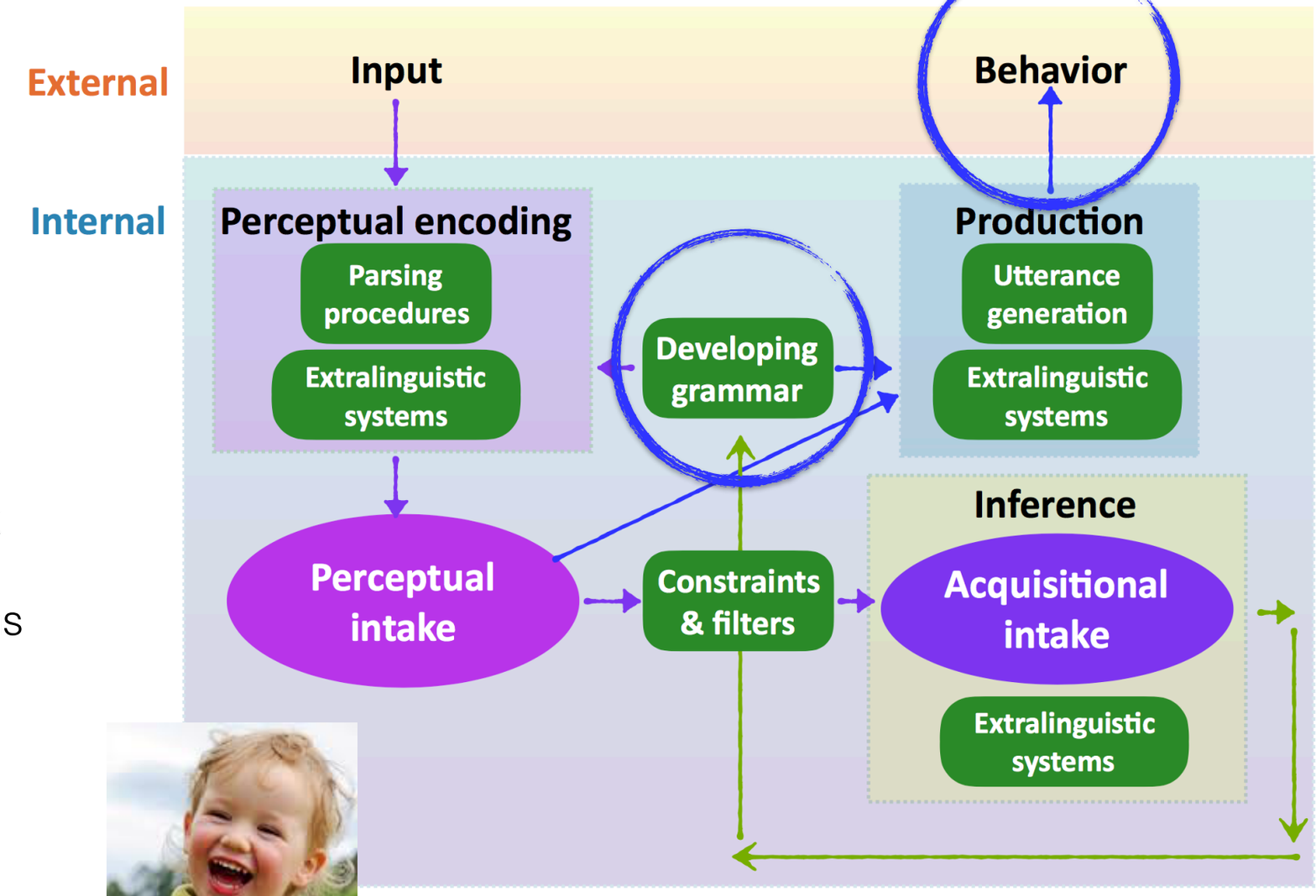
data intake

inference

learning period

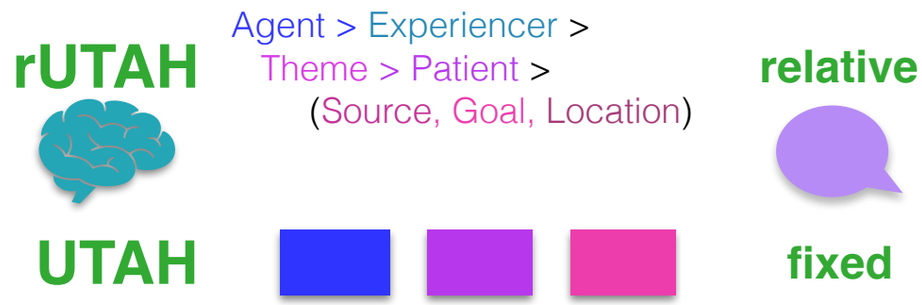
target state

What does successful acquisition look like? What knowledge is the child trying to attain (often assessed in terms of observable behavior)?



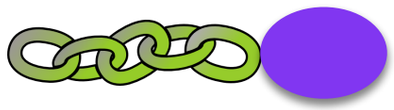
Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



five main parts

initial state



data intake

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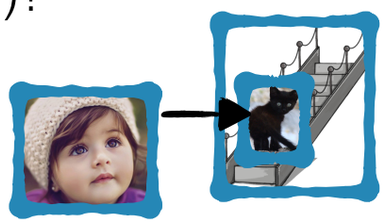
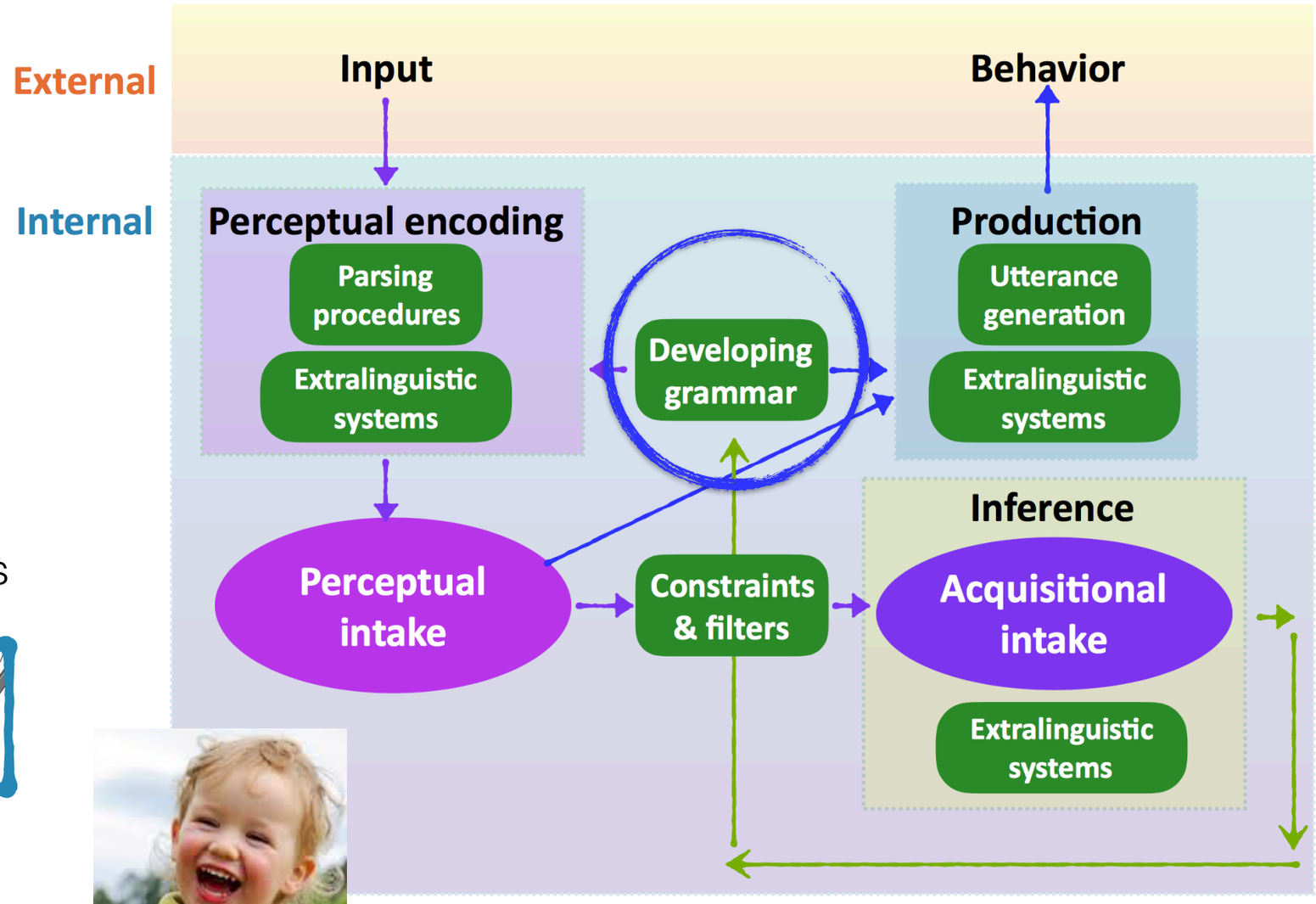
What does successful acquisition look like? What **knowledge** is the child trying to attain (often assessed in terms of observable behavior)?

The little girl kissed the kitten on the stairs.





Pearl *in press*

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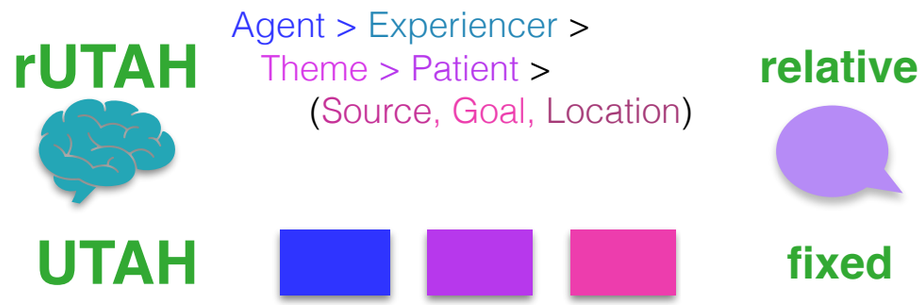
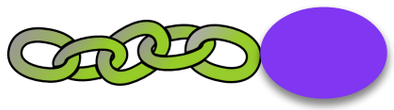


five main parts

initial state



data intake

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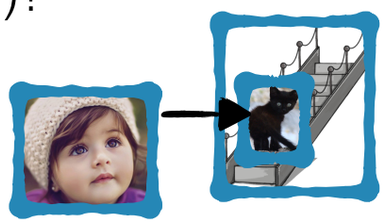
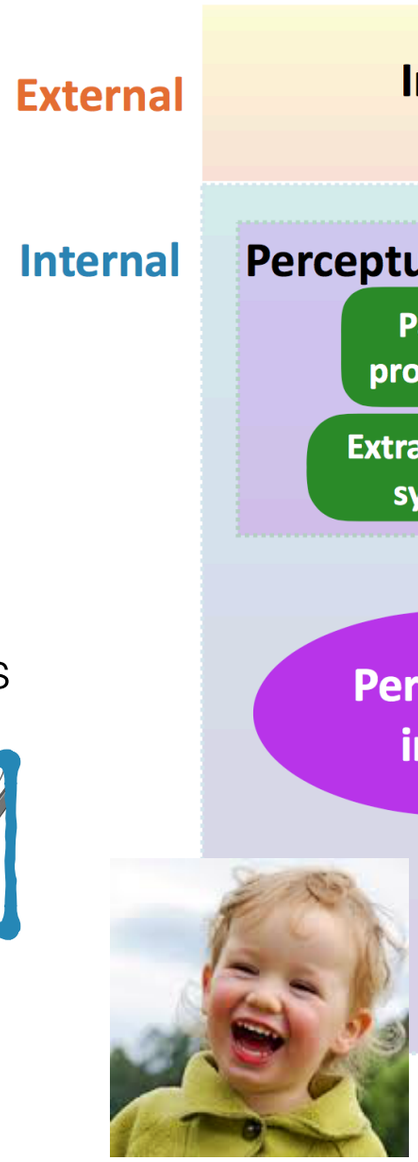
What does successful acquisition look like? What **knowledge** is the child trying to attain (often assessed in terms of observable behavior)?

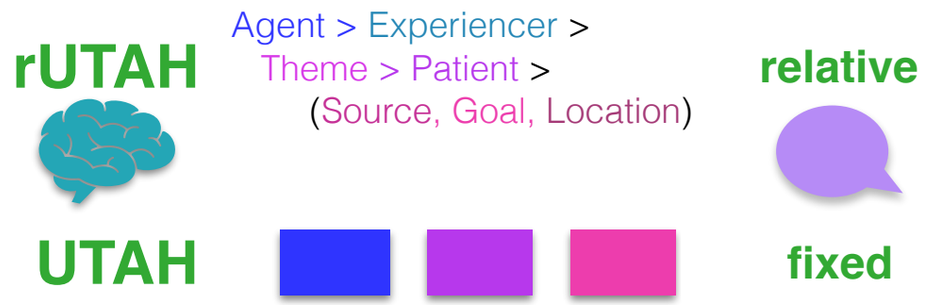
pet
touch
kiss
hug





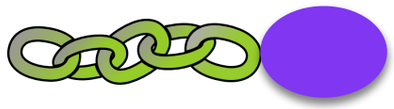
Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



five main parts

initial state



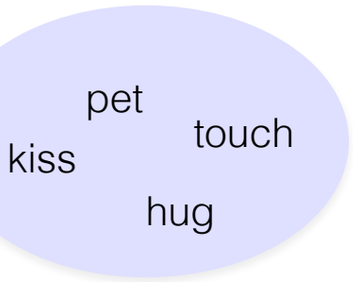
data intake

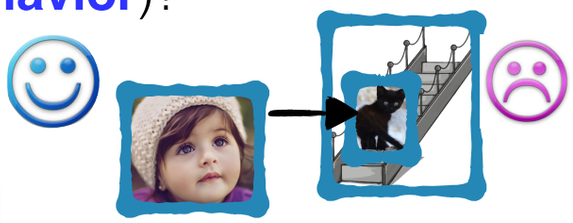
inference

learning period

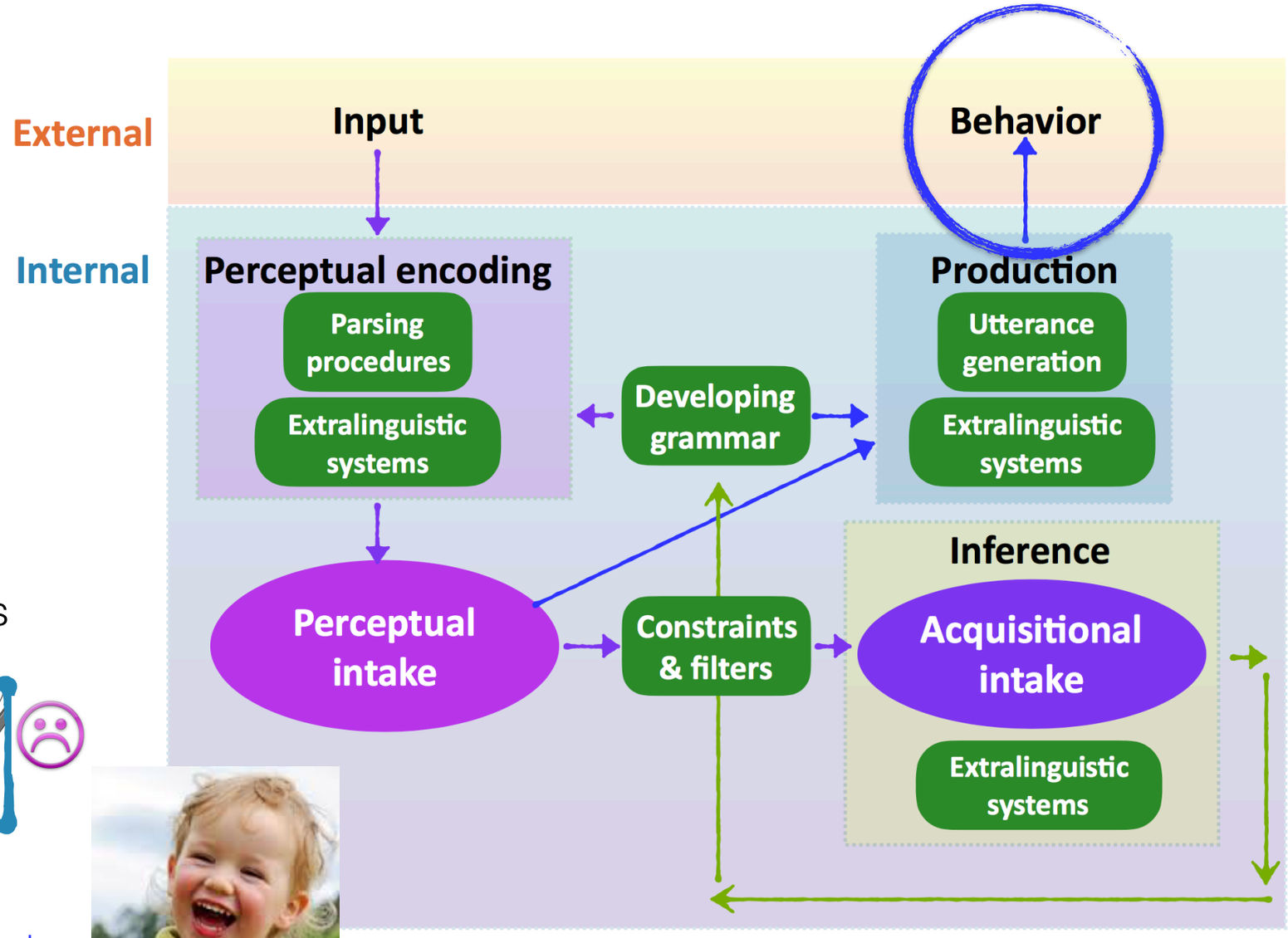
target state

What does successful acquisition look like? What knowledge is the child trying to attain (often assessed in terms of **observable behavior**)?



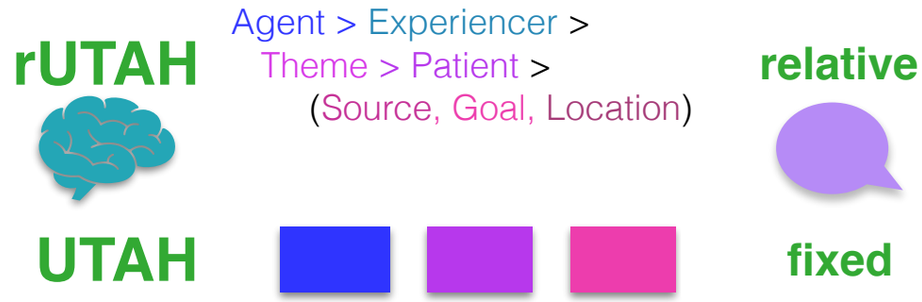


interpretations or productions in context



Pearl *in press*

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



five main parts

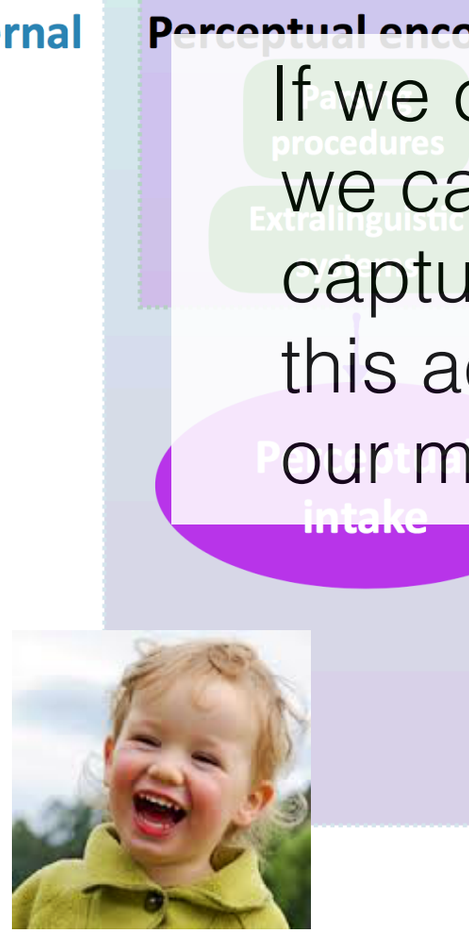
initial state

data intake

inference

learning period

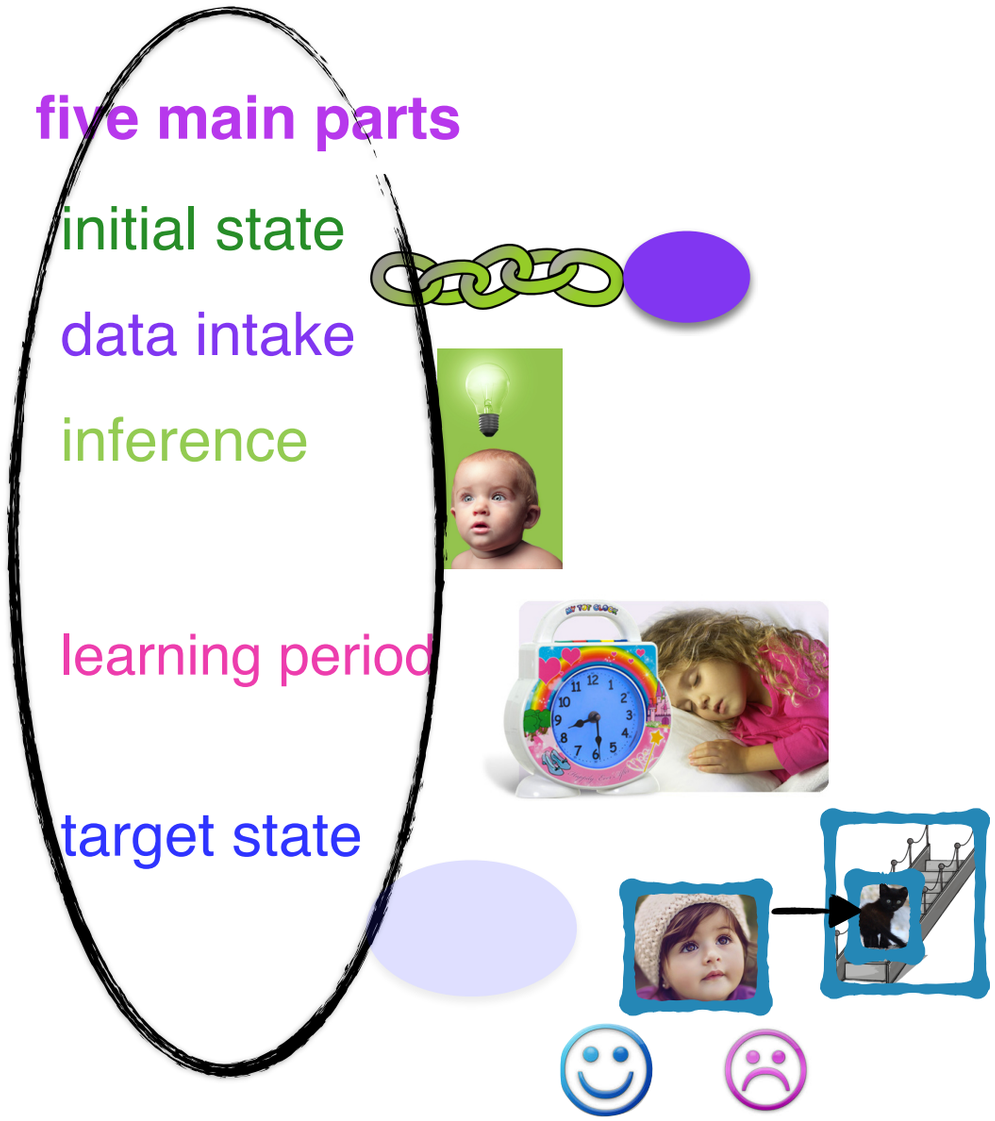
target state

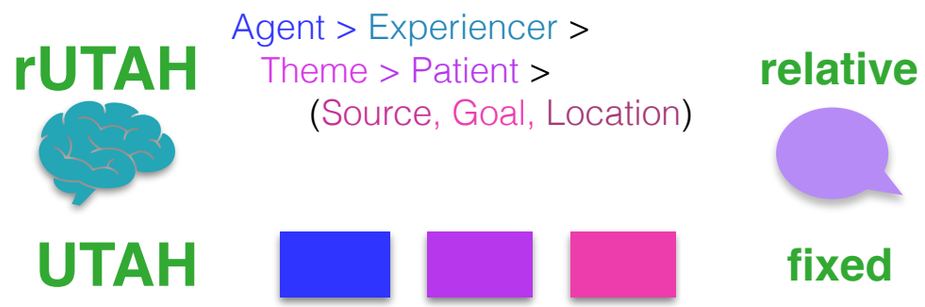


If we can define those pieces, we can make sure we've captured the relevant parts of this acquisition process in our modeled learner.

Pearl *in press*

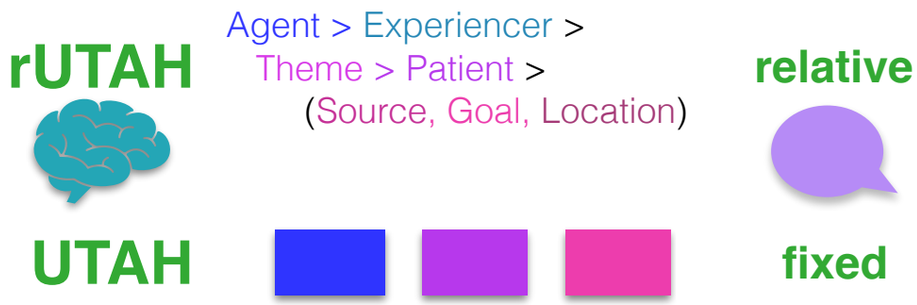
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

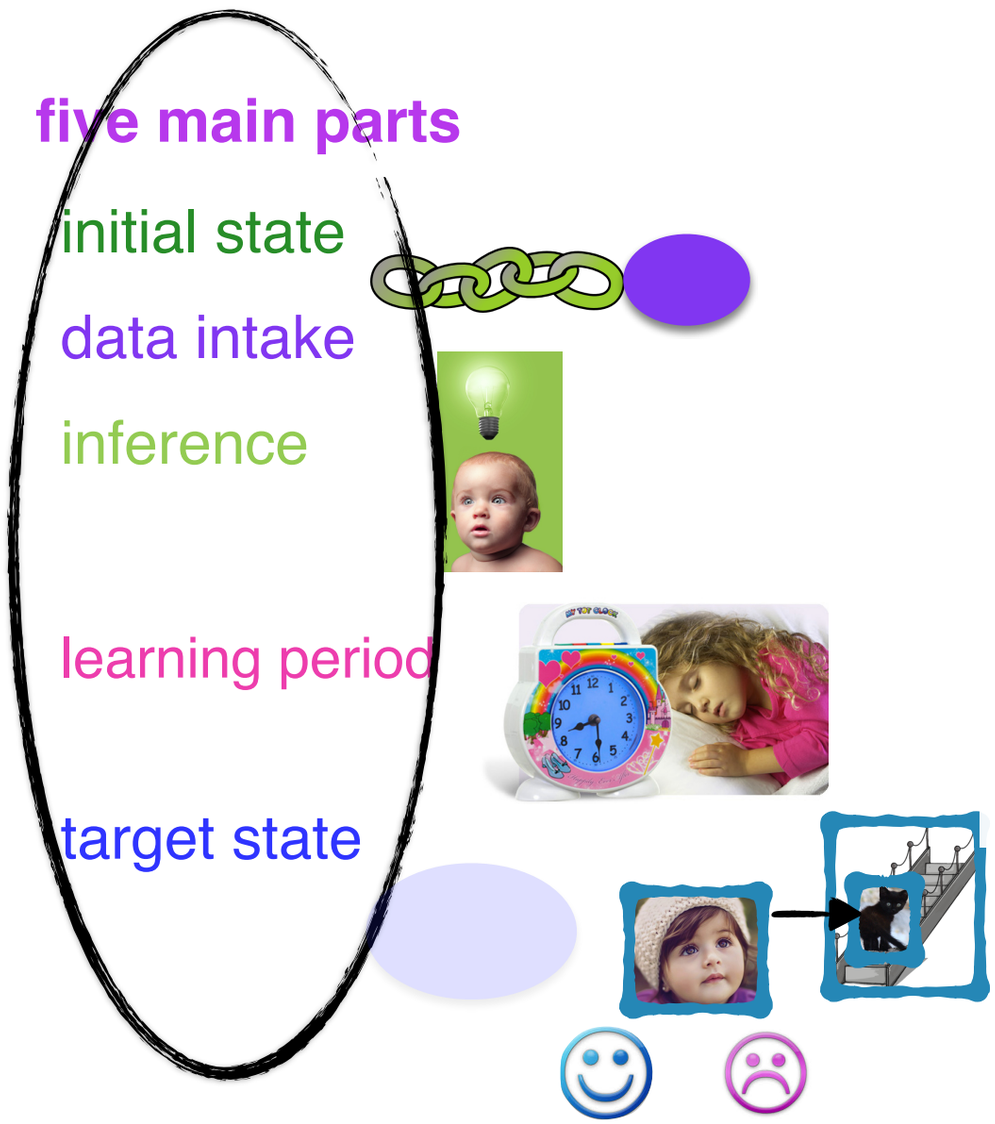




So let's do this for modeled learners who implement different linking theory proposals.

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling





Goal: Model the developmental trajectory of verb class knowledge from 3 to 4 to 5 years old in English

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

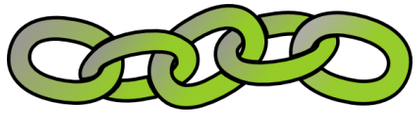
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

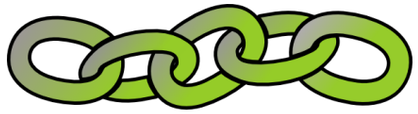
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

UTAH

relative

fixed

Thematic roles that indicate event participant roles are salient to very young children.
(<10 months: Gordon 2003; 6 months: Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom 2007, Hamlin, Wynn, Bloom, & Mahajan 2011)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

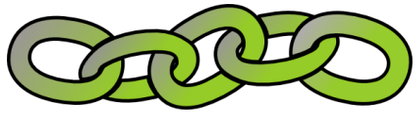
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state



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Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

UTAH

relative

fixed

Thematic roles that indicate event participant roles are salient to very young children.
(<10 months: Gordon 2003; 6 months: Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom 2007, Hamlin, Wynn, Bloom, & Mahajan 2011)

Cognitively plausible ✓

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

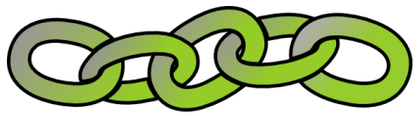
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state



rUTAH

UTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

relative

fixed

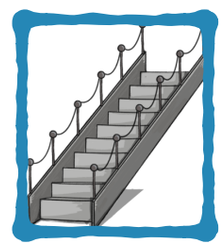
Children are also sensitive to the animacy of verb arguments.

Becker 2009, Kirby 2009, Kirby 2010,
Becker 2014, Becker 2015, Hartshorne et al. 2015, among others

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

+animate

+animate



-animate

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

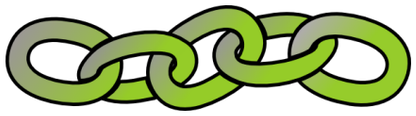
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state



rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

UTAH

relative

fixed

+animate

-animate

Children pay attention to the linguistic context of a verb (its syntactic frame) to figure out how it behaves (e.g., Fisher et al. 2010, Gutman et al. 2015, Harrigan et al. 2016).

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state

rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
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(Source, Goal, Location)

UTAH

relative

fixed

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The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

NP ___ NP PP

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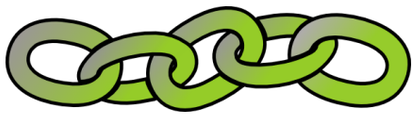
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

data intake

inference
learning period

target state

initial state



Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

UTAH

relative

fixed

+animate

-animate

NP ___ NP PP

+ whatever statistical learning abilities are required to do inference (Saffran et al. 1996, Gerken 2006, Mintz 2006, Xu & Tenenbaum 2007, Smith & Yu 2008)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state inference target state
learning period

input that yields data intake



The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Samples of child-directed speech

CHILDES Treebank

Pearl & Sprouse 2013

<3yrs

18 and 32 months
~40,000 utterances
239 verbs

<4yrs

18 and 48 months
~51,000 utterances
267 verbs

<5yrs

18 and 58 months
~56,500 utterances
284 verbs

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state inference target state
learning period

data intake

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.
NP ___ NP PP *syntactic frame*

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state inference target state
learning period

data intake

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

NP ___ NP PP *syntactic frame*

NP ___ NP PP -surface morphology

NP ___+past NP PP +surface morphology

Children may either ignore verb surface morphology (like the past tense marker -ed) or pay attention to it when encoding the syntactic frame information.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state

inference
learning period

target state

data intake



+animate **+animate** **-animate**

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

NP ___ NP PP -surface morphology

NP ___**+past** NP PP +surface morphology

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state

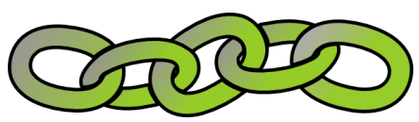
inference
learning period

target state

data intake

rUTAH

UTAH



relative

fixed

+animate **+animate** **-animate**

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

NP ___ NP PP -surface morphology

NP ___**+past** NP PP +surface morphology

+expect-mapping

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state

inference
learning period

target state

data intake



+animate **+animate** **-animate**

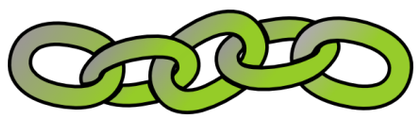
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

NP ___ NP PP -surface morphology

NP ___**+past** NP PP +surface morphology

rUTAH

UTAH



relative

fixed

blick:
Subject = proto-Agent
Object = proto-Patient
Oblique = Other

-expect-mapping

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state

inference
learning period

target state

data intake



+animate **+animate** **-animate**

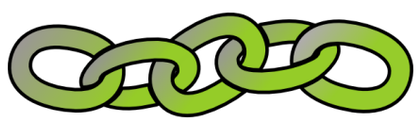
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

NP ___ NP PP -surface morphology

NP ___**+past** NP PP +surface morphology

rUTAH

UTAH



relative

fixed

blick:
Highest-syn = Highest
2nd-Highest-syn = 2nd-Highest
3rd-Highest-syn = 3rd-Highest

-expect-mapping

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference
learning period

Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

learning period

Ideal learner model: not concerned with the cognitive limitations and incremental learning restrictions children have.

Concerned with what assumptions are useful for children to have.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

learning period

Ideal learner model: not concerned with the cognitive limitations and incremental learning restrictions children have.

Concerned with what assumptions are useful for children to have.

It's good to do this before we start worrying if the assumptions are useable by children.

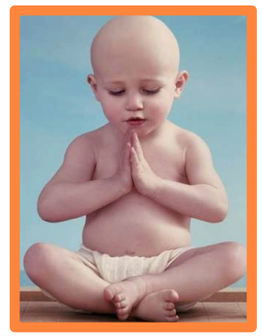
Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

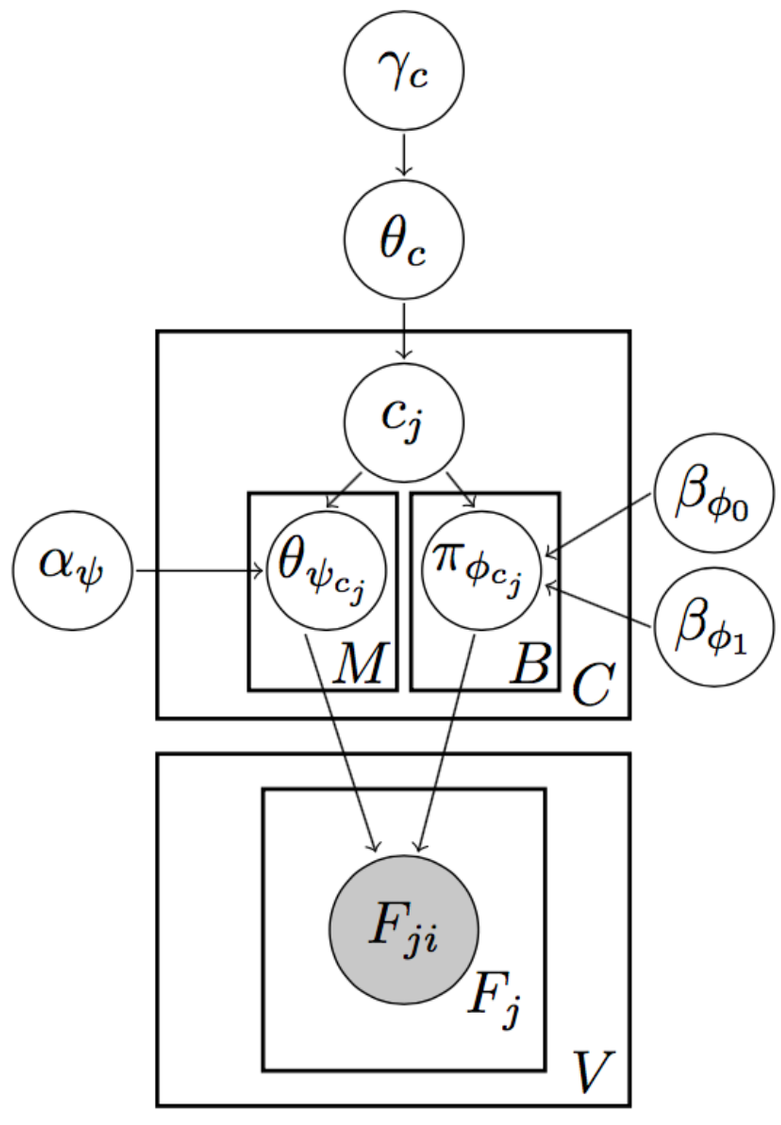
initial state data intake target state

inference

Learners use a **generative model** of how the observable data for each verb are created.



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

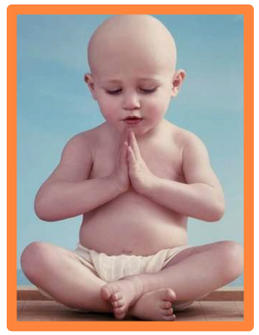


Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

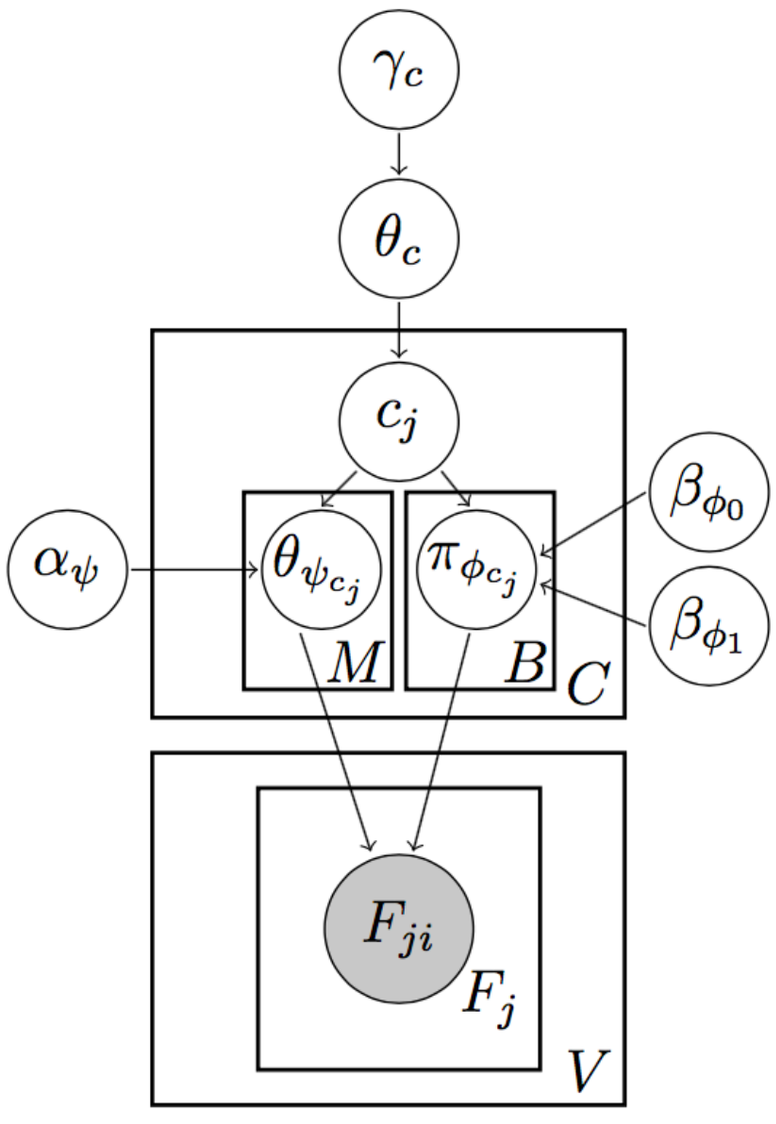
inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Learners use a **generative model** of how the observable data for each verb are created.

This represents how the different information is integrated into the process of determining a verb's class.



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

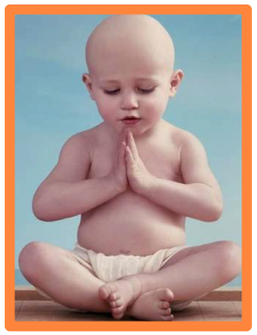
initial state data intake target state

inference

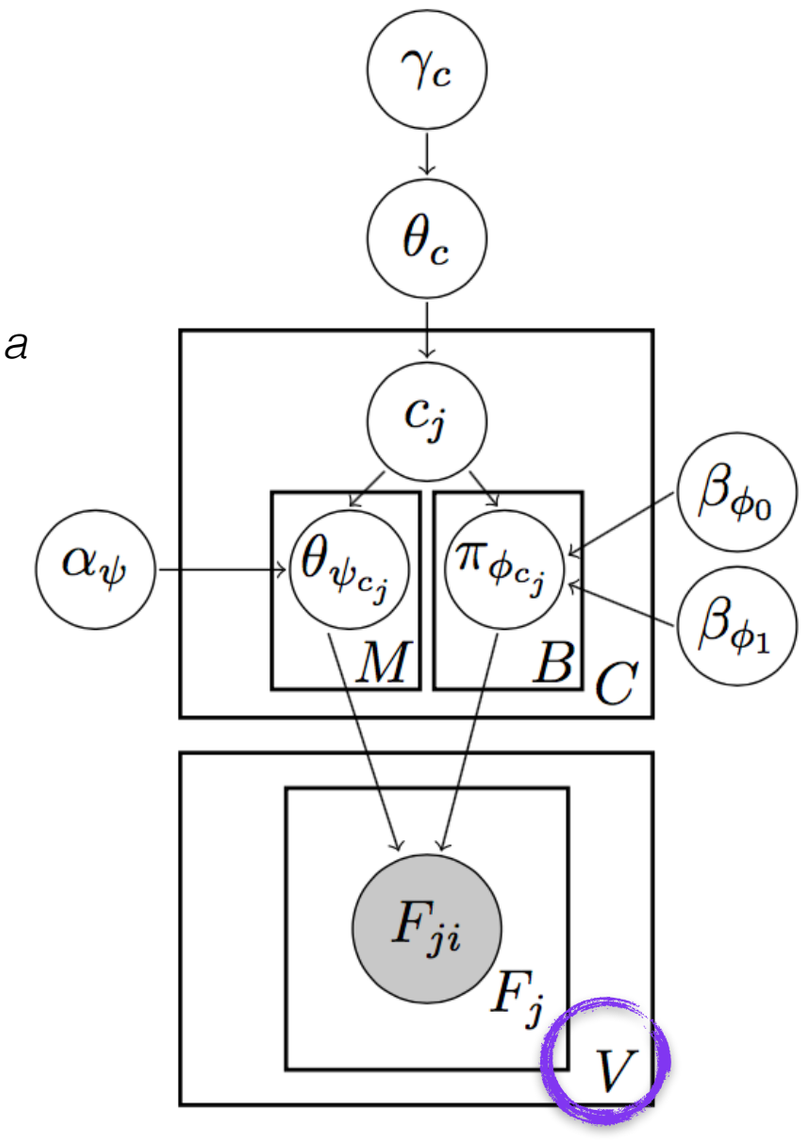
Learners use a **generative model** of how the observable data for each verb are created.

This represents how the different information is integrated into the process of determining a verb's class.

FALL



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

Learners use a **generative model** of how the observable data for each verb are created.

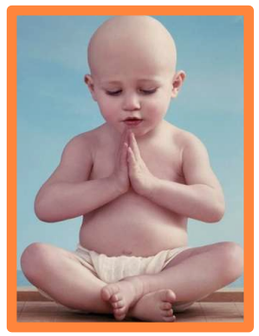
Each verb appears in a certain number of instances in the input.

"it's falling off"

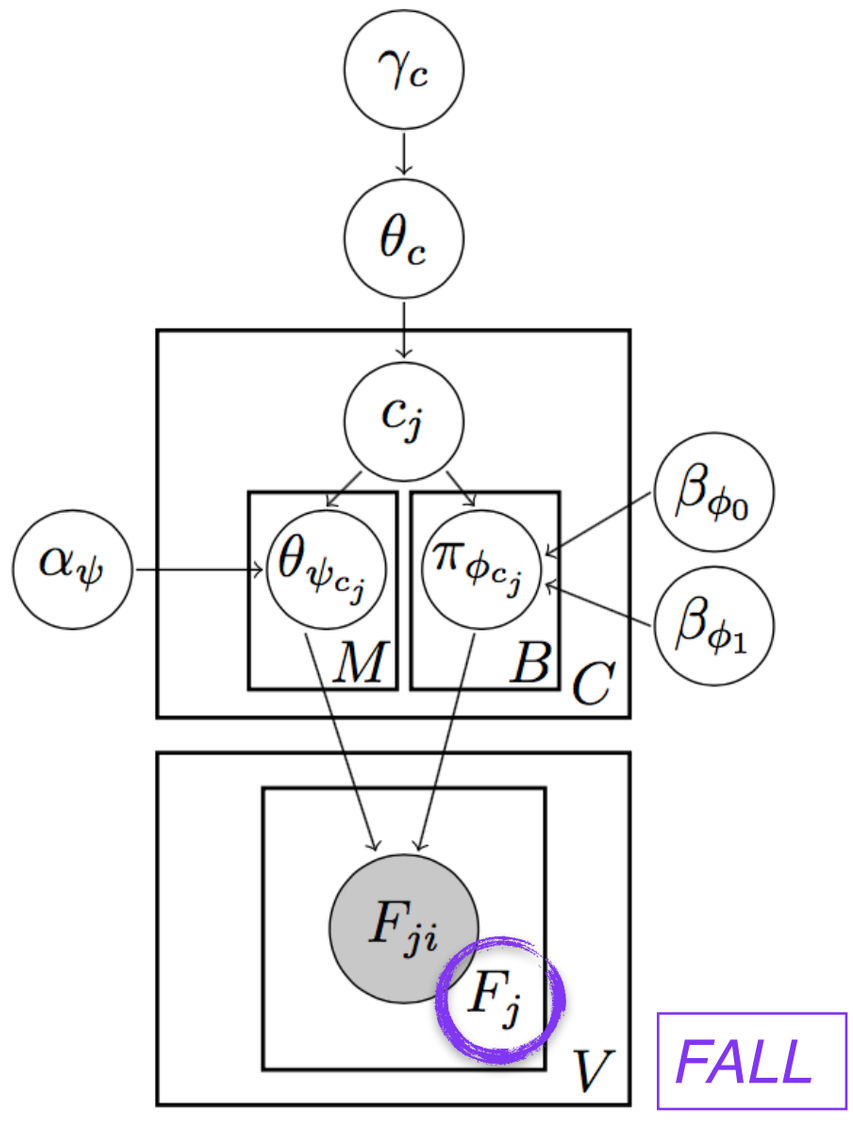
"she fell down"

"don't fall!"

"is London Bridge falling down?"



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

Learners use a **generative model** of how the observable data for each verb are created.

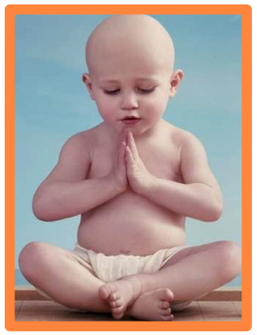
Each instance is observed **some number of times**.

(3x) "it's falling off"

"she fell down"

"don't fall!"

"is London Bridge falling down?"



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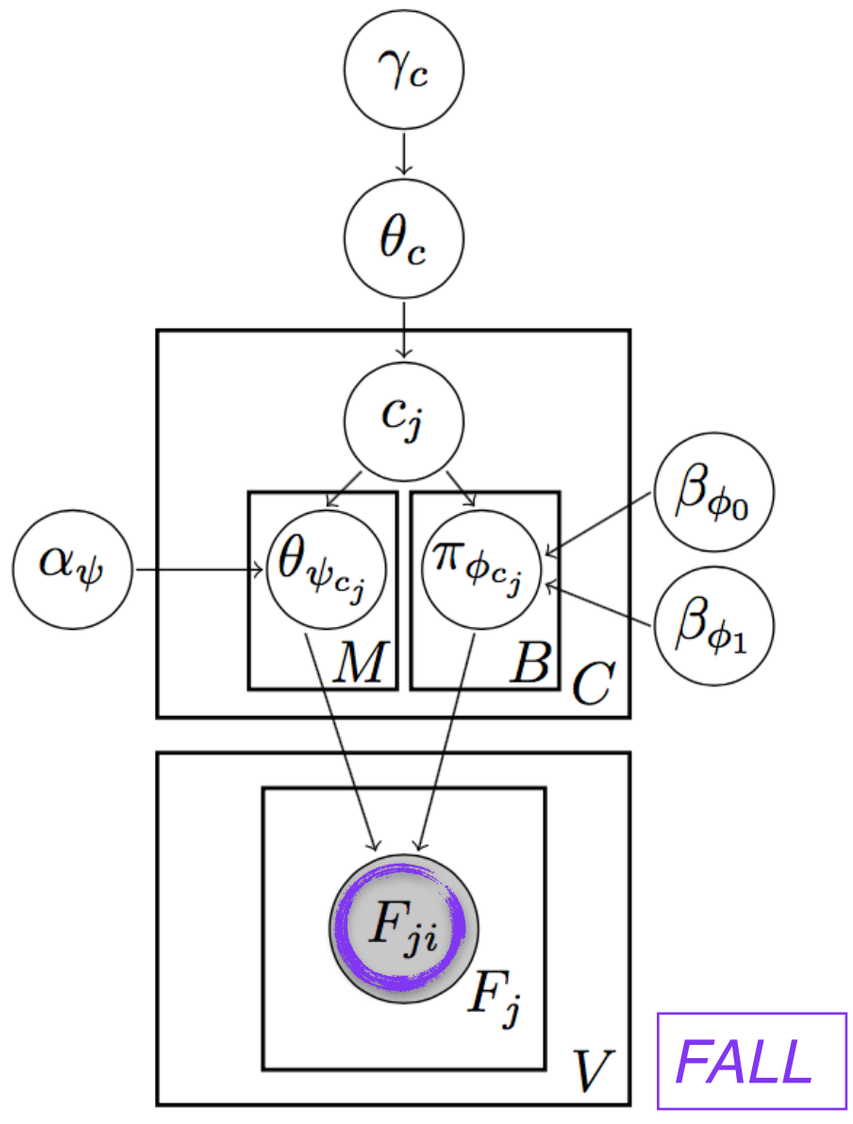
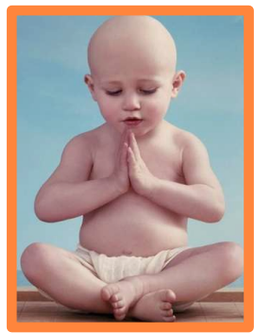


Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

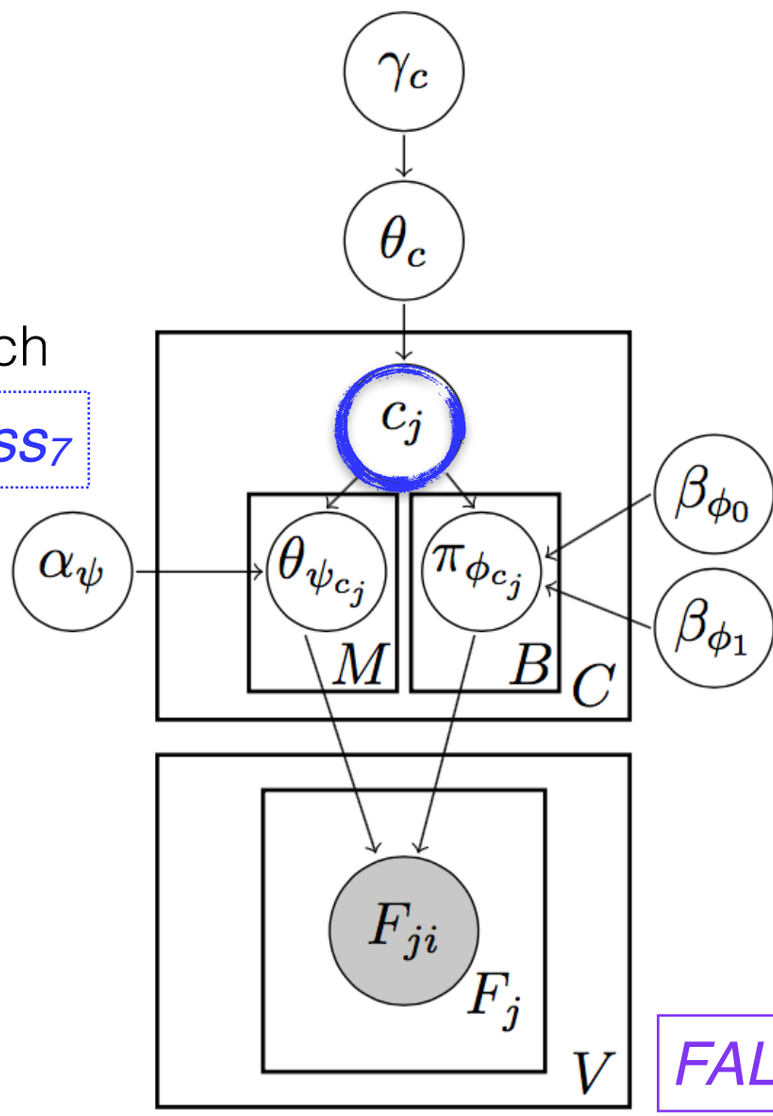
inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Each verb belongs to some class which determines its linguistic behavior.

class7



FALL

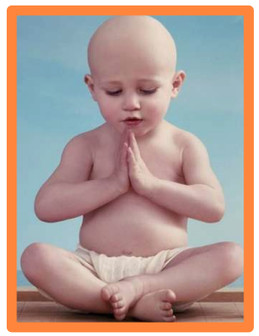
(3x)
"it's falling off"
"she fell down" "don't fall!"
"is London Bridge falling down?"

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

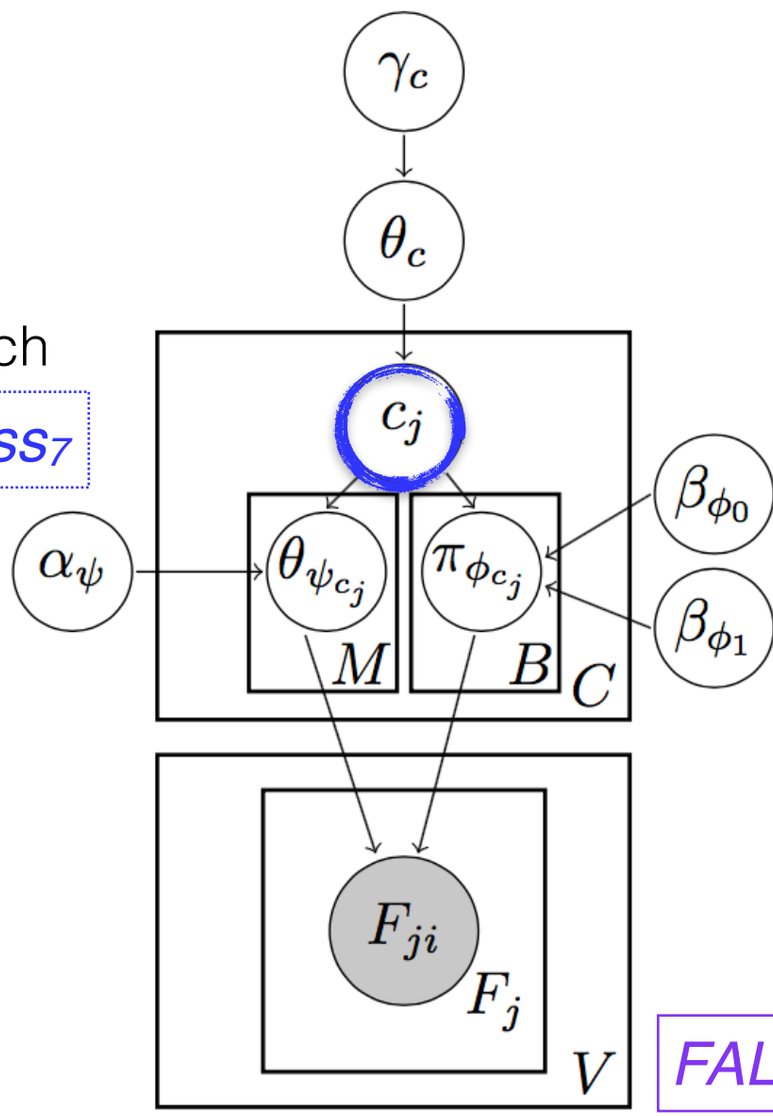
inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Each verb belongs to some class which determines its linguistic behavior. *class7*

Objective: Infer verb class



FALL

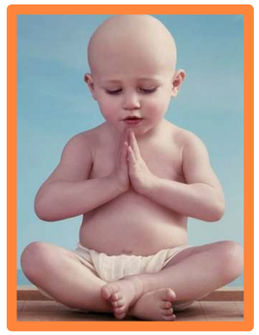
(3x)
"it's falling off"
"she fell down" "don't fall!"
"is London Bridge falling down?"

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

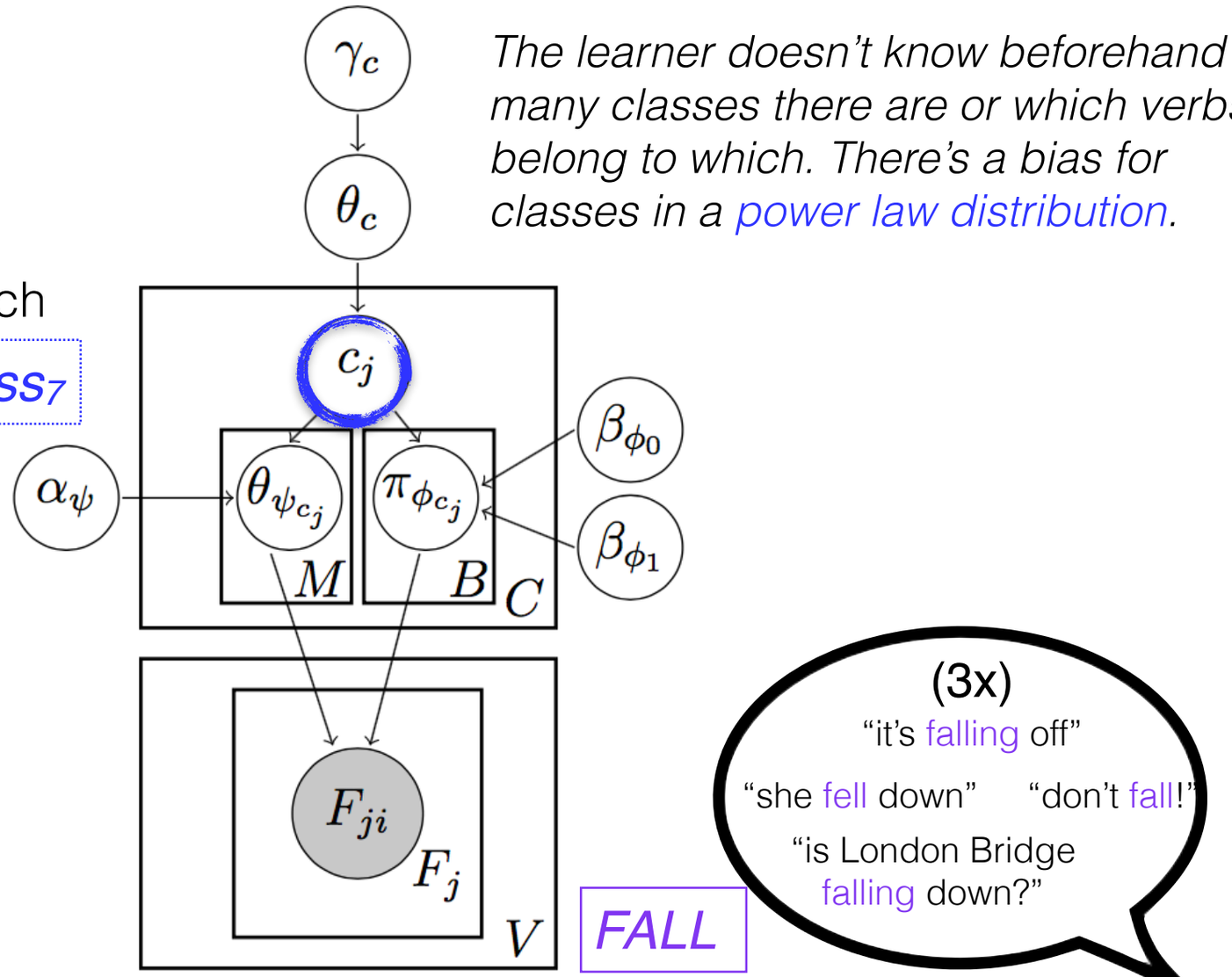


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

The learner doesn't know beforehand how many classes there are or which verbs belong to which. There's a bias for classes in a power law distribution.

Each verb belongs to some class which determines its linguistic behavior. *class7*

Objective: Infer verb class

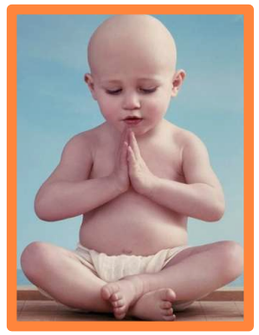


Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

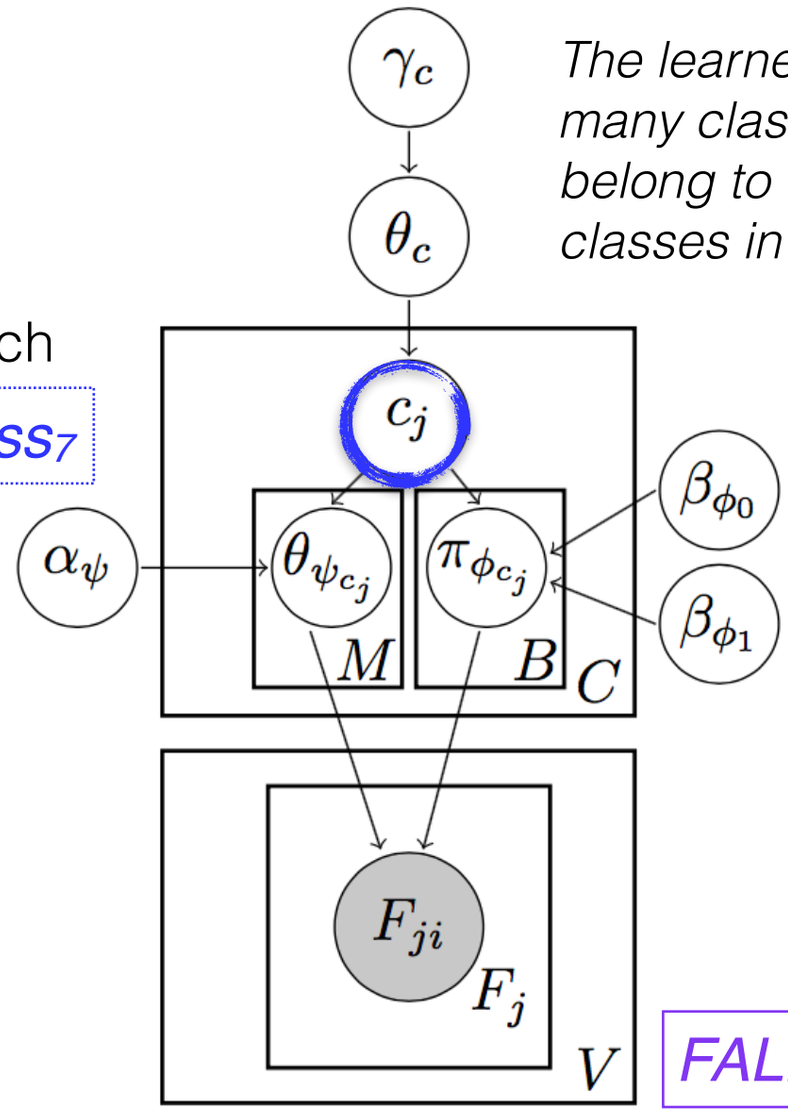


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Each verb belongs to some class which determines its linguistic behavior.

class7

Objective: Infer verb class



The learner doesn't know beforehand how many classes there are or which verbs belong to which. There's a bias for classes in a power law distribution.

A few classes with many members, and most classes with few members.

FALL

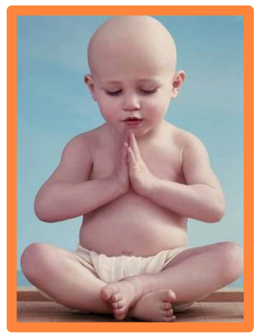
(3x)
"it's falling off"
"she fell down" "don't fall!"
"is London Bridge falling down?"

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

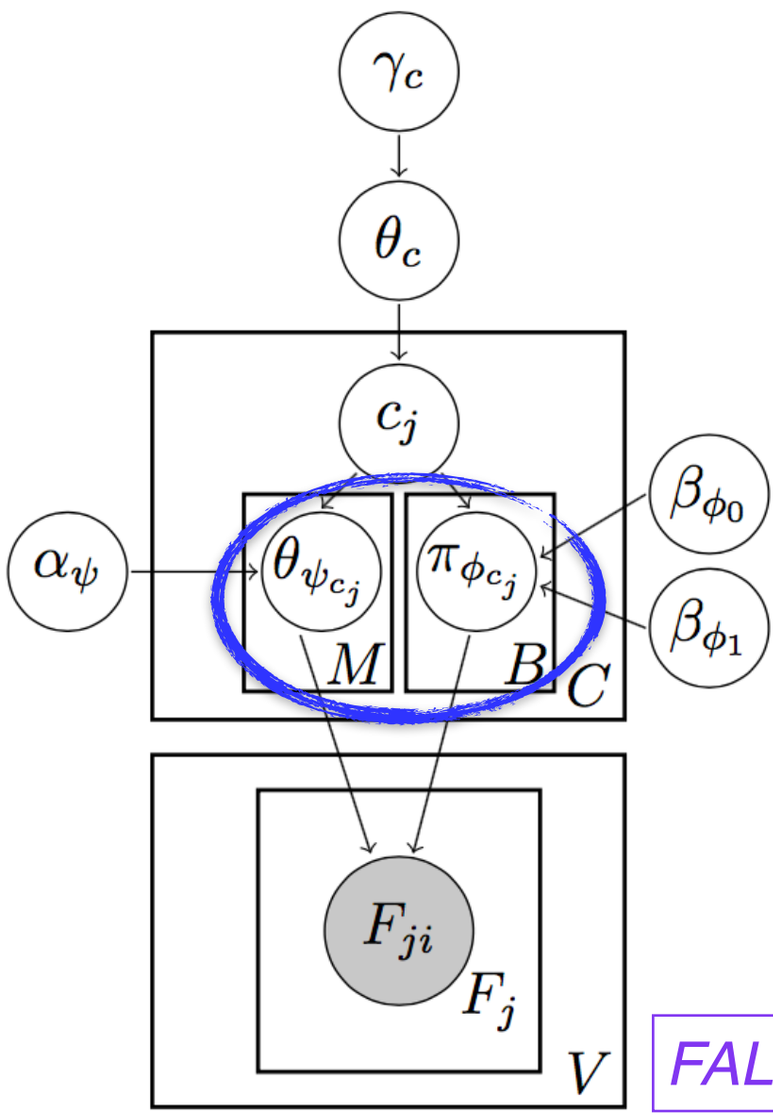
initial state data intake target state

inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Depending on the verb class, the observed usage will have certain characteristics.



class7

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"is London Bridge falling down?"

FALL

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

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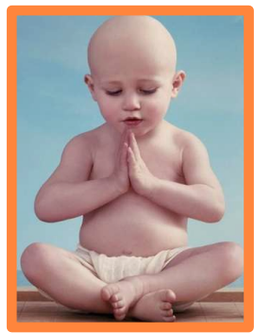
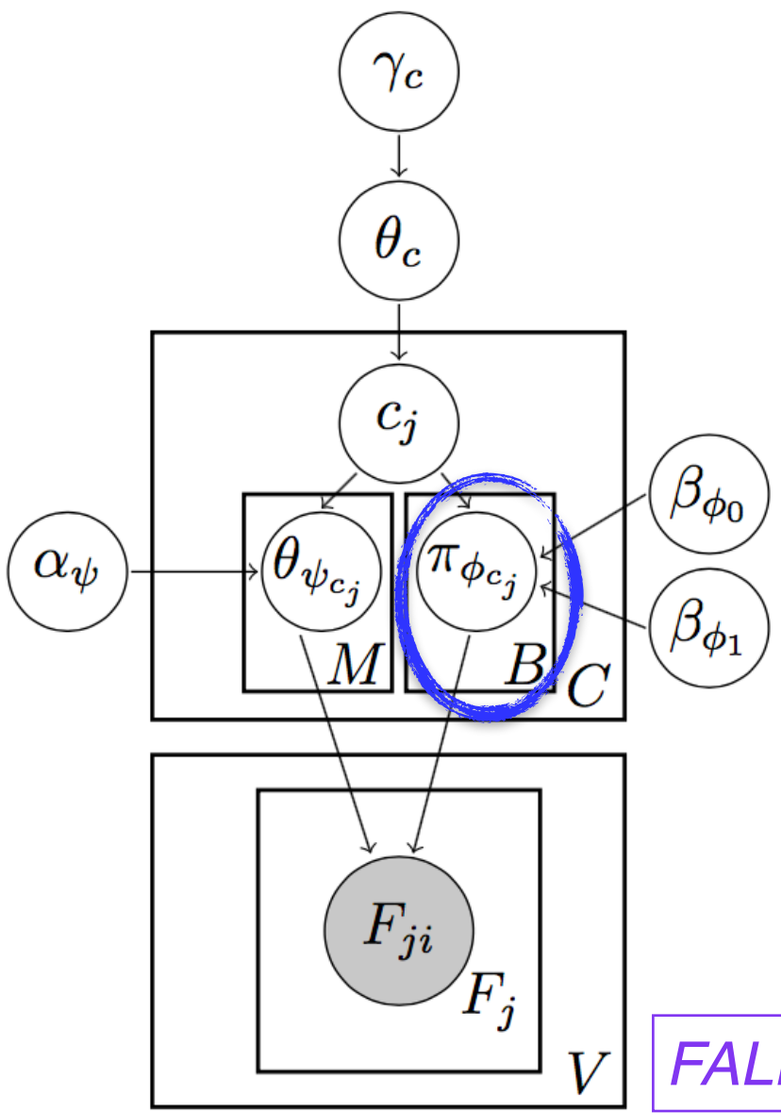


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

These characteristics include binary choices such as whether the subject is animate or not.



class7

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"is London Bridge falling down?"

FALL

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

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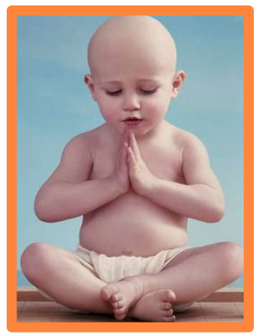
inference



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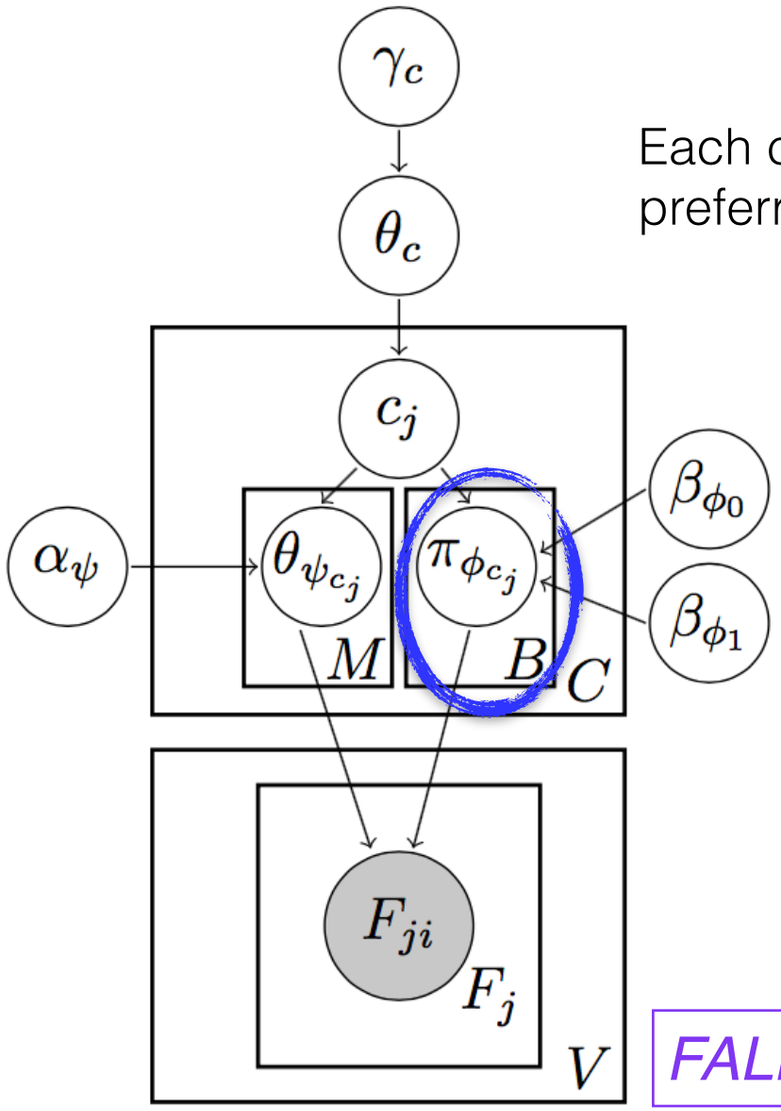


Each class has a probability of preferring each option.

class$_7$

+anim *Subject* ***-anim***

0.3 ***0.7***

-anim (3x)

"it's falling off"

"she fell down" "don't fall!"

"is London Bridge falling down?"

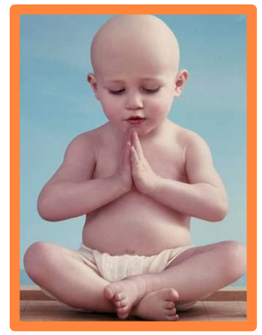
FALL

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

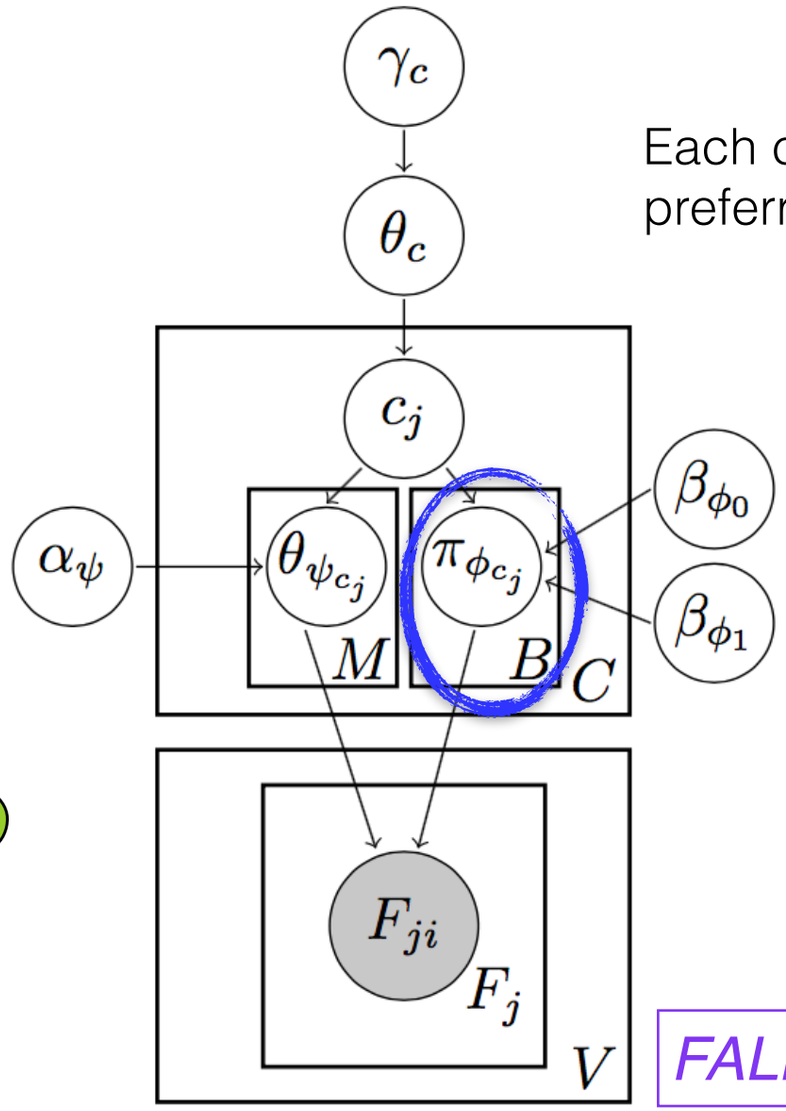
Each class has a probability of preferring each option.

Binary choices:

+/-animate subject
+/-animate object
+/-animate oblique object
+/-movement (when +exp-mapping)

+animate

-animate



class7

+anim	*Subject*	*-anim*
0.3		***0.7***

-anim (3x)
"it's falling off"
"she fell down" "don't fall!"
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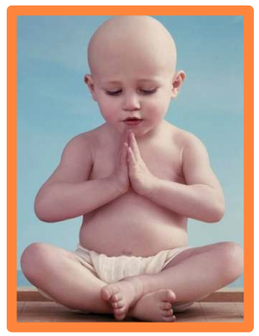
FALL

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference



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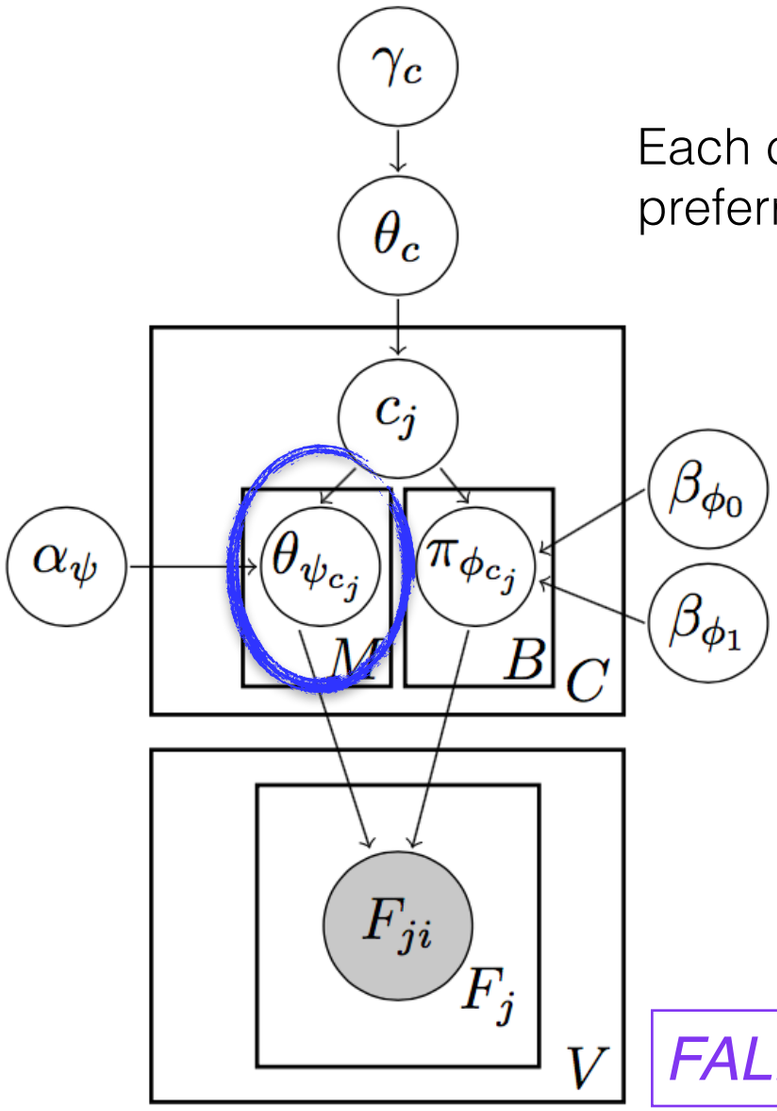


class$_7$

These characteristics include multinomial choices such as which syntactic frame a verb appears in.

-anim (3x)

"it's falling off"

"she fell down" "don't fall!"

"is London Bridge falling down?"

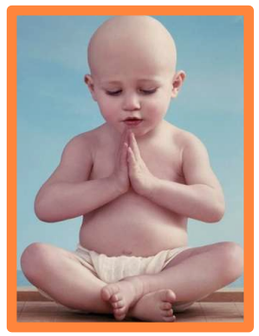
FALL

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference



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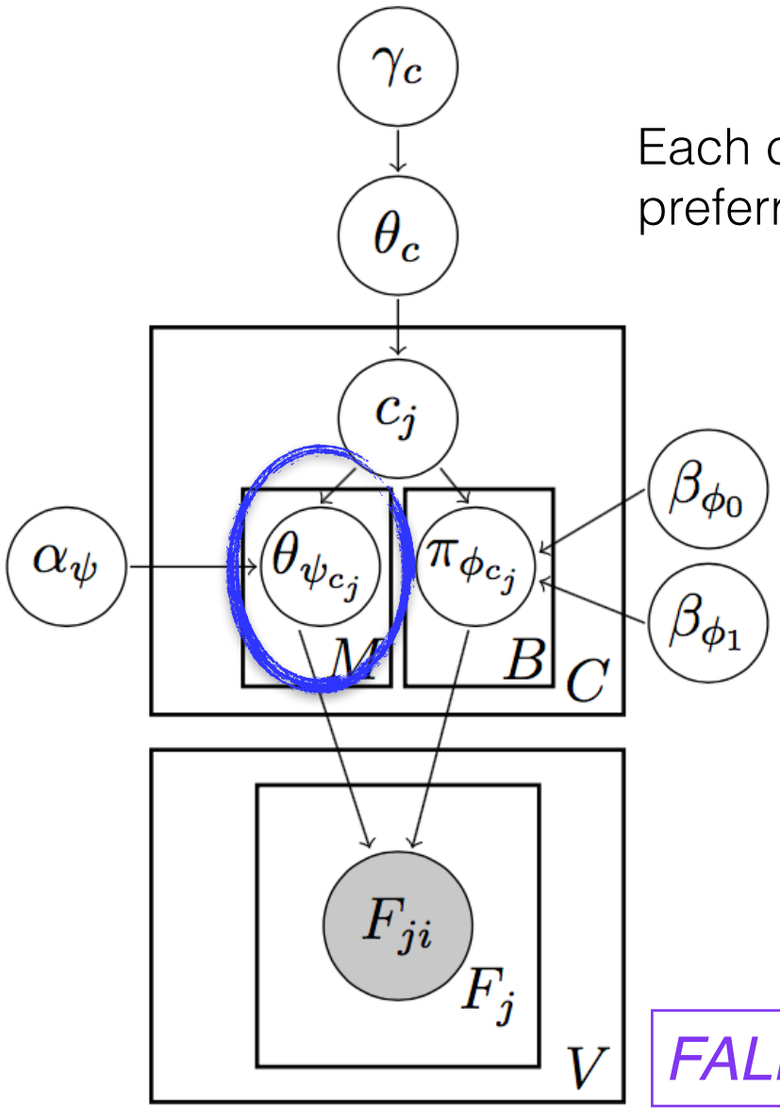


class$_7$

These characteristics include multinomial choices such as which syntactic frame a verb appears in.

NP V PRT

NP V

…

NP V S

FALL

-anim (3x)

"it's falling off"

"she fell down" "don't fall!"

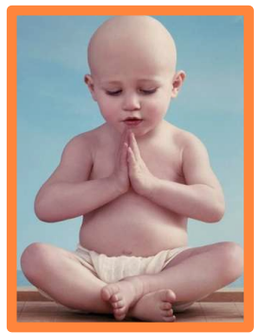
"is London Bridge falling down?"

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

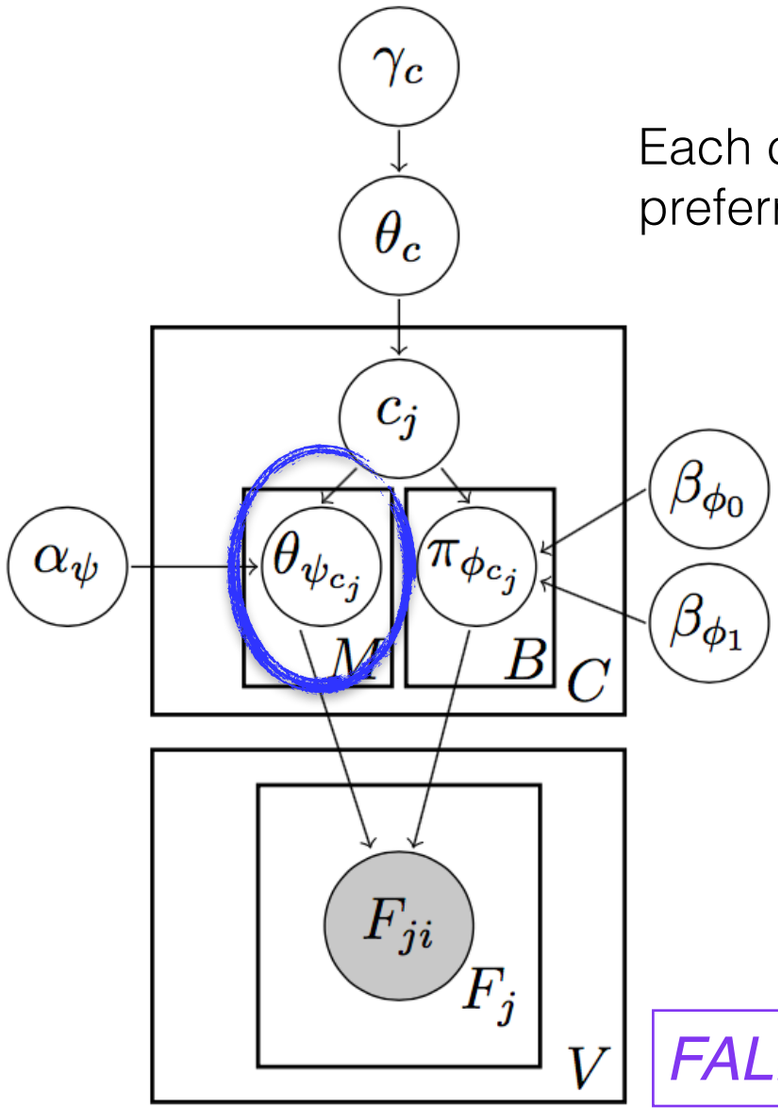
Each class has a probability of preferring each option.

NP V PRT 0.3

NP V 0.25

…

NP V S 0



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class7

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Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

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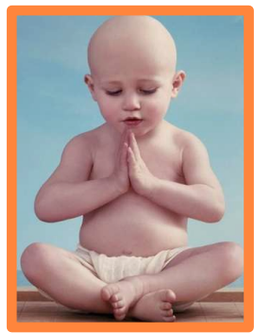
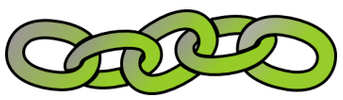


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Multinomial choices:

syntactic frame *NP V PRT*

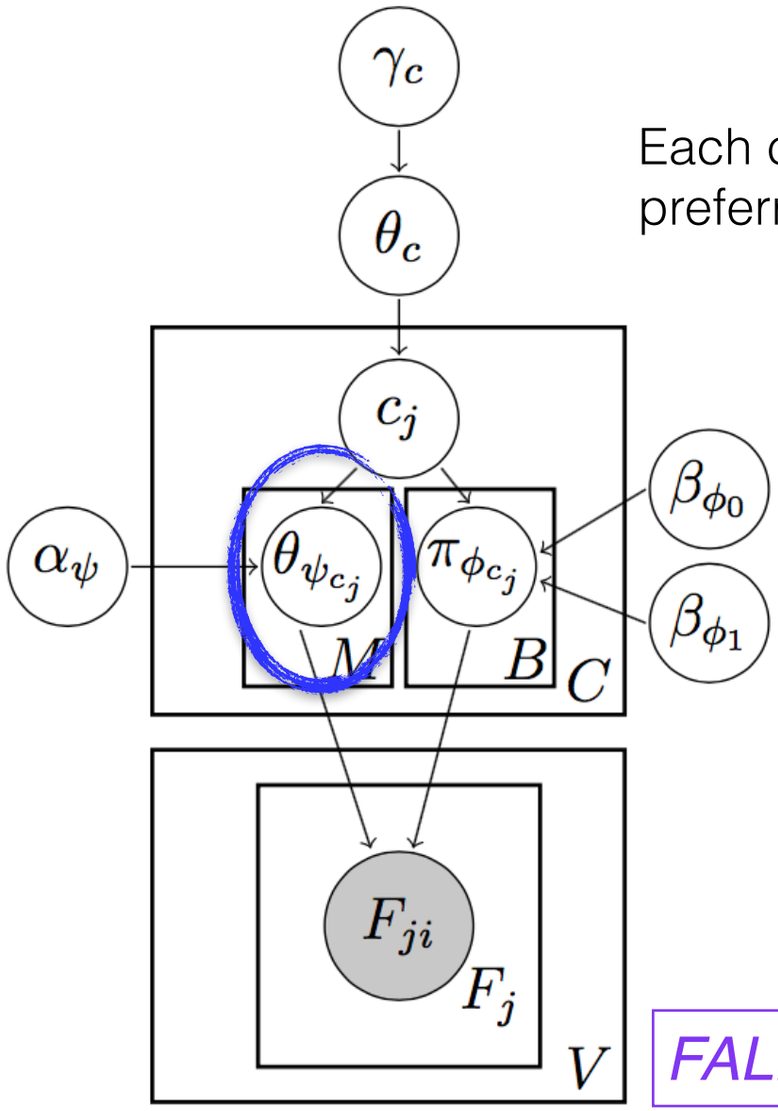
(when -exp-mapping)
position of proto-Agent/Highest
position of proto-Patient/2nd-Highest
position of Other/3rd-Highest



Subject
Highest-syn

Object
2nd-Highest-syn

Oblique Object
3rd-Highest-syn



Each class has a probability of preferring each option.

class$_7$

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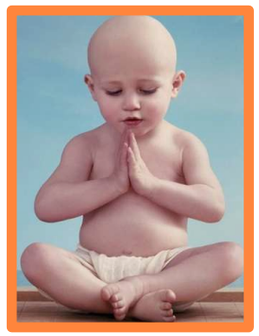
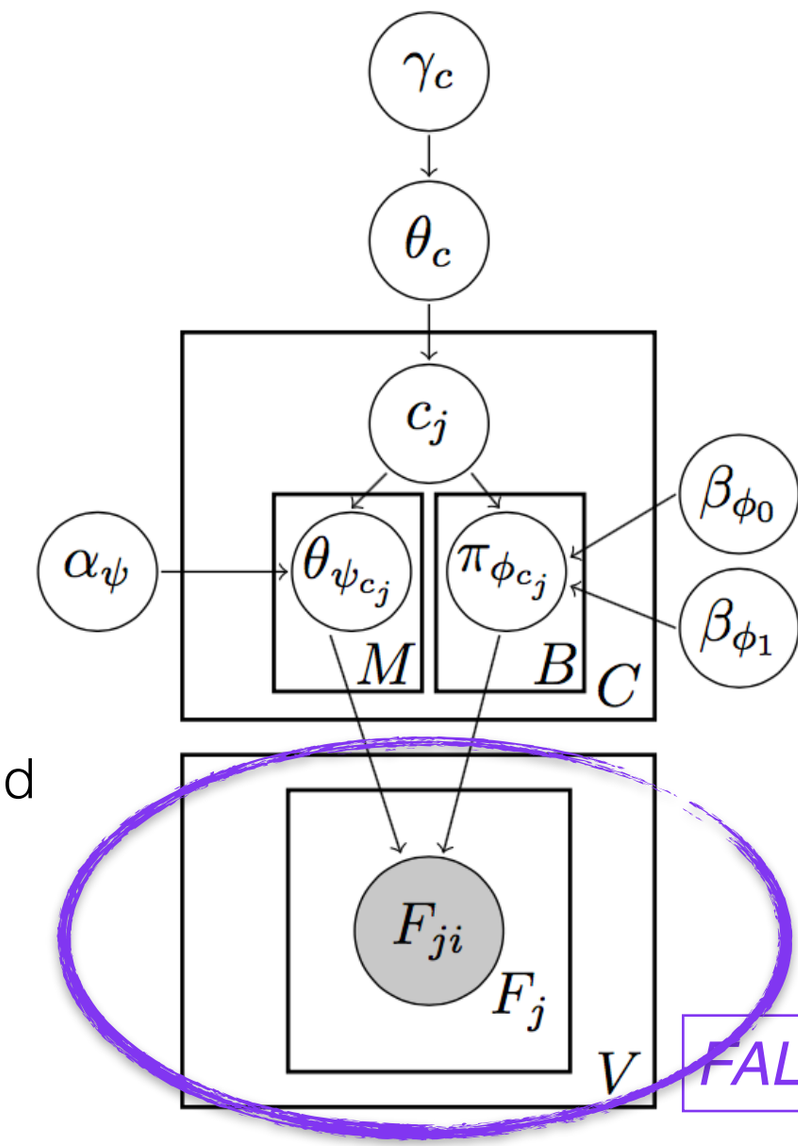


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine …



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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

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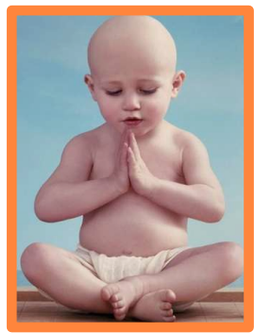
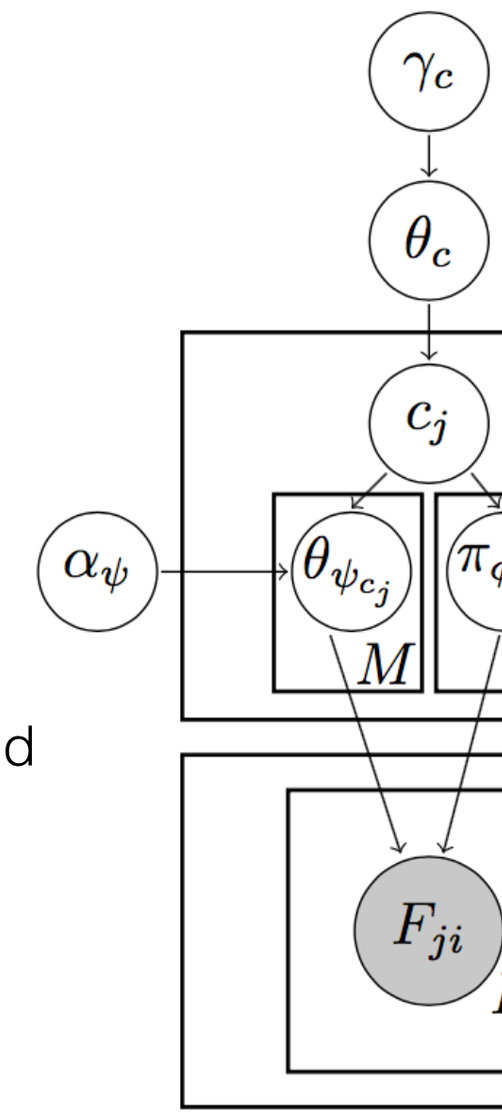


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are



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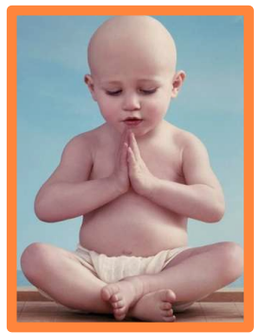
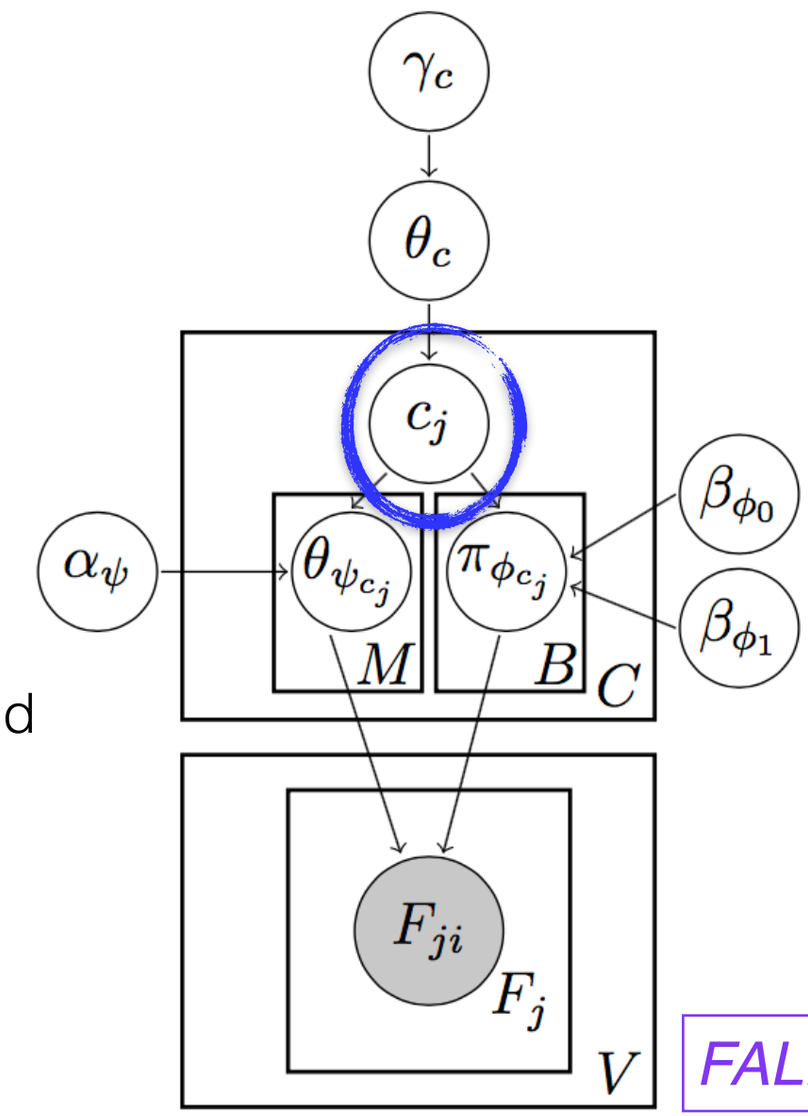


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are
- which class each verb belongs to



class7

FALL

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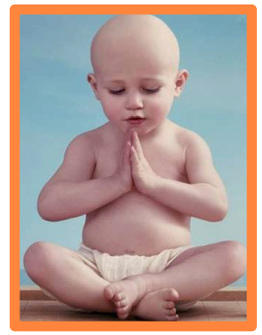
initial state data intake target state

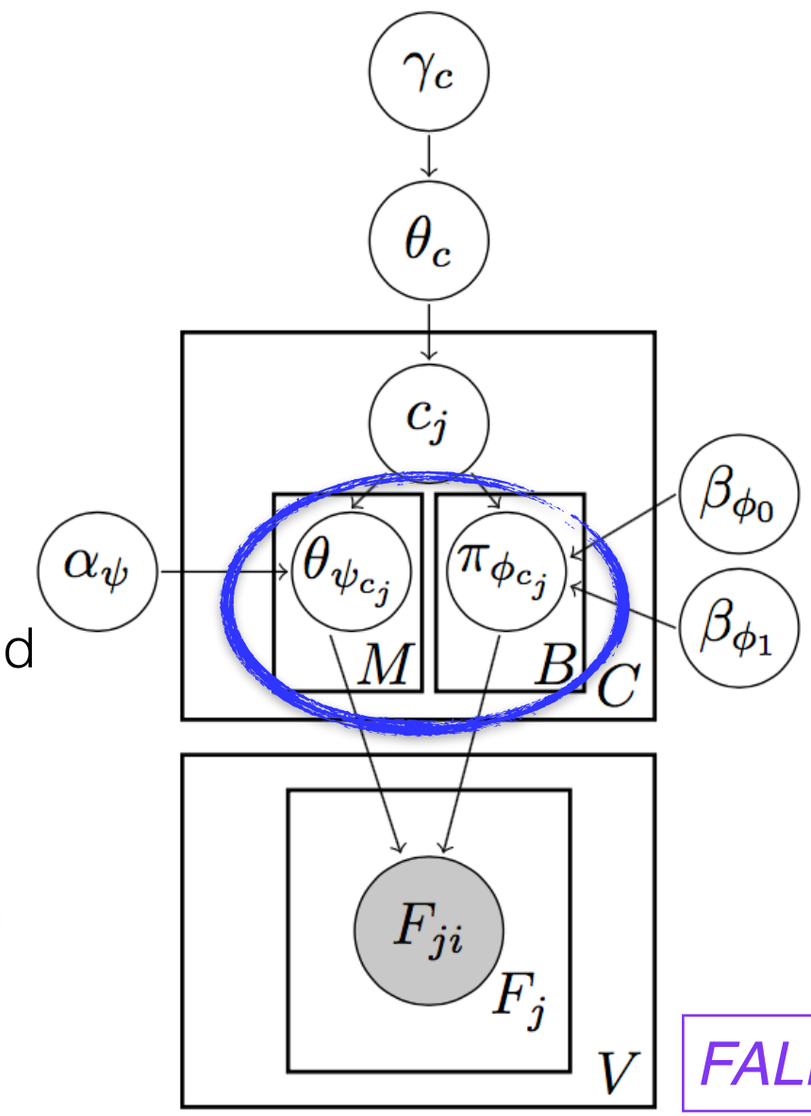
inference



Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are
- which class each verb belongs to
- what the characteristics are of each class



NP V PRT 0.3

NP V 0.25

NP V S 0

class7

+anim	*Subject*	*-anim*
0.3		***0.7***

FALL

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Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

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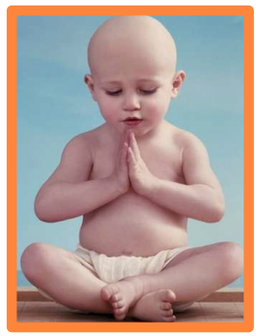
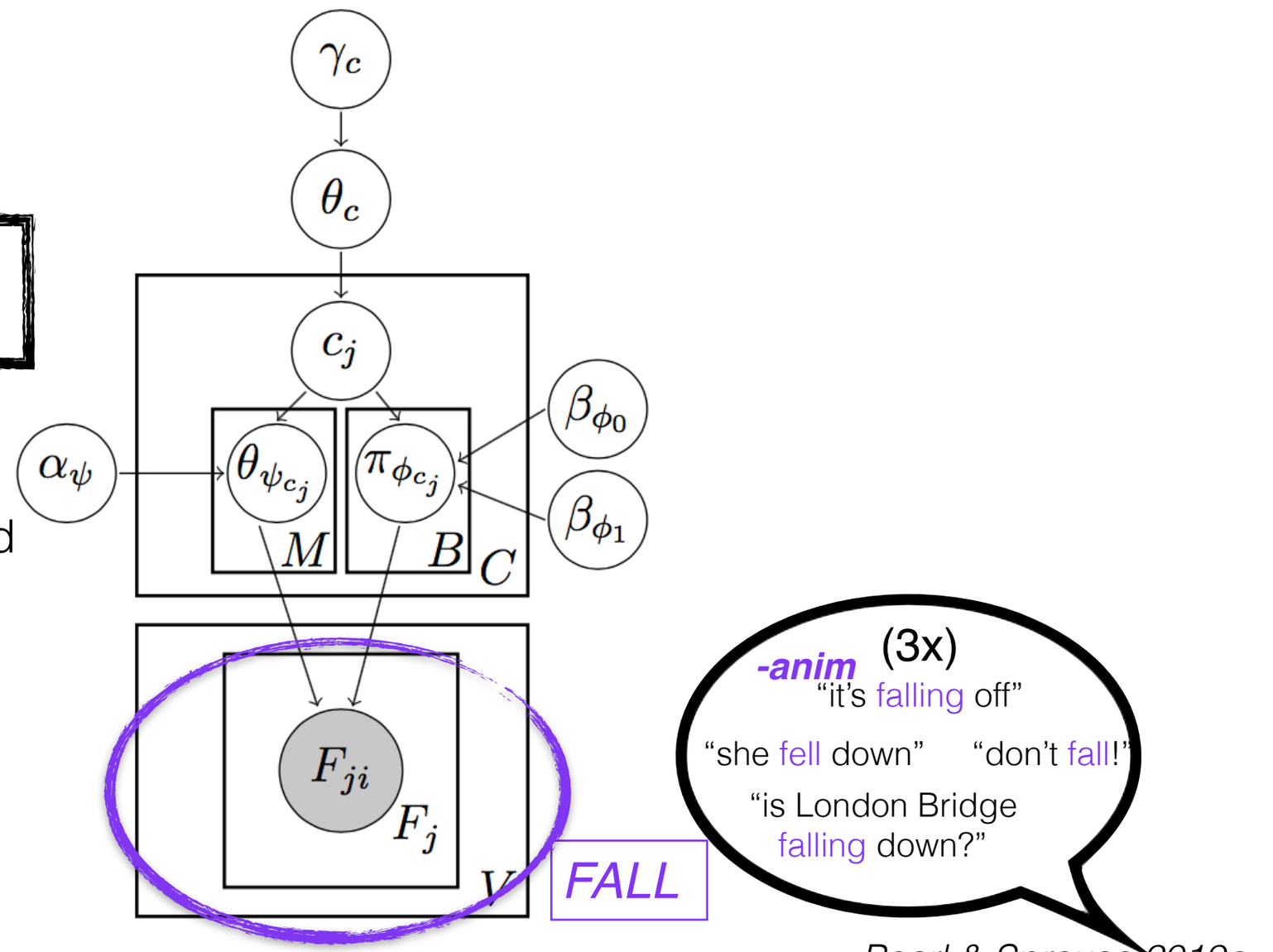


Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

Best answer: maximizes the probability of the observed data.

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are
- which class each verb belongs to
- what the characteristics are of each class



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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

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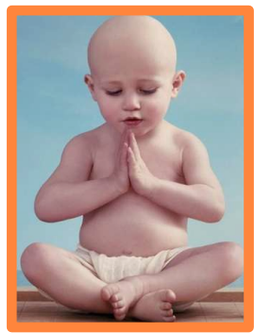


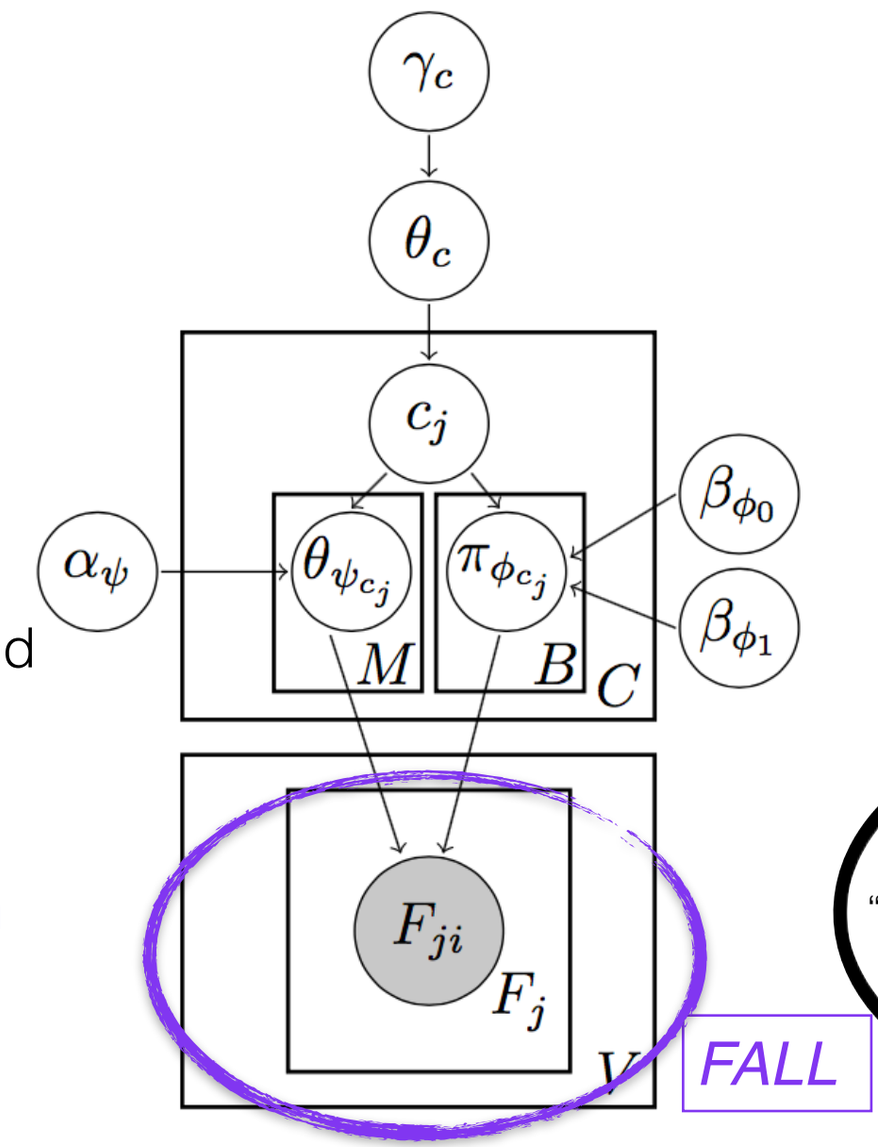
Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

$$p_{c_j} = P(c_j|c_{-j}, \gamma_c, F_{-j}, \lambda) =$$
$$p_{cat_j} * p_{binary_{c_j}} * p_{multinomial_{c_j}}$$

+ Gibbs sampling

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are
- which class each verb belongs to
- what the characteristics are of each class



-anim (3x)
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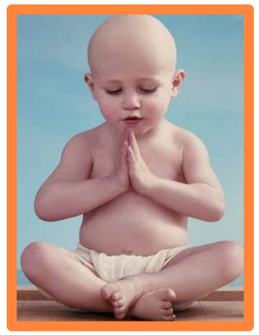
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



initial state data intake target state

Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

inference

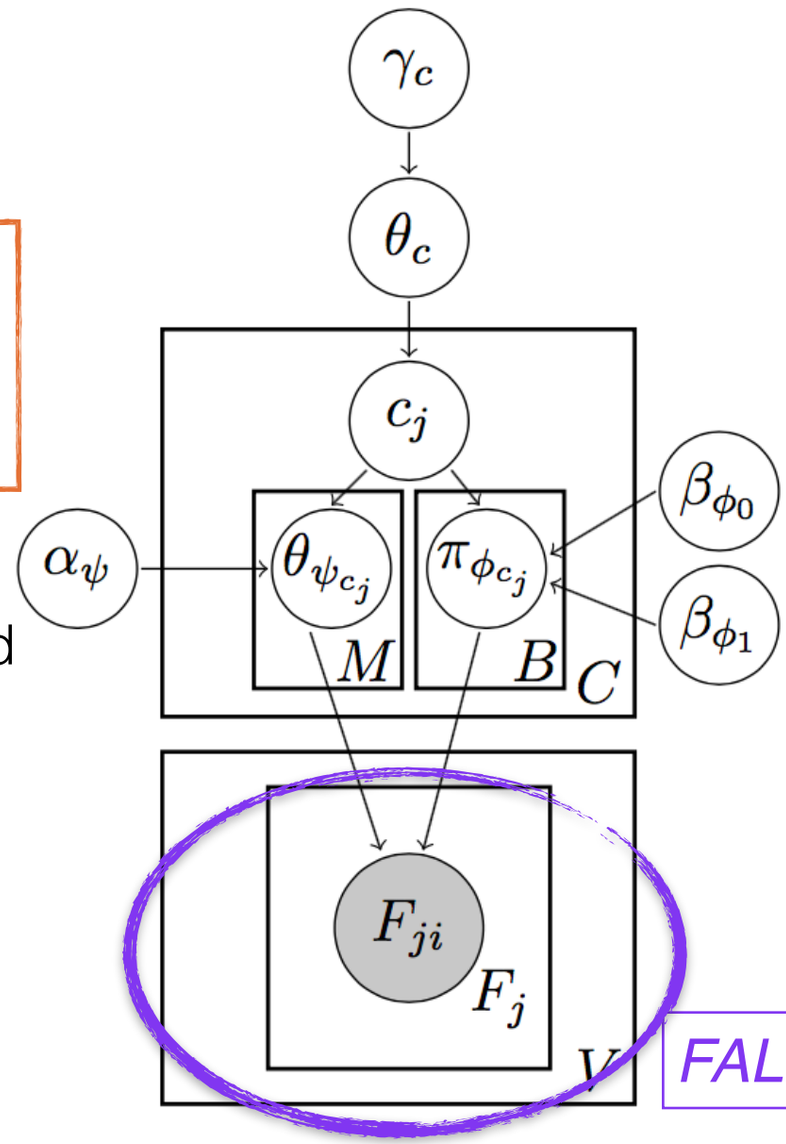
$$p_{c_j} = P(c_j|c_{-j}, \gamma_c, F_{-j}, \lambda) =$$
$$p_{cat_j} * p_{binary_{c_j}} * p_{multinomial_{c_j}}$$

+ Gibbs sampling

This is what makes this an ideal learner model — the inference computation is accomplished using something that's not incremental or constrained, and is guaranteed to converge on the optimal answer, given enough time to run.

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are
- which class each verb belongs to
- what the characteristics are of each class



FALL

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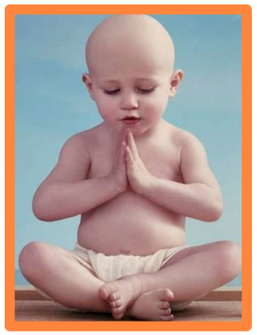
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



initial state data intake target state

Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?

inference

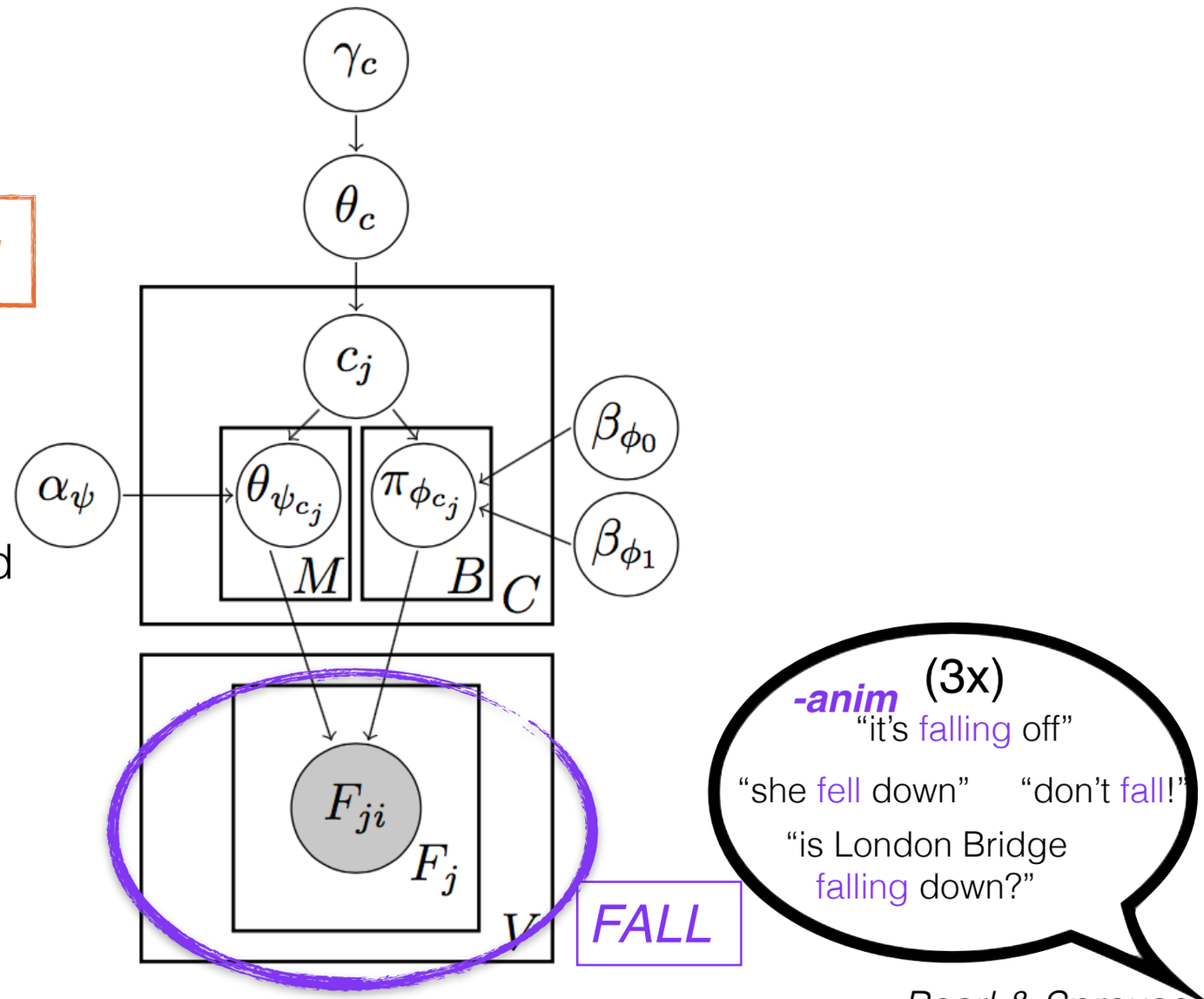
$$p_{c_j} = P(c_j|c_{-j}, \gamma_c, F_{-j}, \lambda) =$$
$$p_{cat_j} * p_{binary_{c_j}} * p_{multinomial_{c_j}}$$

+ Gibbs sampling

Goal: Determine what the best answer we can get is, given this characterization of the learning problem.

Using the observed instances of verb usage, Bayesian inference can be used to determine

- how many classes there are
- which class each verb belongs to
- what the characteristics are of each class



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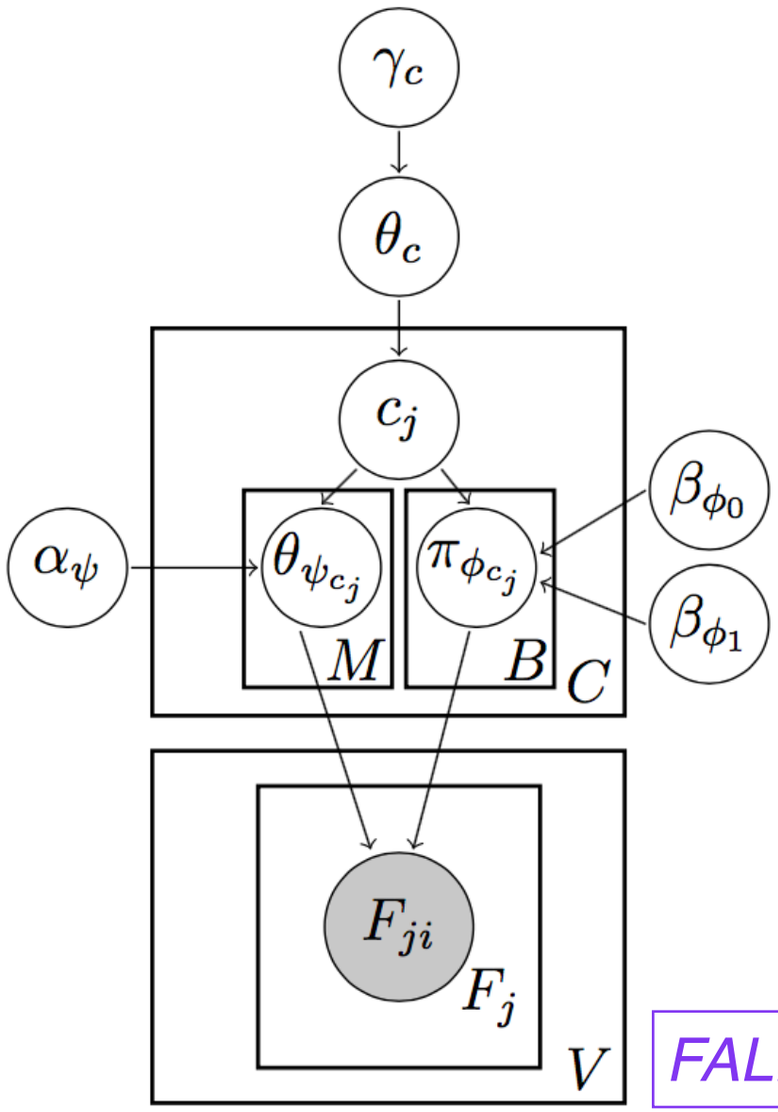
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake target state

inference

Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?



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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

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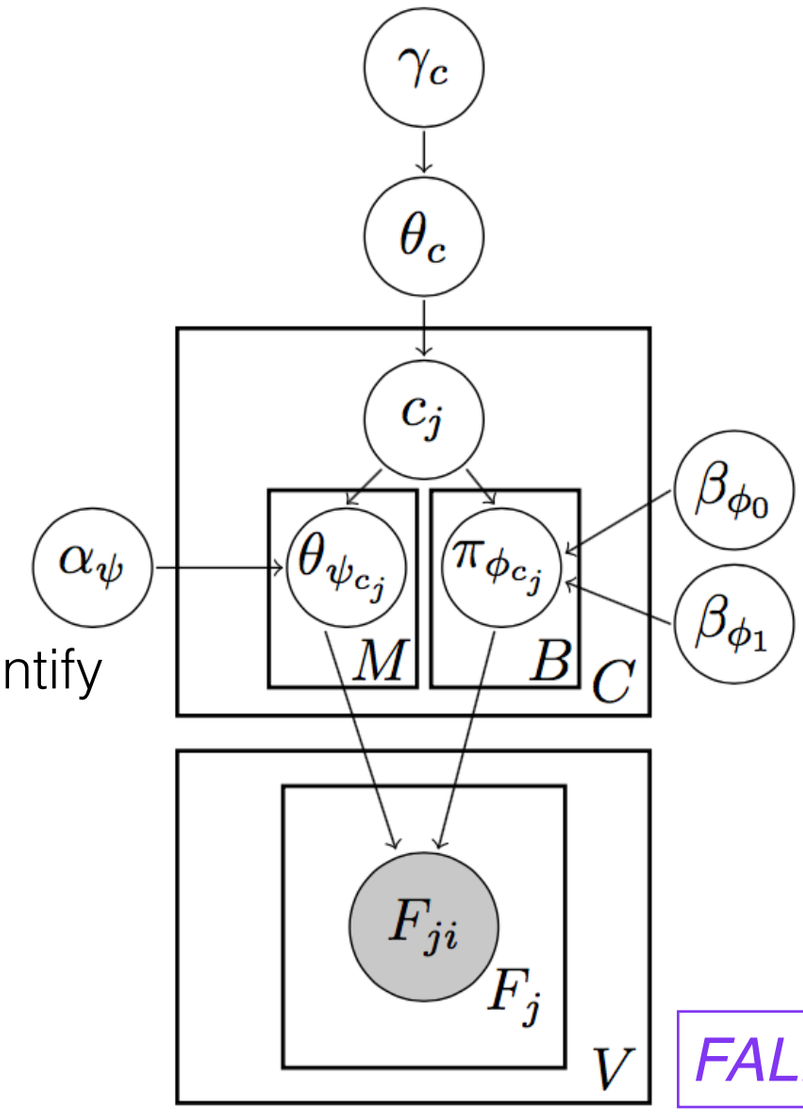
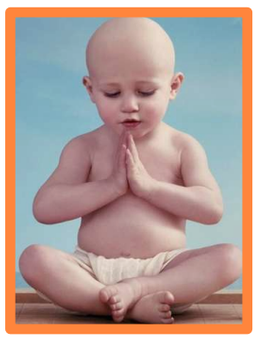
Basic question: Is it possible for the child to use the acquisitional intake to achieve the target knowledge/behavior?



Goal: Determine if the information provided in the modeled learner's acquisitional intake is sufficient to identify verb classes the way children do.



FALL

-anim (3x)
"it's falling off"
"she fell down" "don't fall!"
"is London Bridge falling down?"

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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

So what does the target knowledge/behavior look like?

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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

Goal: Model the developmental trajectory of verb class knowledge from 3 to 4 to 5 years old in English

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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

verb class knowledge

Survey of 38 experimental studies on children's production and comprehension of specific verbs

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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

verb class knowledge

Survey of 38 experimental studies on children's production and comprehension of specific verbs

…yields 12 verb behaviors

+/-passive

+unaccusative

+ditransitive

+control-object

+raising-object

+raising-subject

+control-subject

+*that*-comp

+*whether/if*-comp

+subject-experiencer

+non-finite *to*-comp

+object-experiencer

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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

These verb behaviors yield a number of verb classes at each age

**Verbs only belong to one class*

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Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

These verb behaviors yield a number of verb classes at each age

Example classes **Verbs only belong to one class*

[+passive]: carry, chase, crash, drop, eat, hit, hold, hurt, jump, kick, kiss, knock, lick, punch, push, scratch, shake, turn, wash, watch

[-passive]: believe, remember

[+non-finite *to*]: ask, have, need, start, suppose, teach, try, use, want

<3yrs

[+*that*-comp]: bet, hope, think, wish

[+passive, +non-finite *to*]: like

[+passive, +*that*-comp]: see

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

These verb behaviors yield a number of verb classes at each age

Example classes **Verbs only belong to one class*

[+passive]: bite, bump, carry, chase, crash, drop, find, hit, hold, hurt, jump, kick, kill, kiss, knock, lick, pull, punch, push, ride, scratch, shake, shoot, turn, wash, watch

[-passive]: believe, remember

[+*that*-comp]: bet, hope, think, wish

<4yrs

[+non-finite *to*, +raising-obj]: need

[+non-finite *to*, +raising-obj, +control-subj]: want

[+passive, +non-finite *to*, +psych-subj]: like

[+passive, +*that*-comp]: see

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

These verb behaviors yield a number of verb classes at each age

Example classes **Verbs only belong to one class*

[+passive]: bite, bump, carry, chase, crash, drop, find, hit, hold, hurt, jump, kick, kill, kiss, knock, lick pull, push, ride, scratch, shake, shoot, turn, wash, watch
[-passive]: believe, remember

[+*that*-comp]: bet, dream, guess, hope, lie, pretend, think, wish

[+non-finite *to*, +raising-obj]: need

[+non-finite *to*, +raising-obj, +control-subj]: want

[+passive, +non-finite *to*, +psych-subj]: like

[+passive, +*that*-comp, +*whether*/*if*-comp]: see

<5yrs

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

initial state data intake inference

target state

These verb behaviors yield a number of verb classes at each age

<3yrs

15 classes of 60 verbs total

<4yrs

23 classes of 76 verbs total

<5yrs

25 classes of 84 verbs total

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

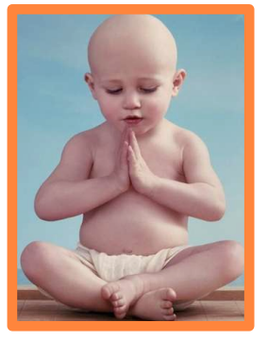
15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

Implementation:
Rand Index

0.0 <= RI <= 1.0

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

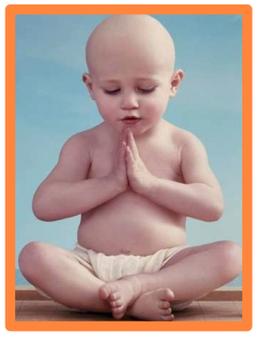
Implementation:
Rand Index

0.0 <= RI <= 1.0

Intuition: Get credit for putting things together that belong together and keeping things apart that should be apart.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

0.0 <= RI <= 1.0

Rand Index

For each pair of verbs in the inferred classes: $verb_i$ $verb_j$

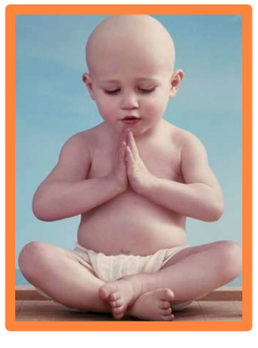
Inferred Class

Child Class	*Same class*	*Different class*
Same class		
Different class		

Intuition: Get credit for putting things together that belong together and keeping things apart that should be apart.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

0.0 <= RI <= 1.0

Rand Index

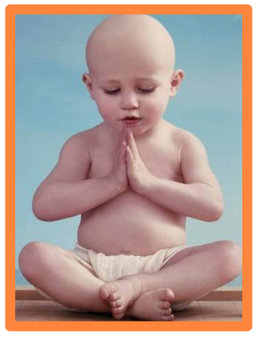
For each pair of verbs in the inferred classes: $verb_i$ $verb_j$

		Inferred Class	
		Same class	*Different class*
Child Class	*Same class*	True Positive	
	Different class		

Intuition: Get credit for putting things together that belong together and keeping things apart that should be apart.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

0.0 <= RI <= 1.0

Rand Index

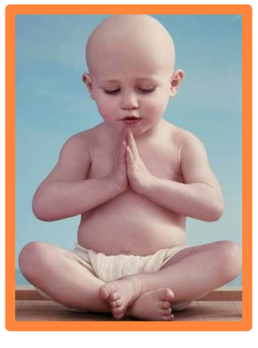
For each pair of verbs in the inferred classes: $verb_i$ $verb_j$

		Inferred Class	
		Same class	*Different class*
Child Class	*Same class*	True Positive	
	Different class		True Negative

Intuition: Get credit for putting things together that belong together and keeping things apart that should be apart.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

0.0 <= RI <= 1.0

Rand Index

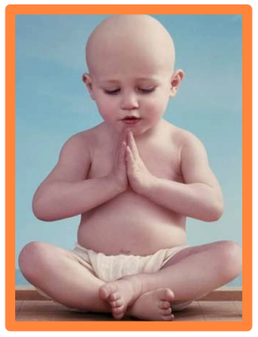
For each pair of verbs in the inferred classes: $verb_i$ $verb_j$

		Inferred Class	
		Same class	*Different class*
Child Class	*Same class*	True Positive	False Negative
	Different class	False Positive	True Negative

Intuition: Get credit for putting things together that belong together and keeping things apart that should be apart.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

True Positives + True Negatives

True Positives + True Negatives + False Positives + False Negatives

Rand Index

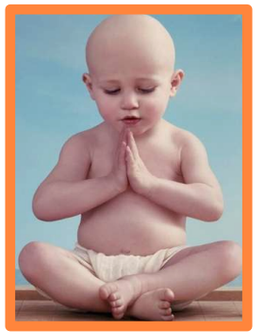
For each pair of verbs in the inferred classes: $verb_i$ $verb_j$

Child Class \ Inferred Class	*Same class*	*Different class*
Same class	True Positive	False Negative
Different class	False Positive	True Negative

Intuition: Get credit for putting things together that belong together and keeping things apart that should be apart.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

$$\frac{\text{True Positives} + \text{True Negatives}}{\text{True Positives} + \text{True Negatives} + \text{False Positives} + \text{False Negatives}}$$

Rand Index

But how do we know we're doing better than chance?

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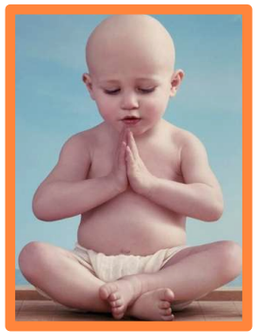
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Evaluation:
How well did the modeled learner do at finding these verb classes?

<3yrs

15 classes

<4yrs

23 classes

<5yrs

25 classes

$$\frac{\text{True Positives} + \text{True Negatives}}{\text{True Positives} + \text{True Negatives} + \text{False Positives} + \text{False Negatives}}$$

Rand Index

Bootstrapped confidence intervals for RI, with randomly generated classes of random size and random verb assignment

RI > 99% = better than chance

RI < 1% = worse than chance

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Thematic systems

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Thematic systems

relative

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Thematic systems

relative

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

fixed

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Thematic systems

relative Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

fixed

Expected mapping

yes

Subject	Highest-syn
Object	2nd-Highest-syn

no

Oblique Object	3rd-Highest-Syn

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Thematic systems

relative Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

fixed 

Expected mapping

yes 

Subject	Highest-syn
Object	2nd-Highest-syn
Oblique Object	3rd-Highest-Syn

no 

Surface morphology

yes *NP V_{past} PRT*

no *NP V PRT*

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Thematic systems

relative Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

fixed 

Expected mapping

yes 

Subject	Highest-syn
Object	2nd-Highest-syn
Oblique Object	3rd-Highest-Syn

no 

Surface morphology

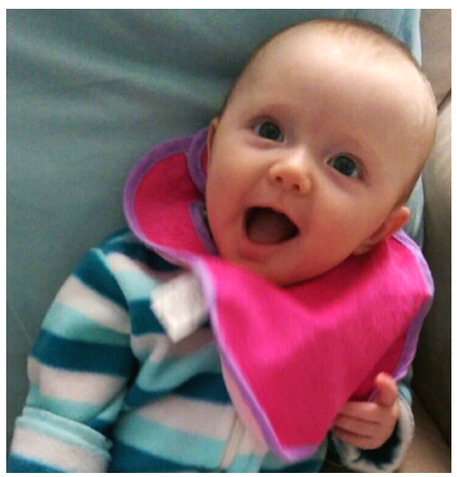
yes *NP V_{past} PRT*

no *NP V PRT*

A modeled learner implements one of each (thematic system, expected mapping, and surface morphology)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



Good news!
There were some for each age that performed better than chance (RI > 99%).

<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

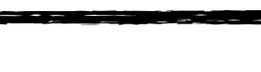
RI > 99% = better than chance

<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

relative **no**

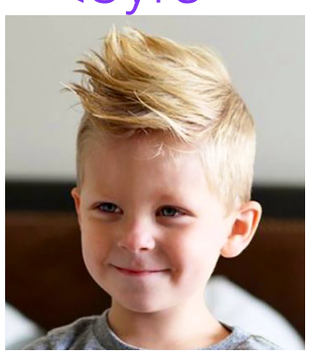


yes

no

<4yrs

<5yrs



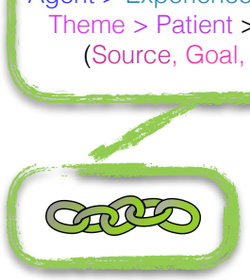
Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

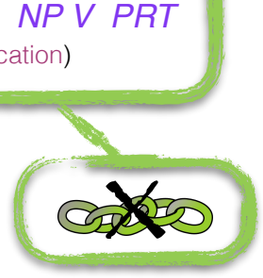
Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

RI > 99% = better than chance

<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location) *NP V PRT*





<4yrs

NP V PRT

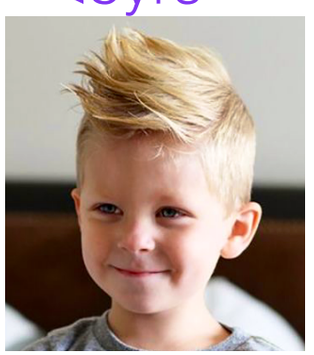
fixed

no

yes

no

<5yrs

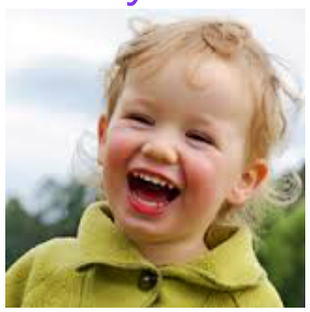


Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

RI > 99% = better than chance

<3yrs



Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

<4yrs

NP V PRT

no

NP V_{past} PRT

yes

fixed

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

<5yrs

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

RI > 99% = better than chance

<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location) *NP V PRT*

<4yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT
no

NP V_{past} PRT
yes

yes

fixed

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)
relative

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling

RI > 99% = better than chance

<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location) *NP V PRT*

<4yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

no *NP V PRT* **no**

fixed

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location) **relative**

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

rUTAH **relative**

UTAH **fixed**

<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

<4yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

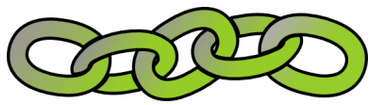
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

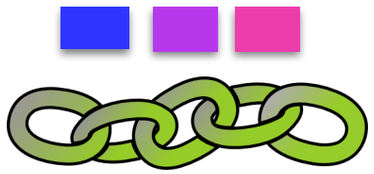


rUTAH

relative

fixed

UTAH

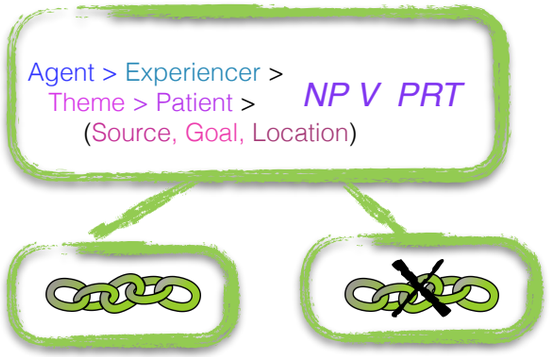


These are innately specified. Early maturation would assume they're present at all ages.

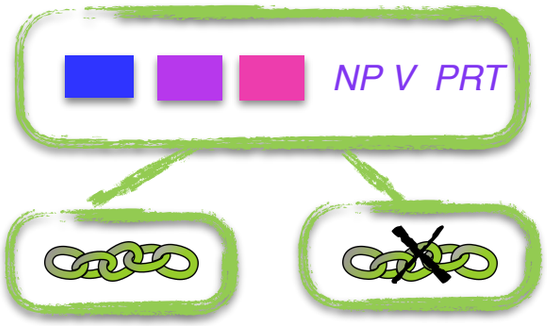
<3yrs

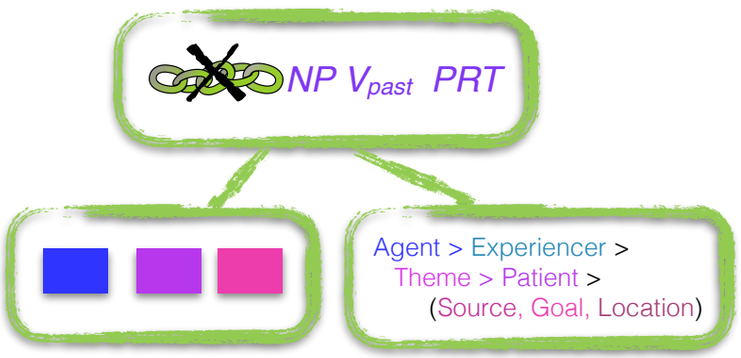
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

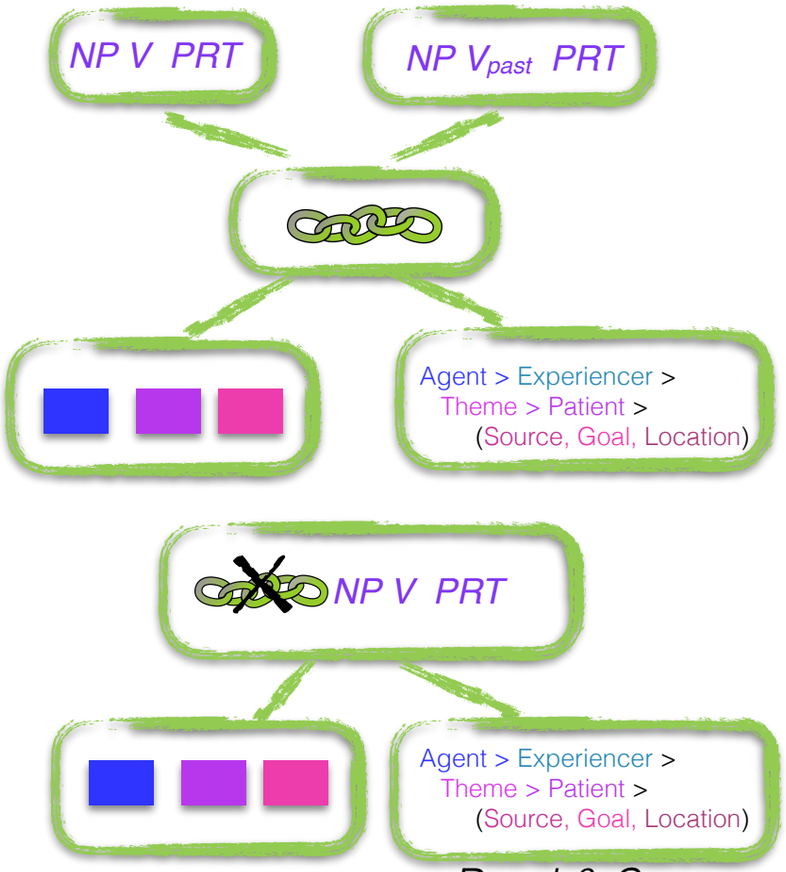


<4yrs



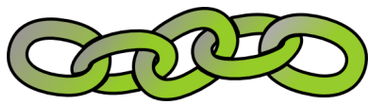


<5yrs



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

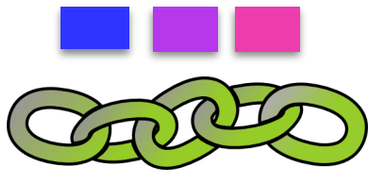


rUTAH

relative

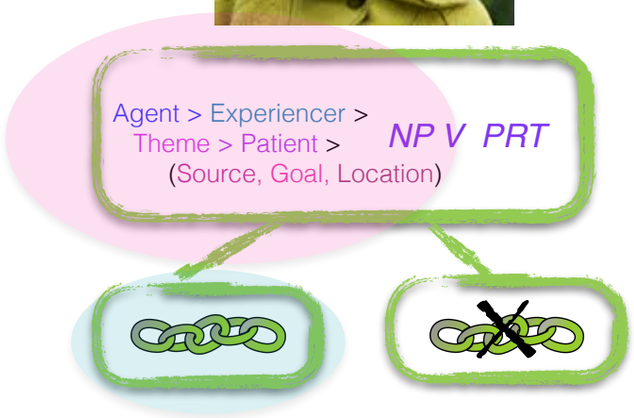
fixed

UTAH

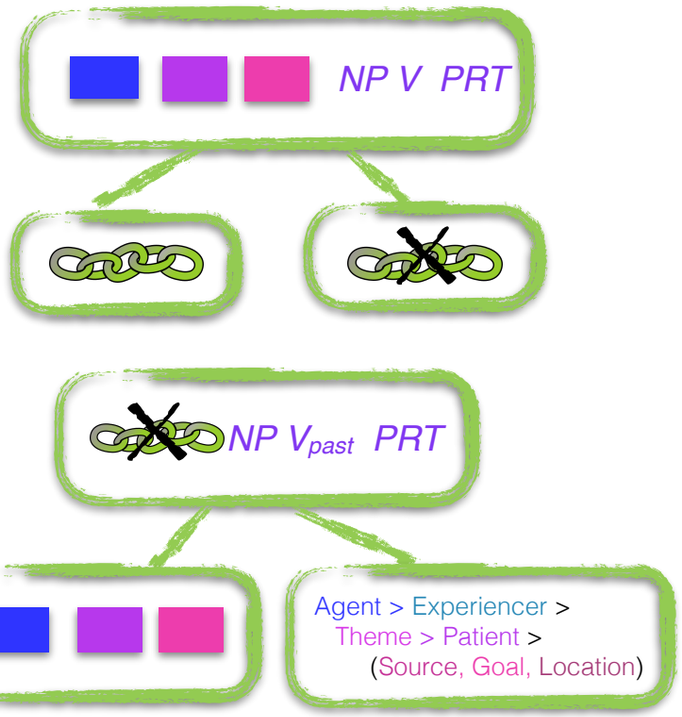


But the thematic representation isn't present at three, even though the link could be.

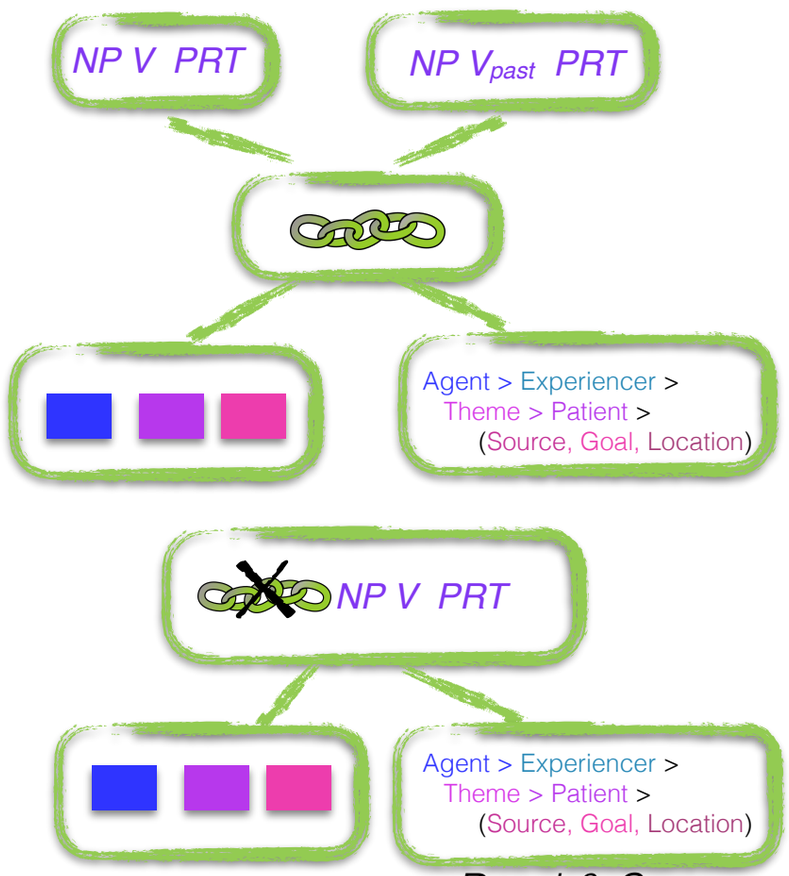
<3yrs



<4yrs



<5yrs



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

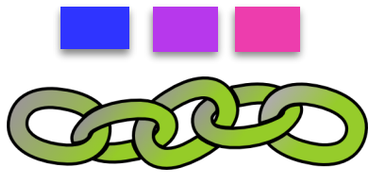
How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

rUTAH

relative

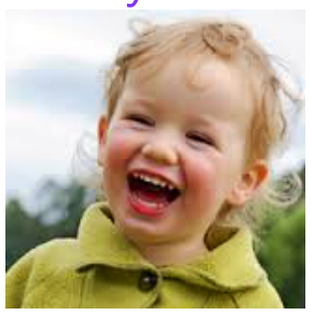
fixed

UTAH



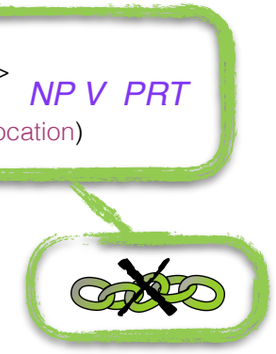
Both are present at four and five, though.

<3yrs

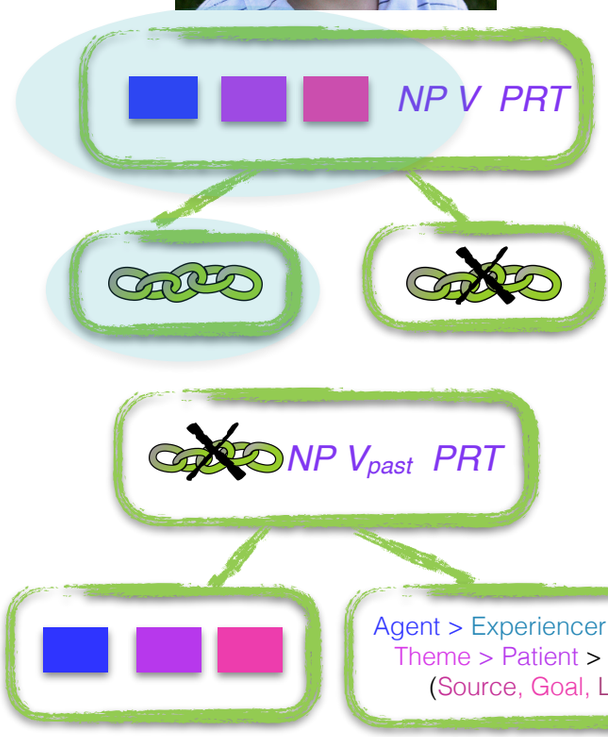


Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

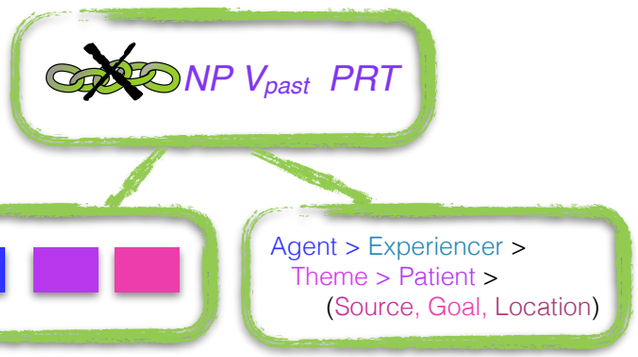


<4yrs



NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

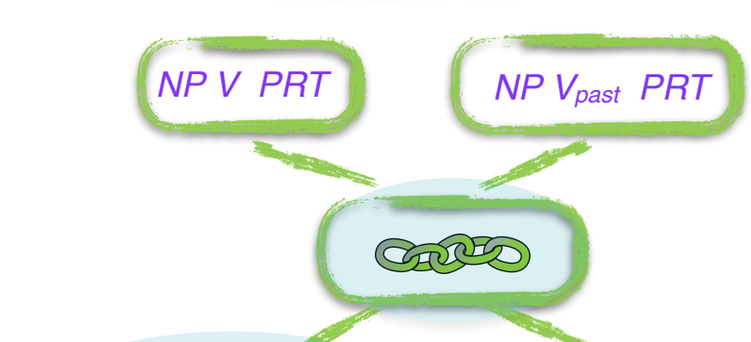


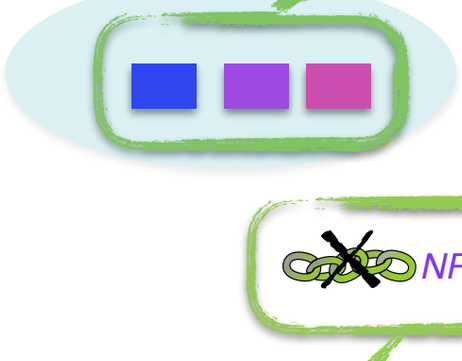
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT





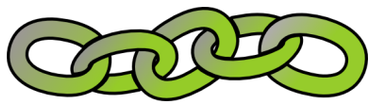
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

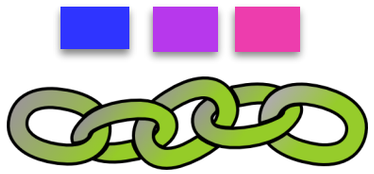


rUTAH

relative

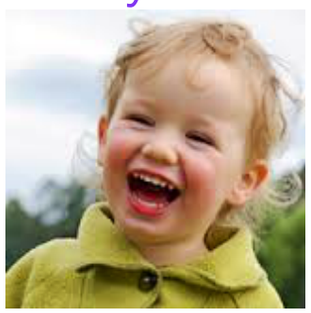
fixed

UTAH



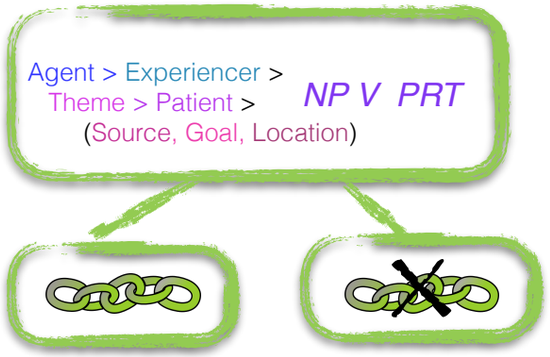
So UTAH is compatible with late maturation (at four or later).

<3yrs



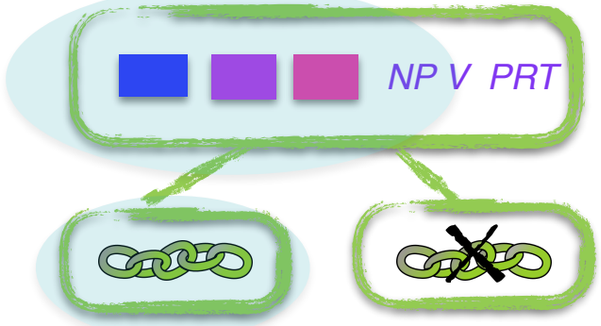
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

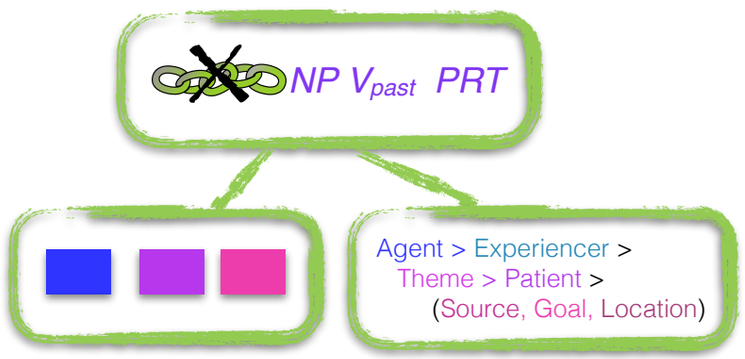


<4yrs

NP V PRT



NP V_{past} PRT

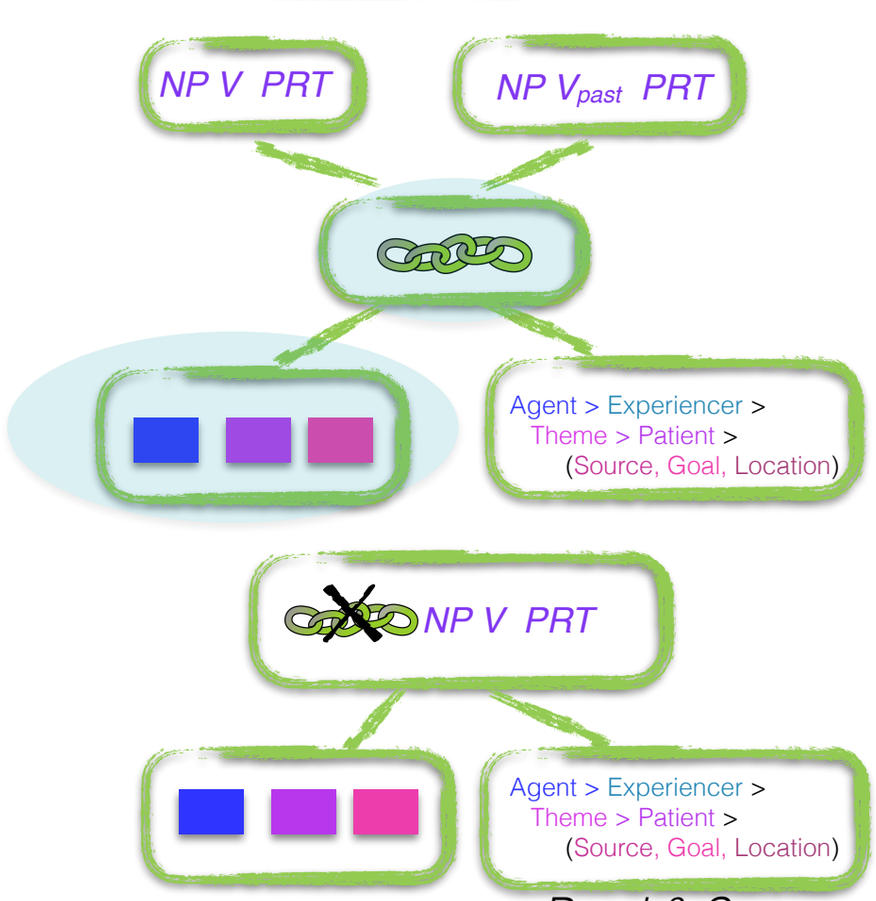


Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT



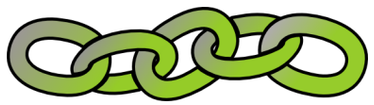
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?



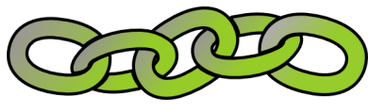
late
UTAH

relative

fixed

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

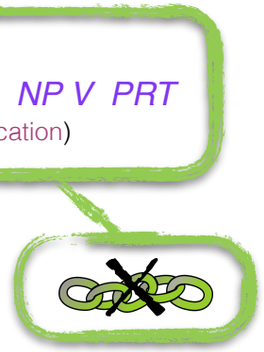
rUTAH



These are innately specified. Early maturation would assume they're present at all ages.

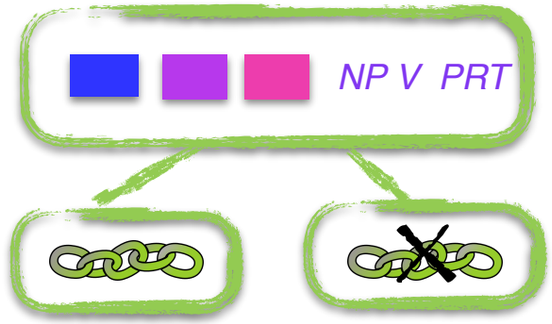
<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)
NP V PRT



<4yrs

NP V PRT



NP V_{past} PRT

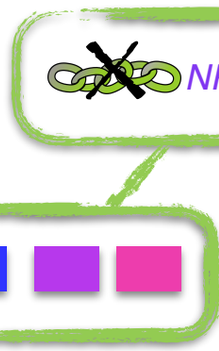
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

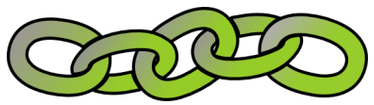


NP V PRT

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?



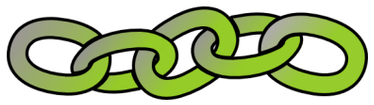
relative

late
UTAH

fixed

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

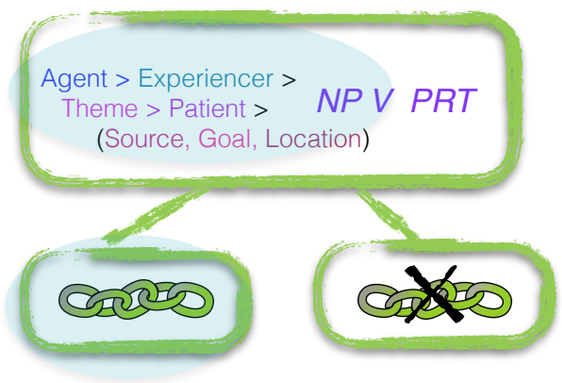


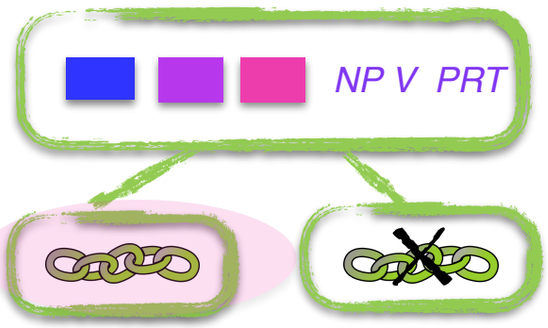
Both are present at three and five, but absent together at four.

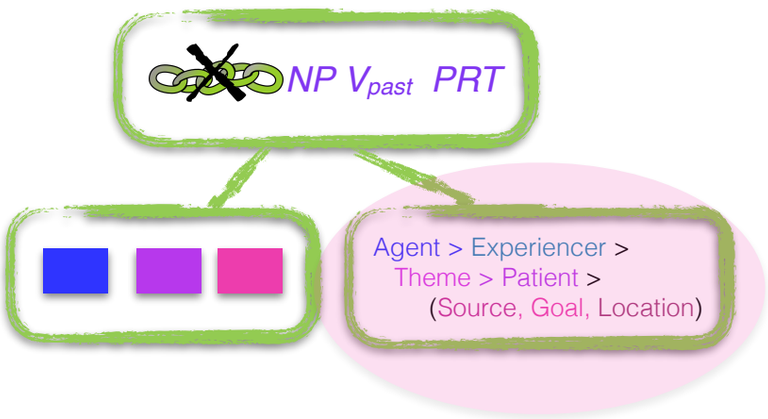
<3yrs

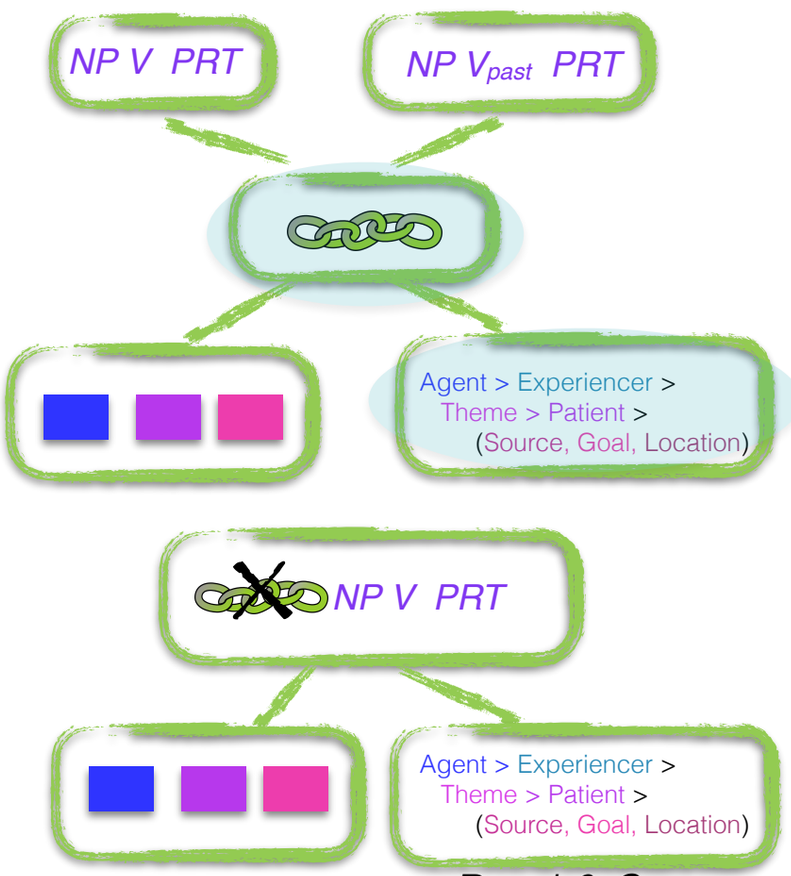
<4yrs

<5yrs









Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

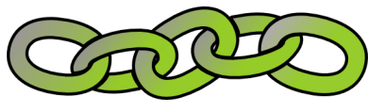
relative

late
UTAH

fixed

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

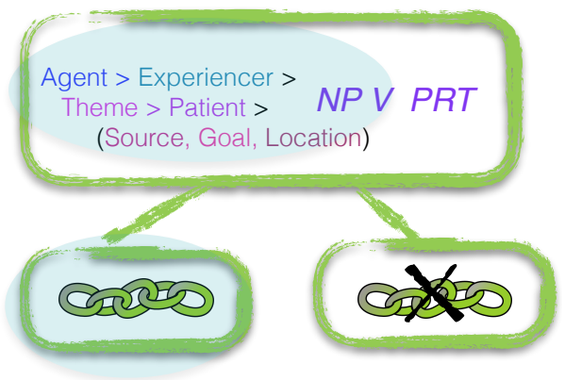


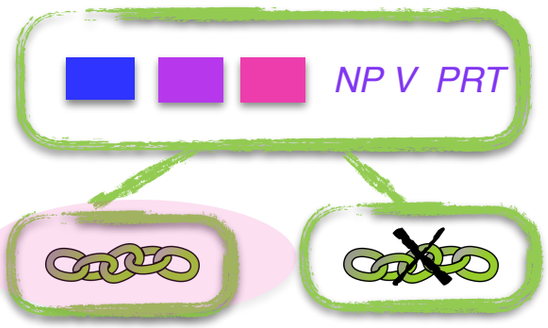
This means development is complicated for early maturation — the knowledge has to be inaccessible at four for some reason.

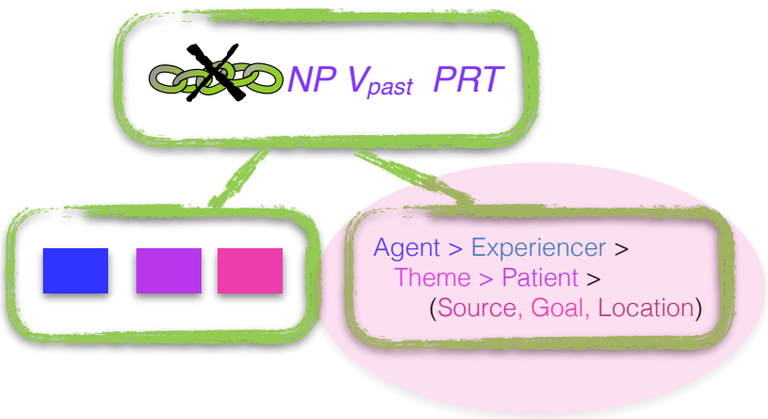
<3yrs

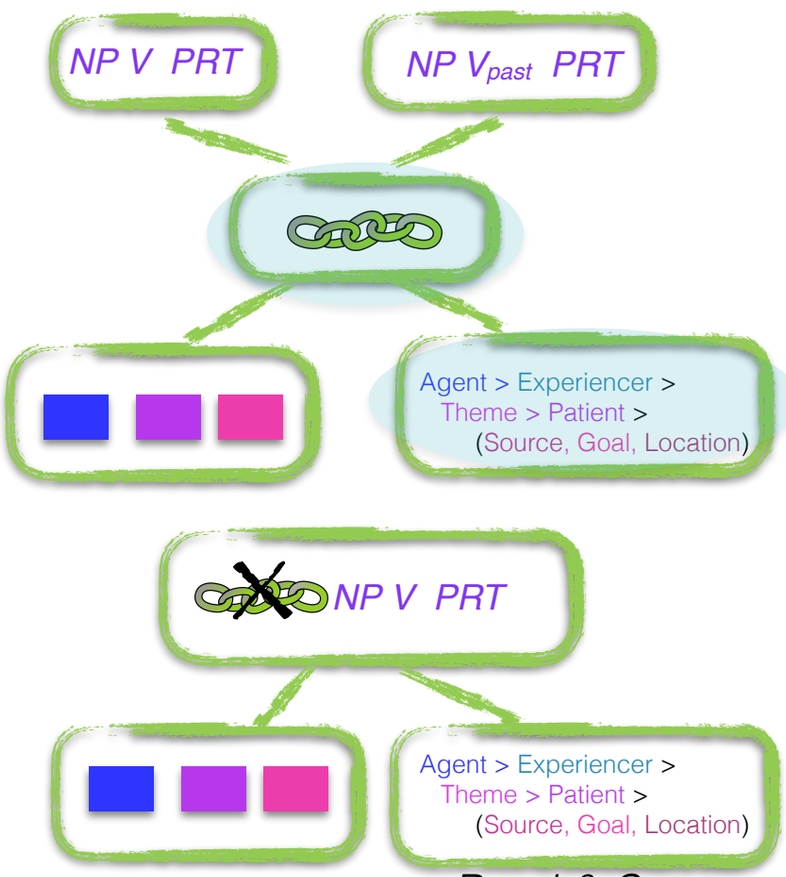
<4yrs

<5yrs









Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?

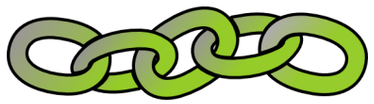
late
UTAH

relative

fixed

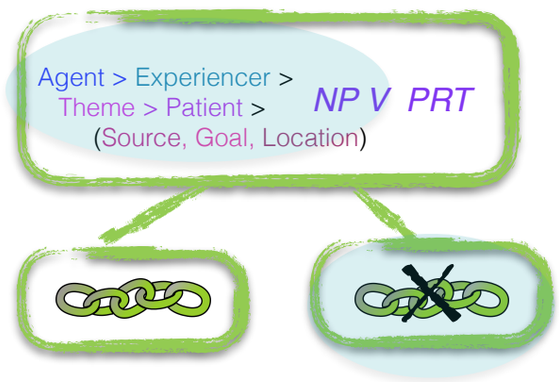
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

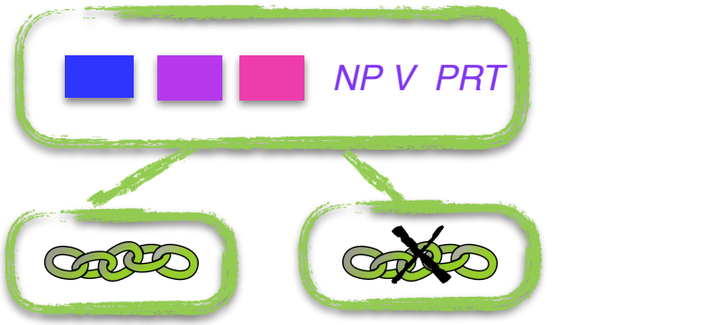


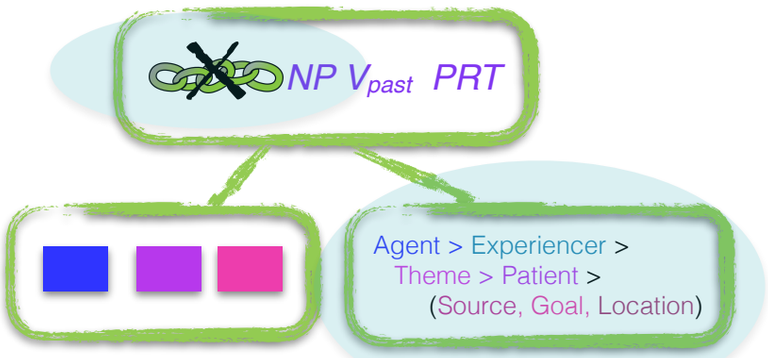
Late maturation is compatible, and would predict that the linking knowledge doesn't emerge till five.

<3yrs

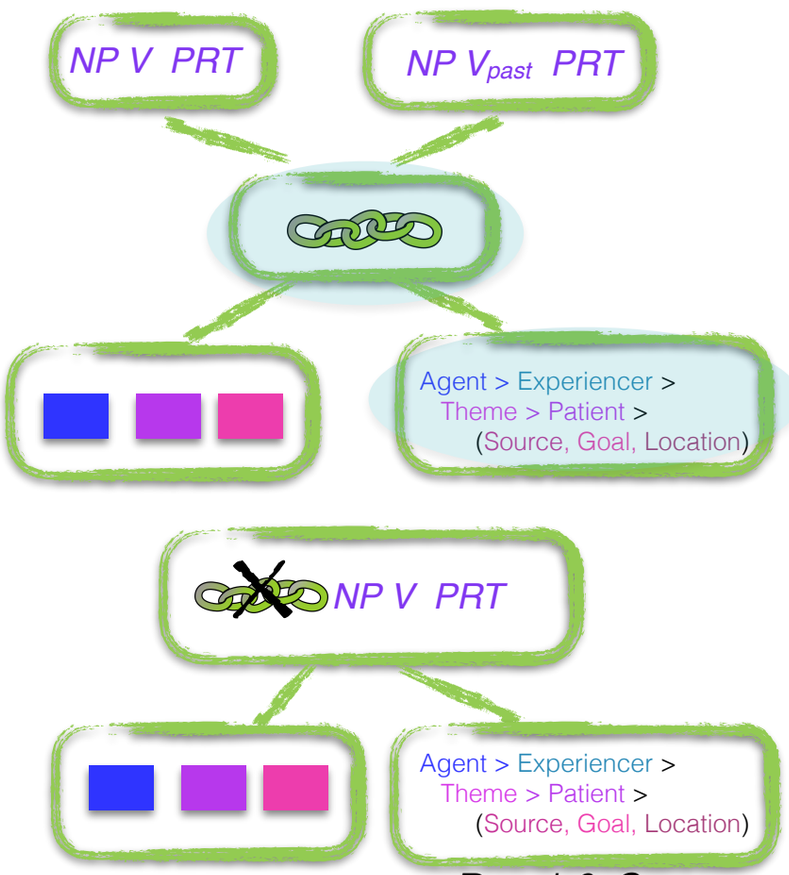


<4yrs



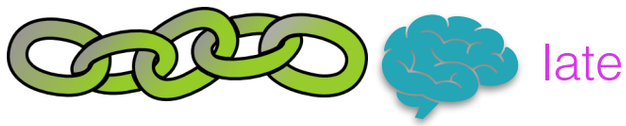


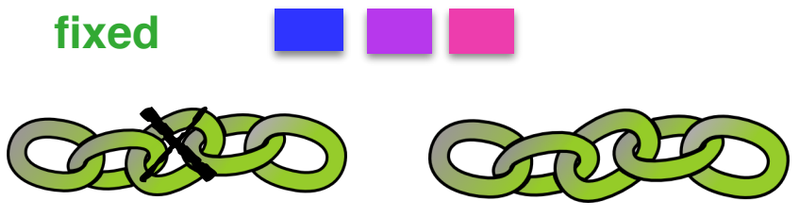
<5yrs



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?





The derived-mapping variant using the fixed system would look for this knowledge to be present after the child has had sufficient language experience.

<3yrs

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

<4yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT

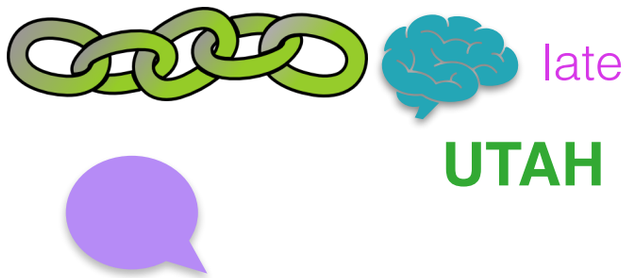
Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

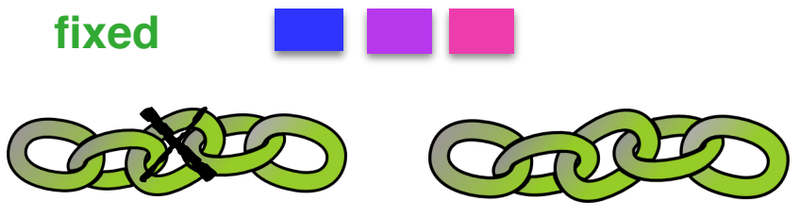
NP V PRT

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

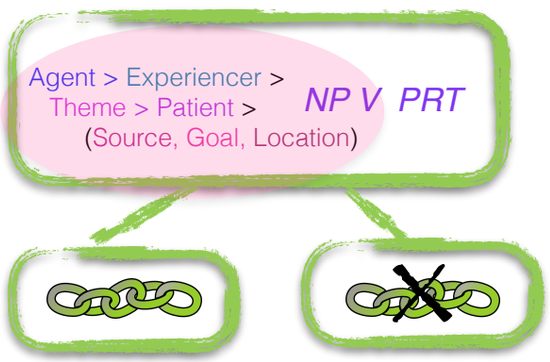
How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?



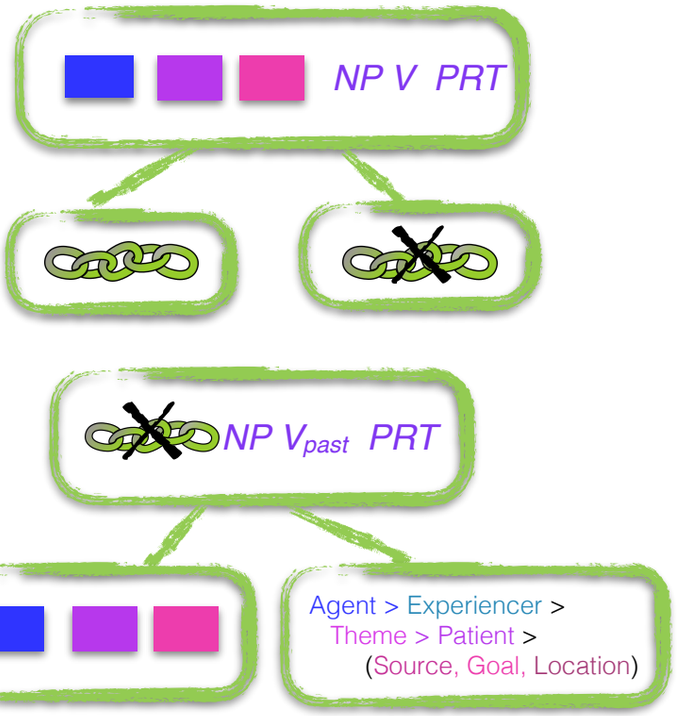


The child would need to derive the fixed system knowledge as well as the linking knowledge, since it's not present at age three.

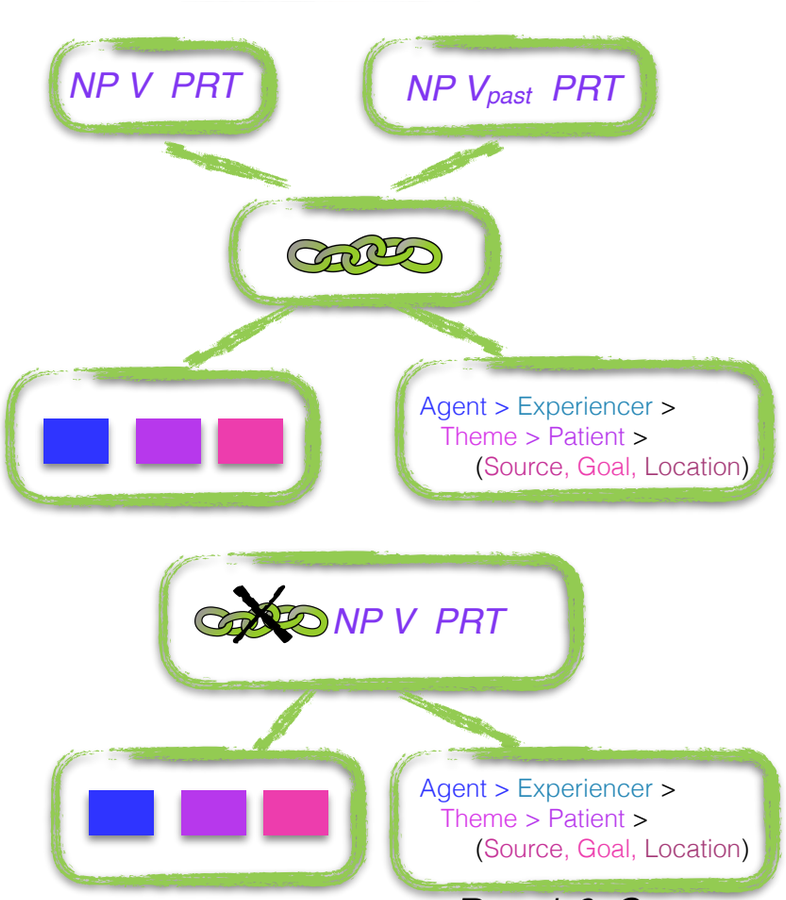
<3yrs



<4yrs

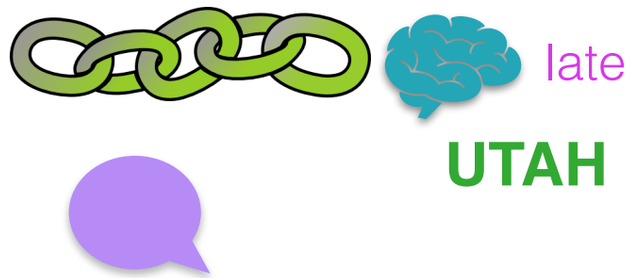


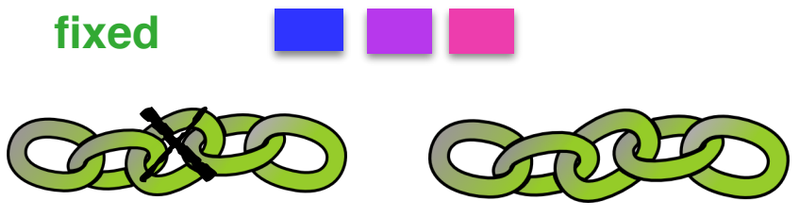
<5yrs



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?



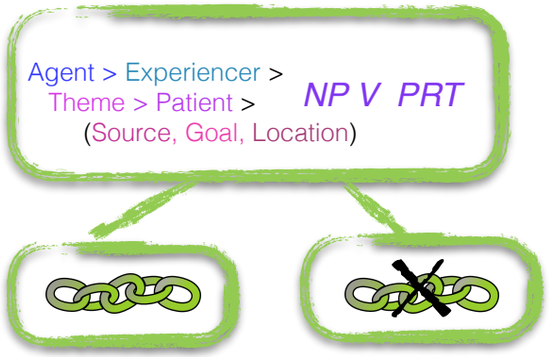


The child would need to derive the fixed system knowledge as well as the linking knowledge, since it's not present at age three.

<3yrs

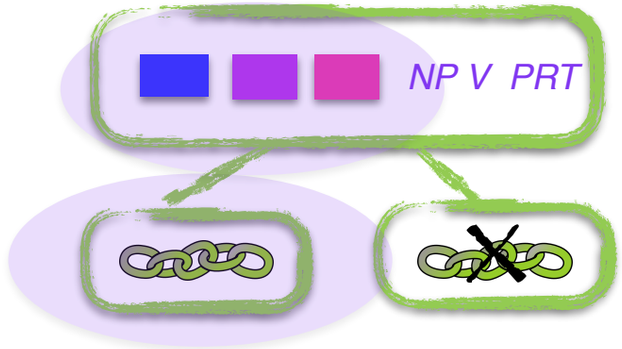
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

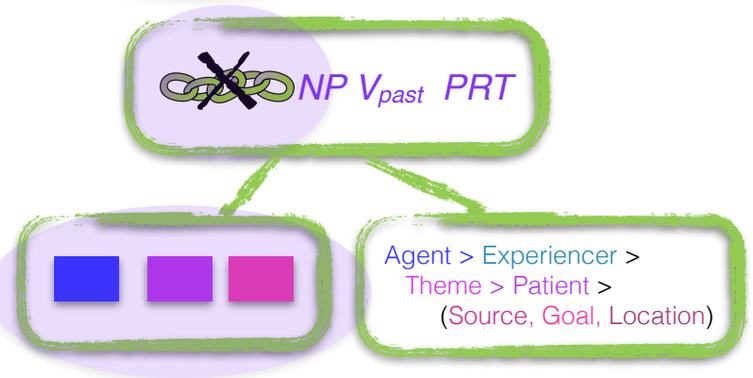


<4yrs

NP V PRT



NP V_{past} PRT

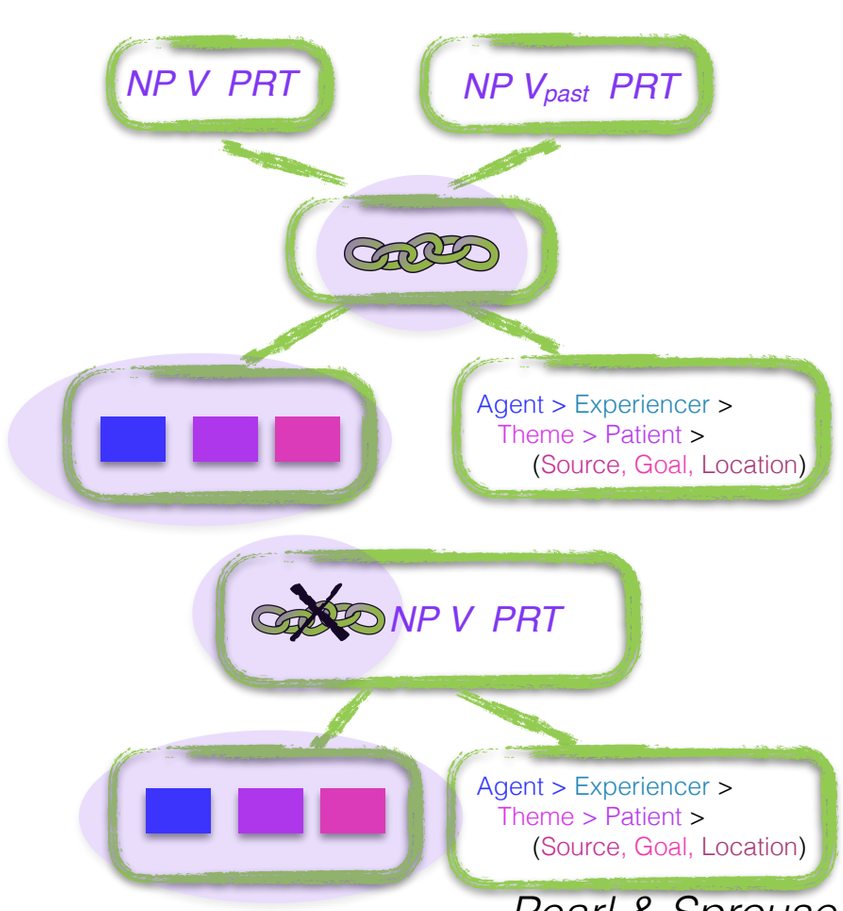


Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

<5yrs

NP V PRT

NP V_{past} PRT



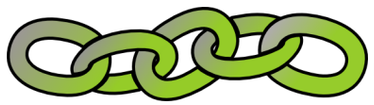
Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

NP V PRT

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?



rUTAH

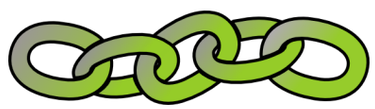
late

UTAH

+derive fixed
fixed

relative

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

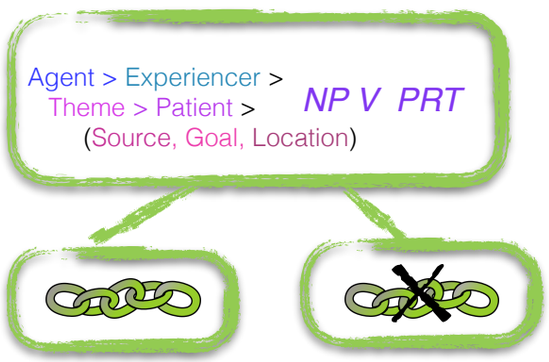


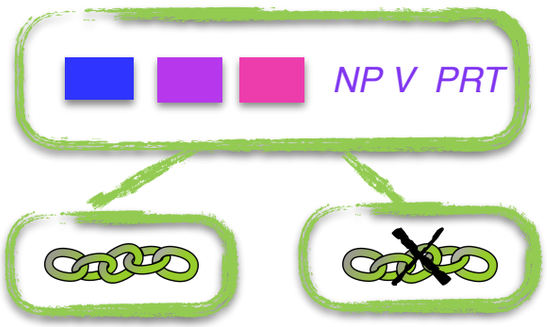
The derived-mapping variant using the relative system would look for this knowledge to be present after the child has had sufficient language experience.

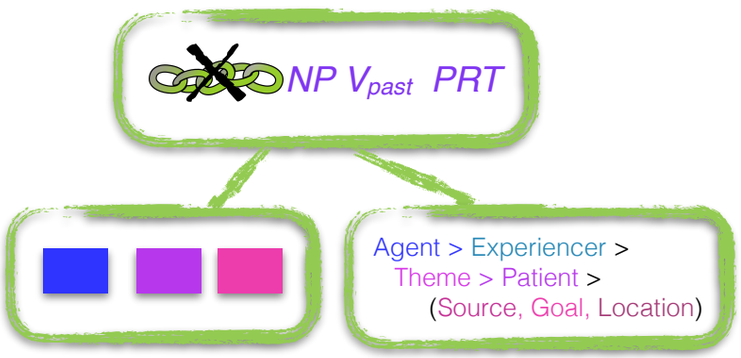
<3yrs

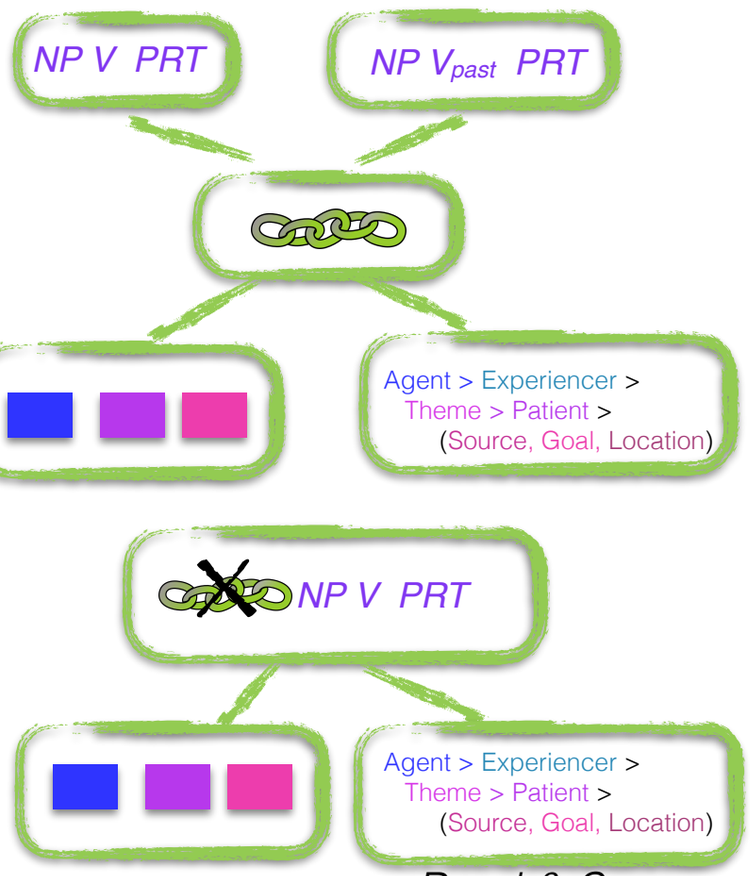
<4yrs

<5yrs









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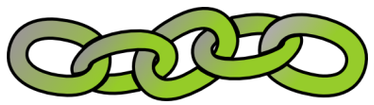
How do we interpret this with respect to our linking theory proposals?



rUTAH

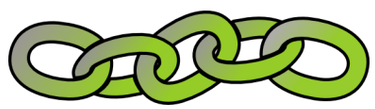
late

UTAH

+derive fixed
fixed

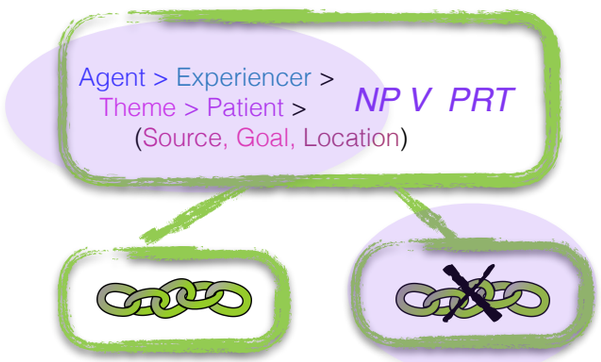
relative

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

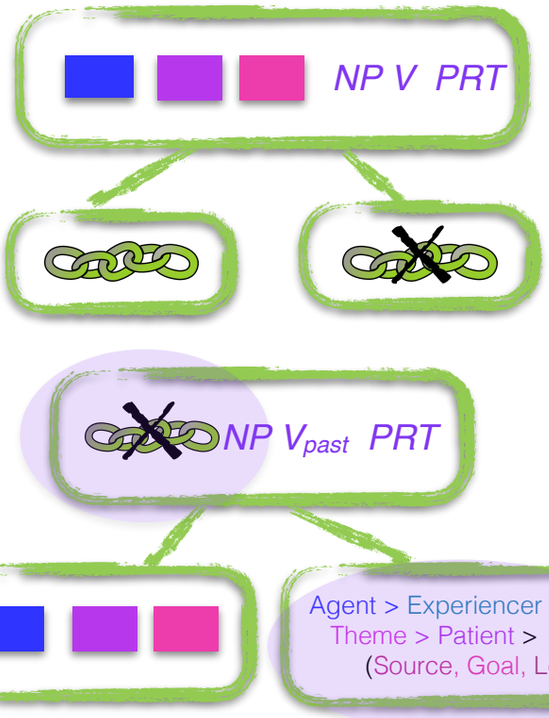


This seems compatible: for example, the linking knowledge could be absent at three and four, but derived by five.

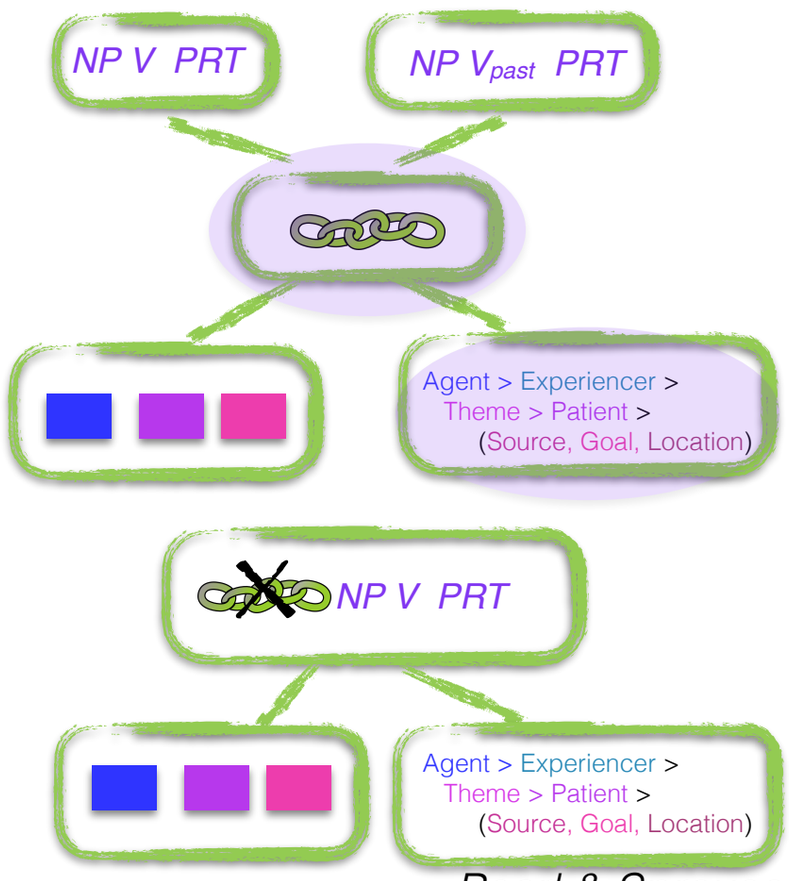
<3yrs



<4yrs



<5yrs



Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Our linking theory proposals can now be coupled with the developmental theories that have to accompany them in order to match empirical data from children.

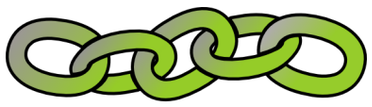
rUTAH

late maturation

UTAH

+fixed matures late

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)



relative

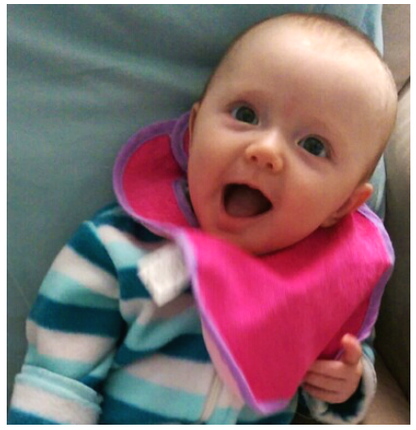
derive by five

fixed

+derive fixed

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Our linking theory proposals can now be coupled with the developmental theories that have to accompany them in order to match empirical data from children.



Takeaway 1: Innate-mapping approaches must involve late maturation.

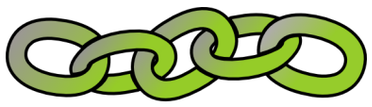
rUTAH

late maturation

UTAH

+fixed matures late

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)



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Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

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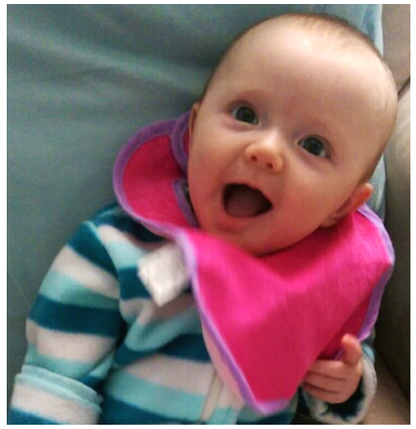


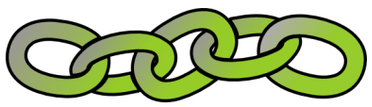
Takeaway 2: Approaches with fixed thematic systems must involve late maturation or derivation from the input.

rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

relative

late maturation



derive by five

UTAH

+fixed matures late

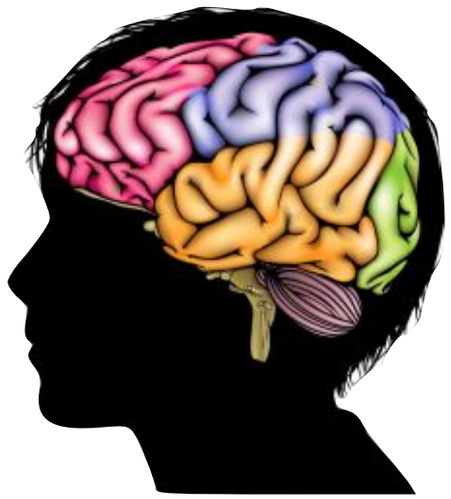
fixed

+derive fixed

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Our linking theory proposals can now be coupled with the developmental theories that have to accompany them in order to match empirical data from children.

Question: If knowledge matures late, how does that work?
We need evidence from developmental neurobiology.



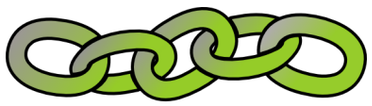
rUTAH

late maturation

UTAH

+fixed matures late

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)



relative

derive by five

fixed

+derive fixed

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

Our linking theory proposals can now be coupled with the developmental theories that have to accompany them in order to match empirical data from children.

Question: If knowledge is derived from the input, how does that work? We need a concrete proposal for how children could do this.

rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

late maturation

relative

derive by five

UTAH

+fixed matures late

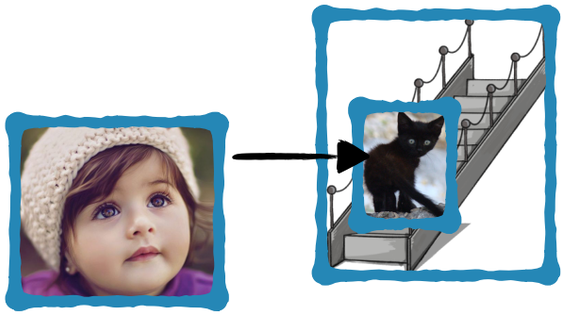
fixed

+derive fixed

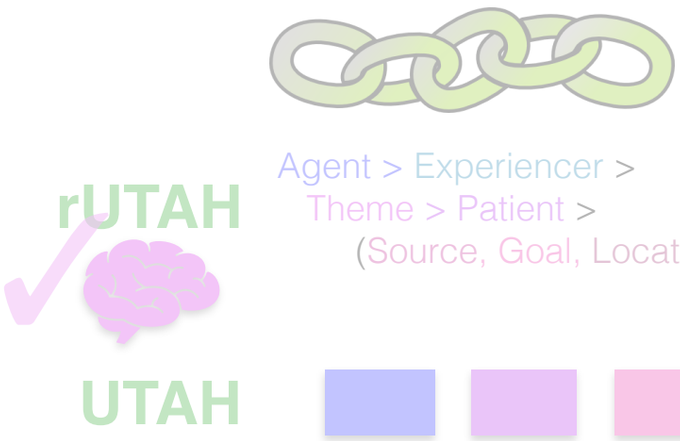
Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

The Plan

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



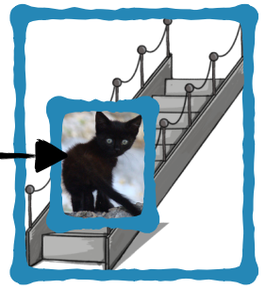
1. Evaluating different linking theory proposals using acquisition modeling



2. Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

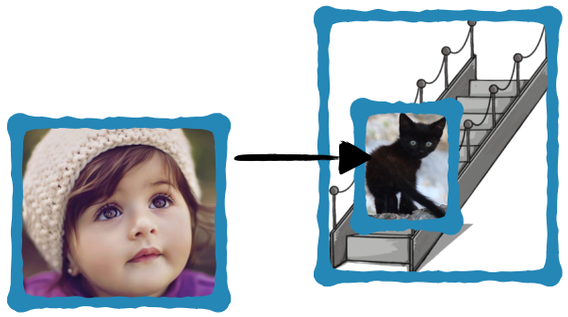
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Let's remind ourselves what children are learning about links.

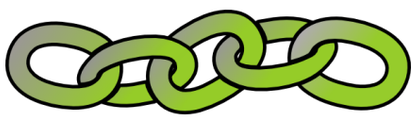
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input



Subject Object Oblique Object

Syntax The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



If children have a particular intermediate representation for thematic roles, then they need to link those representations to syntactic positions.

Intermediate representations

fixed

relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

Event participant roles = Thematic roles

Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Goal, Source, Location…

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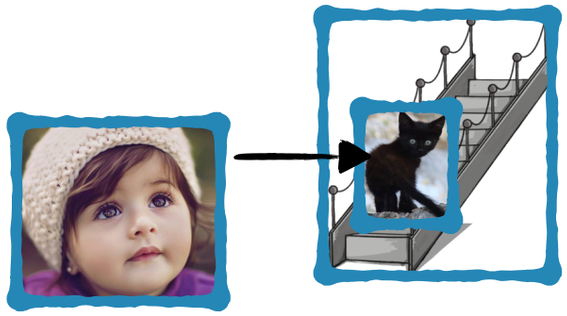
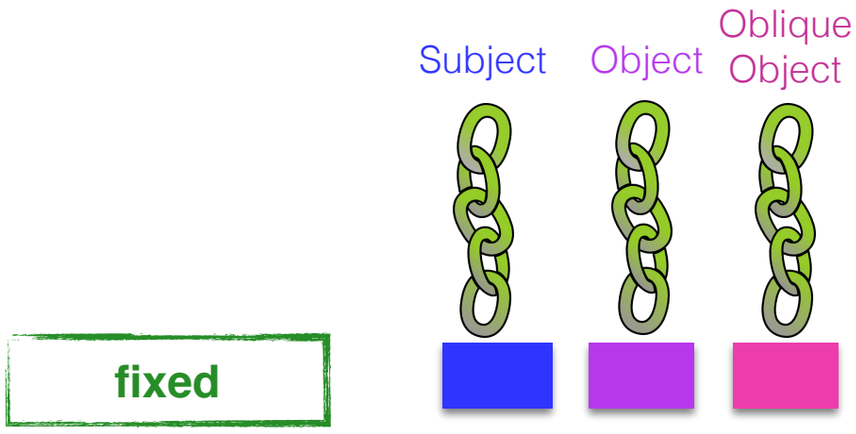
Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input



The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

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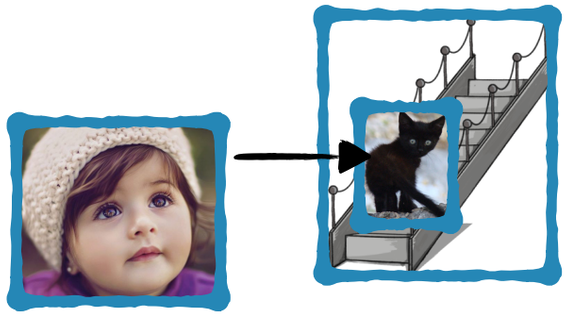
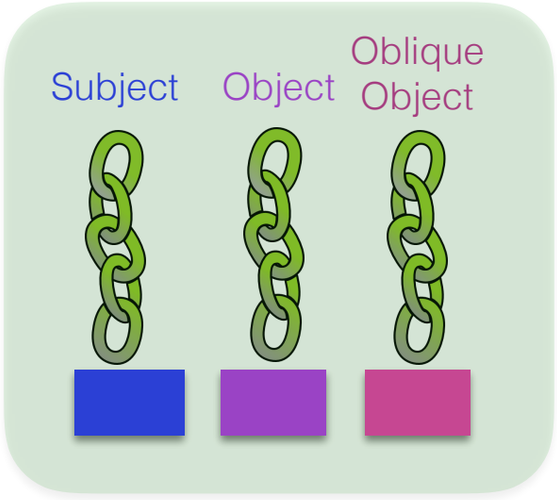
Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input



The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



fixed

relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

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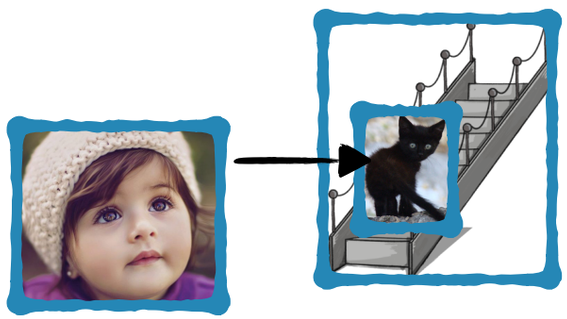
Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input



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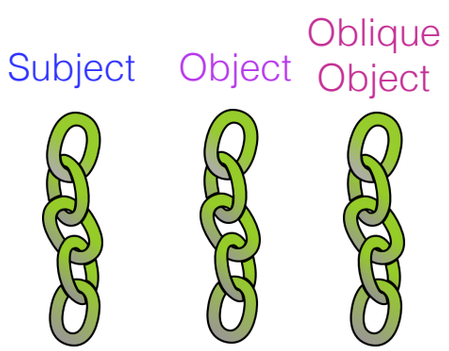
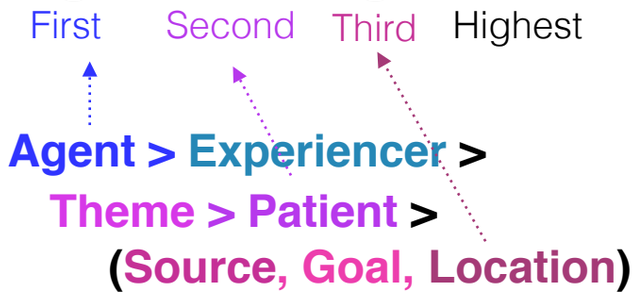
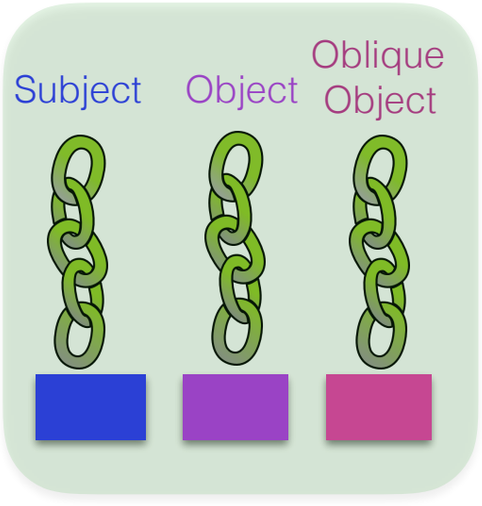


relative



fixed



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

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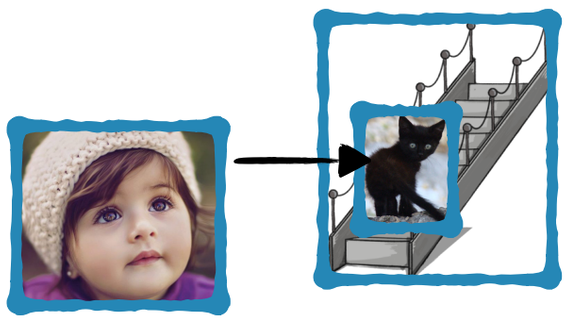

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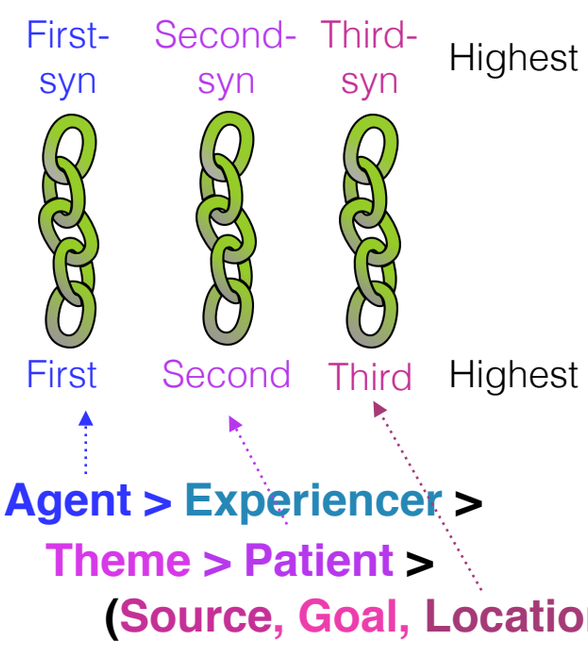

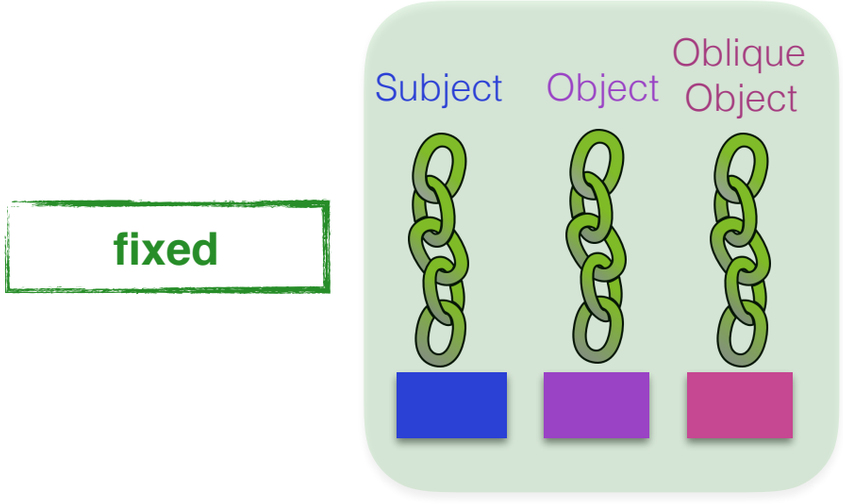

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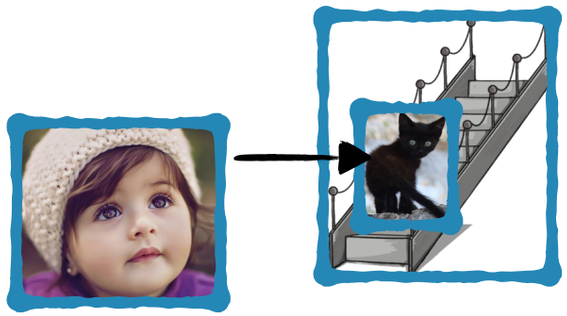
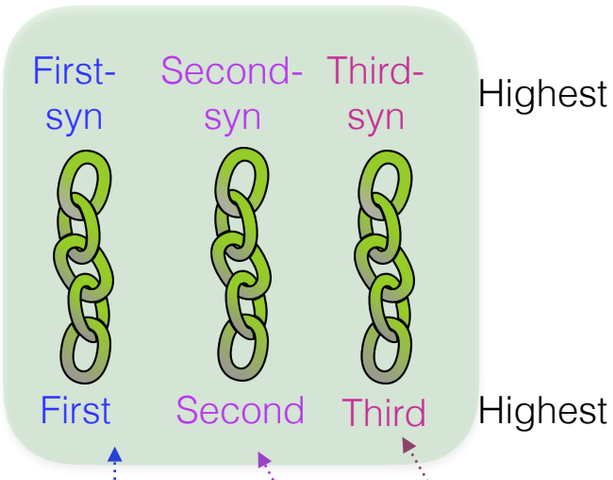
Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input



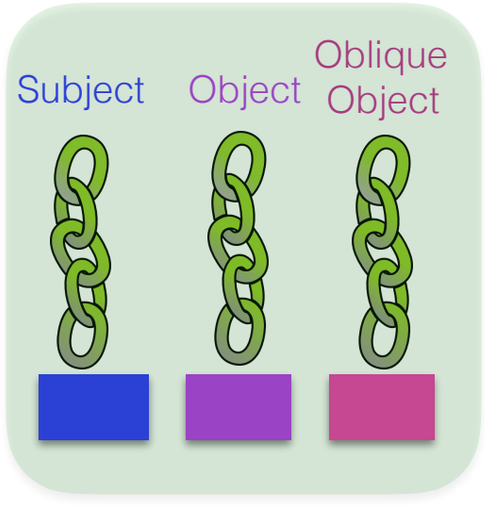
The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



relative

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

fixed



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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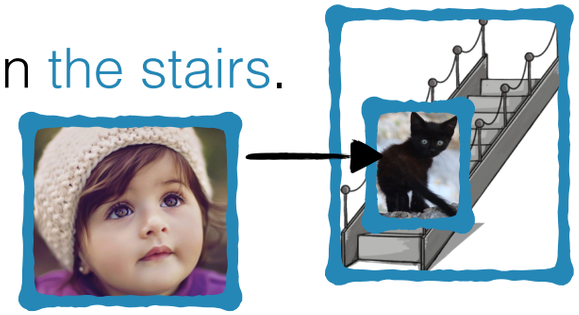
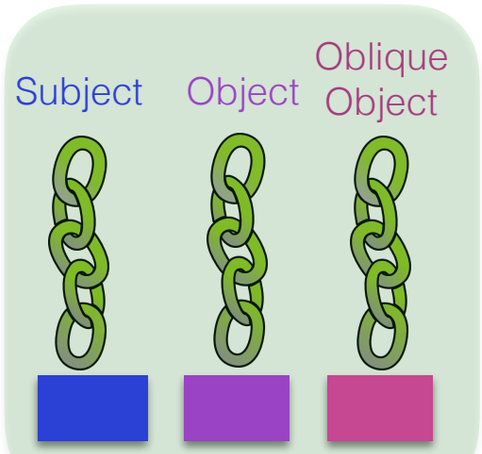


The linking theories we looked at before (UTAH and rUTAH, and their derived-mapping equivalents) treat these as atomic units (3-link theories).

fixed



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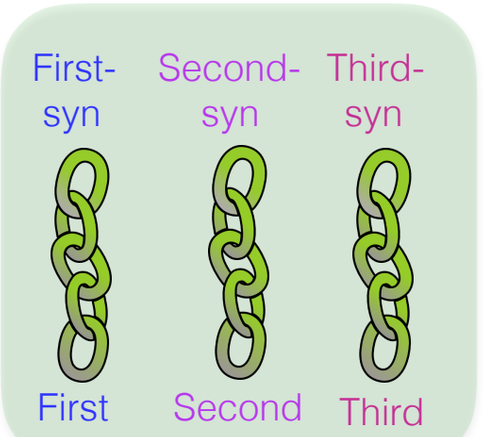

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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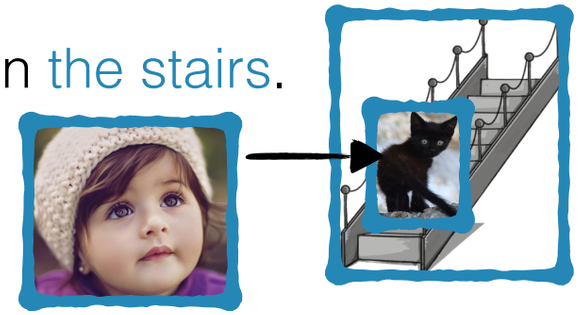
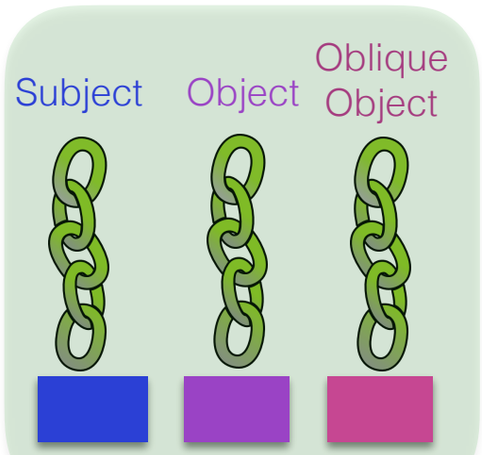


Acquisition task for one 3-link theory:
(1) Derive all three links from the input.
(2) Derive the 3-link linking theory from the input.

fixed



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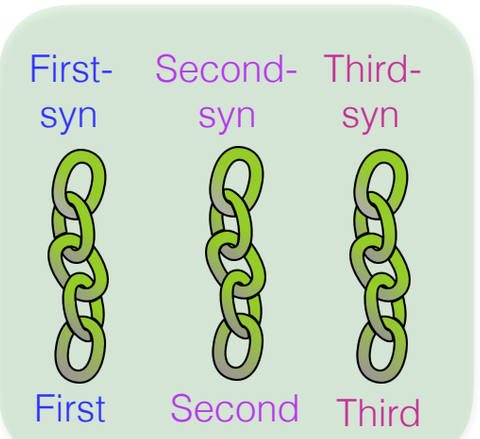

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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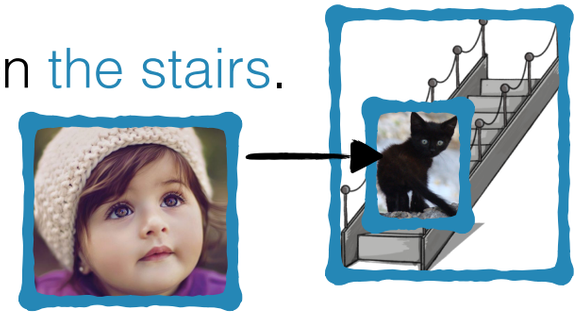
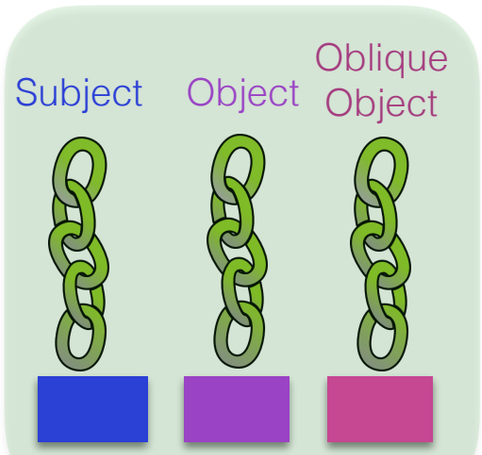


Acquisition task for one 3-link theory:
(1) Derive all three links from the input.
(2) Derive the 3-link linking theory from the input.

How would this work?

fixed



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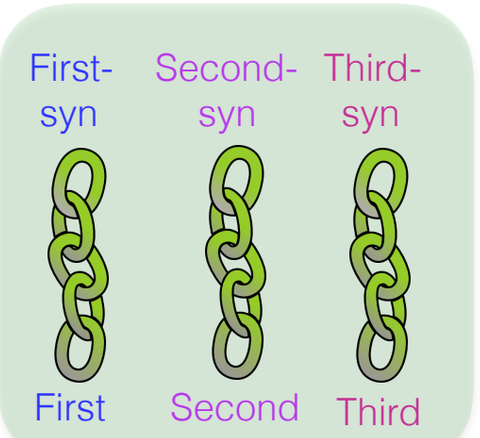

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Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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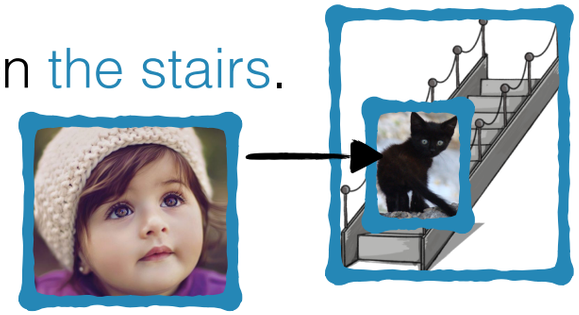

Acquisition task for one 3-link theory:
(1) Derive all three links from the input.
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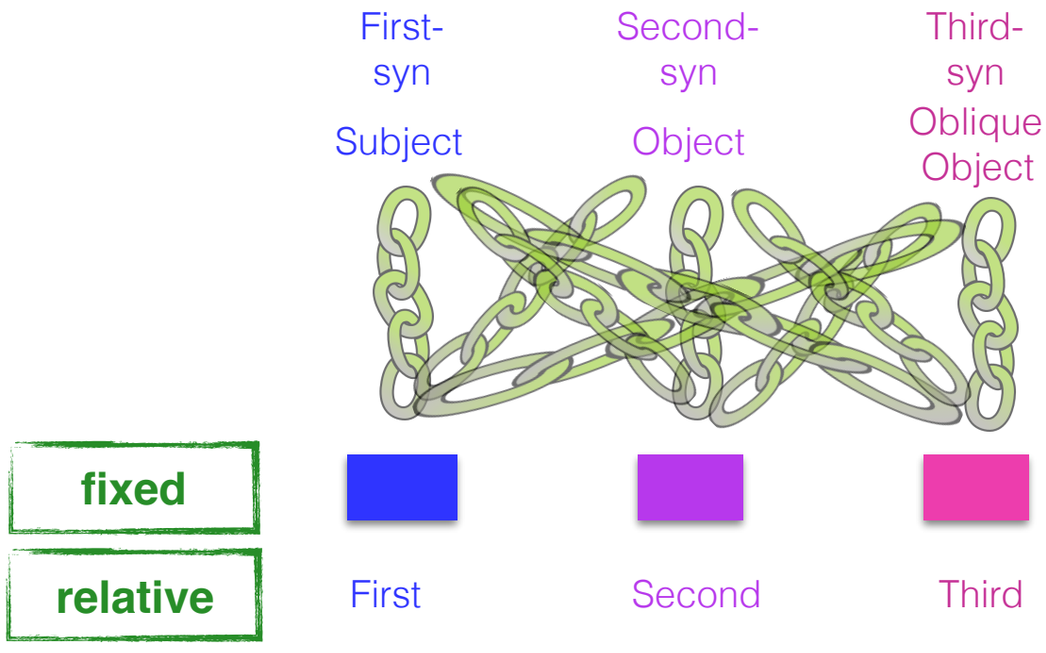
One way: Consider all possible links and see which ones are reliable enough in the input



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Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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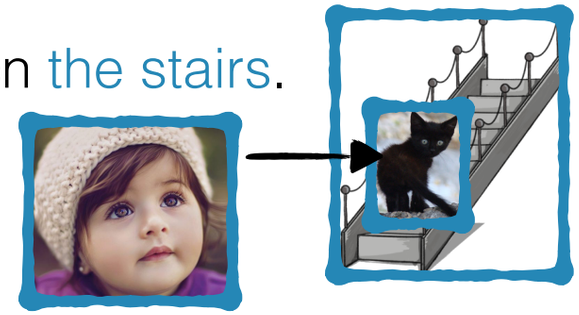

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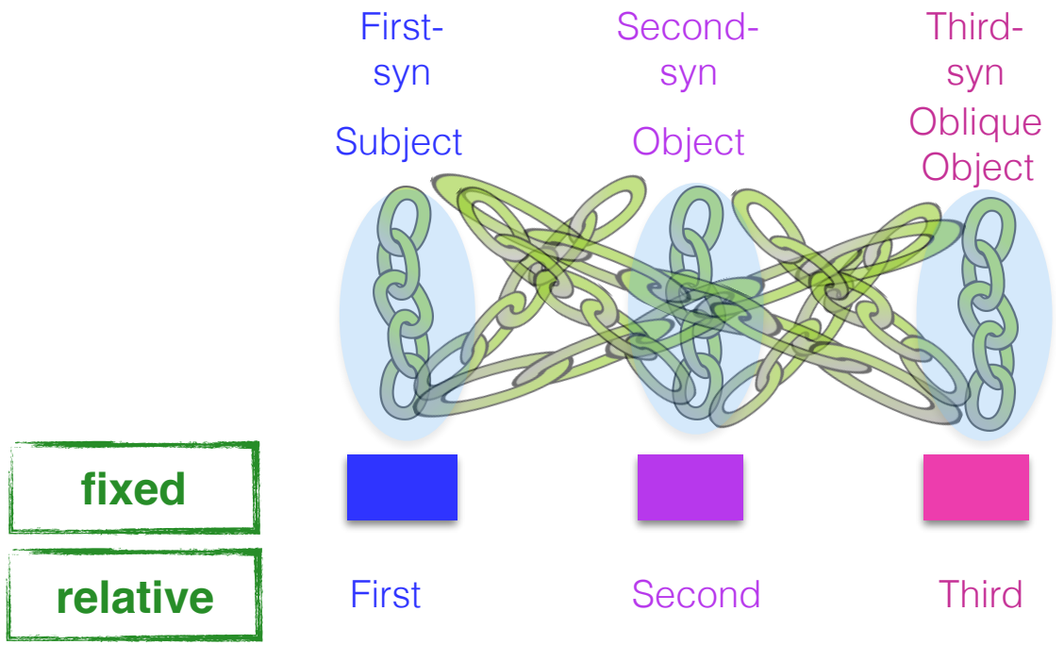

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Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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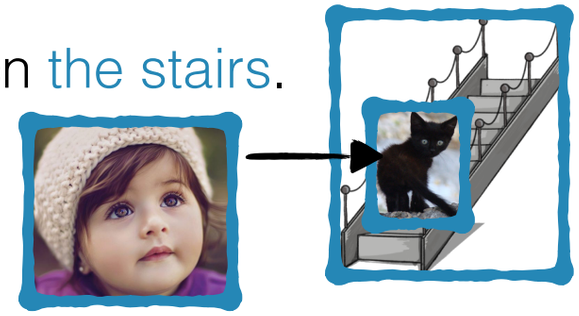
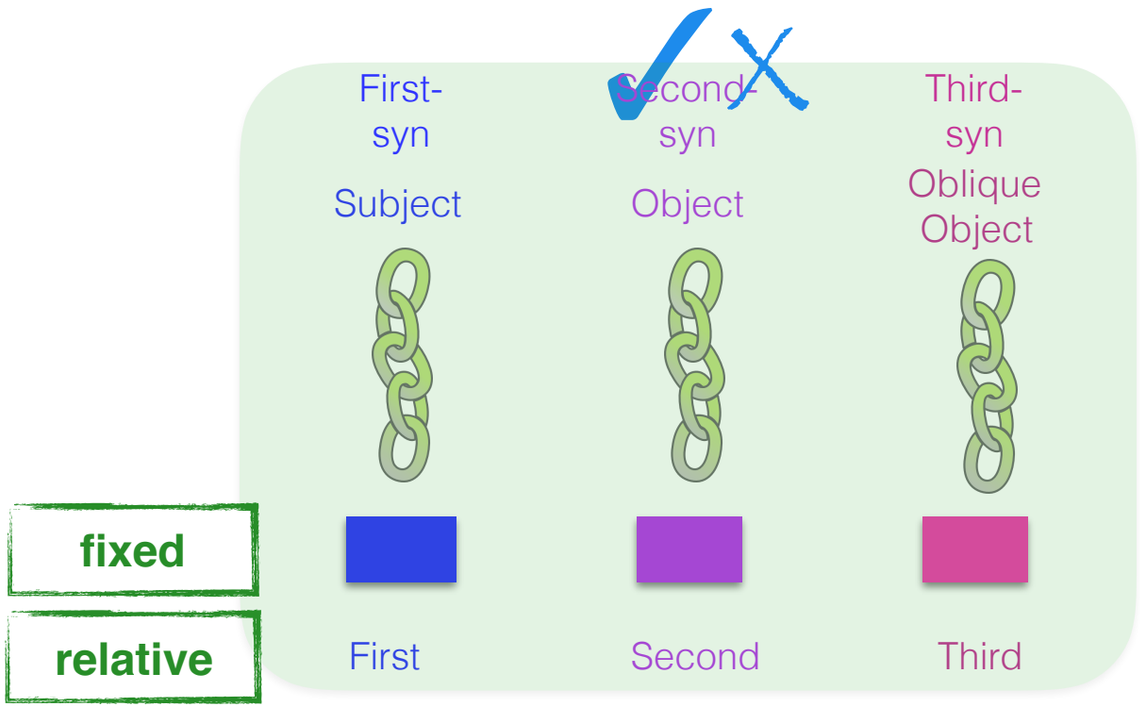


Acquisition task for one 3-link theory:

(1) Derive all three links from the input.

(2) Derive the 3-link linking theory from the input.

One way: Then construct the 3-link linking theory from the reliable links and see if the 3-link theory is reliable enough as a unit.



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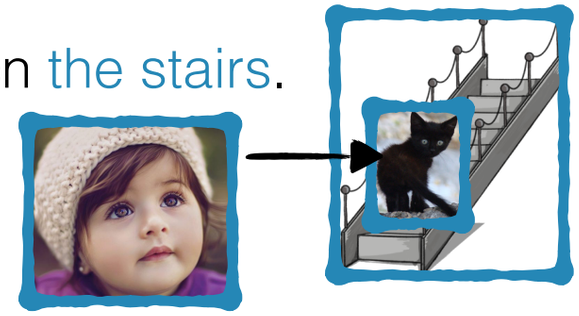
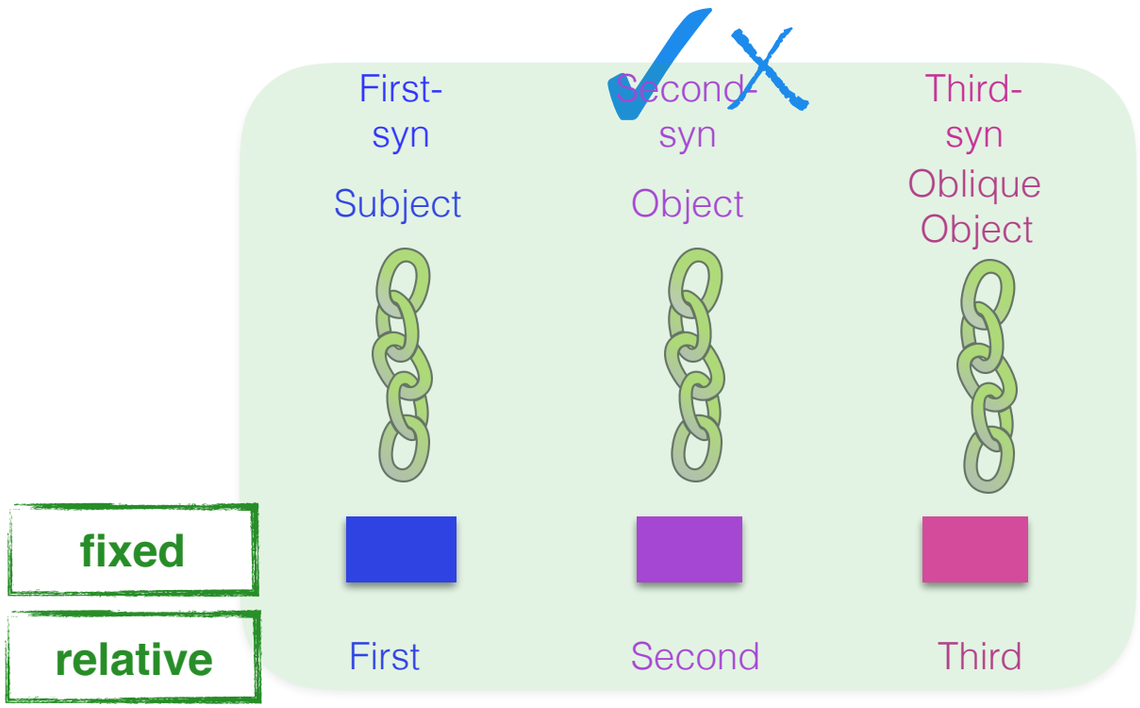
Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



Acquisition task for one 3-link theory:
(1) Derive all three links from the input.
(2) Derive the 3-link linking theory from the input.

But why even bother with this second step?



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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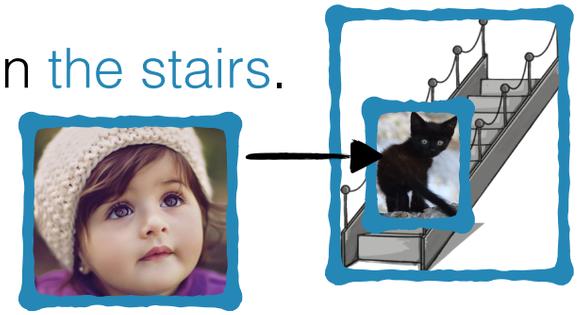
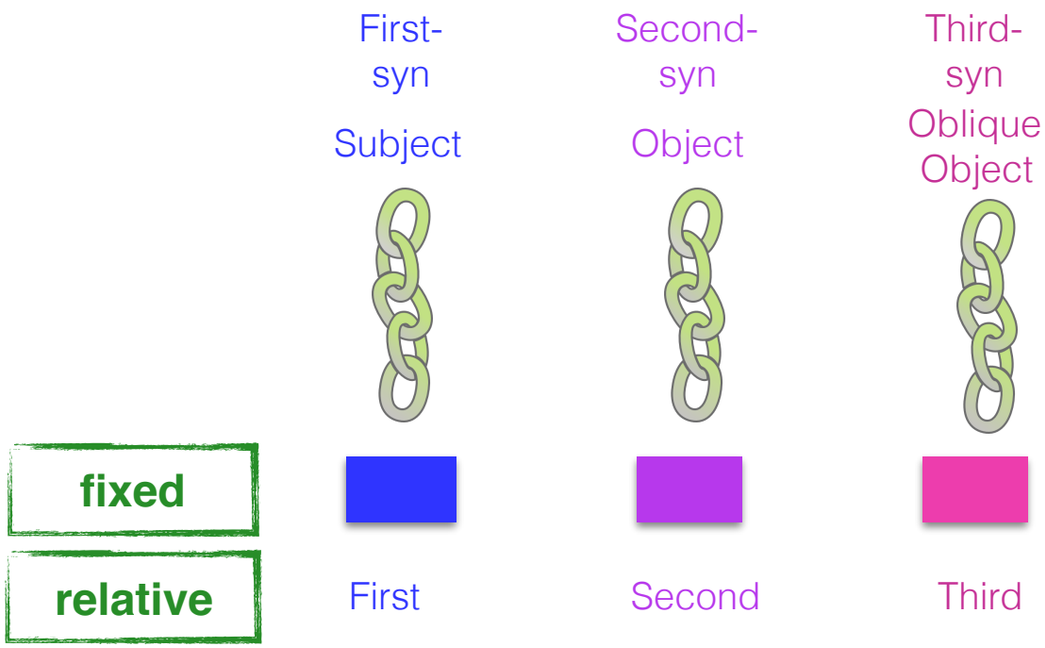


Acquisition task for one 3-link theory:

(1) Derive all three links from the input.

~~(2) Derive the 3-link linking theory from the input.~~

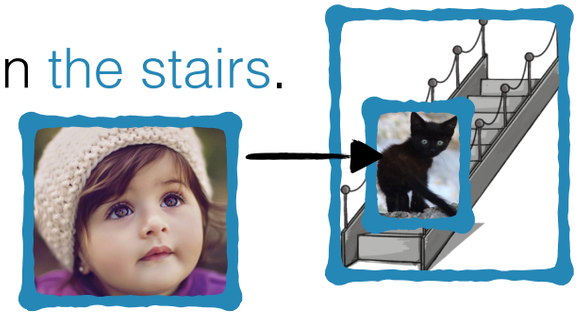
What if we just had three 1-link theories?



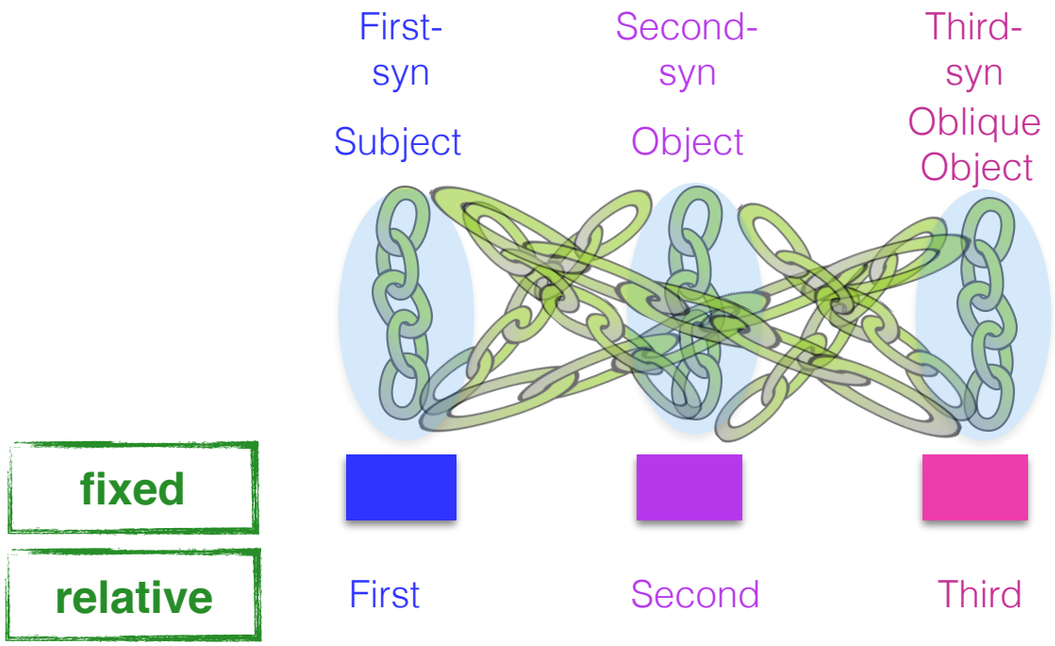
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



An alternative acquisition task for three 1-link theories:
Derive all three links from the input (and don't worry about binding them together — just have three 1-link theories)



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Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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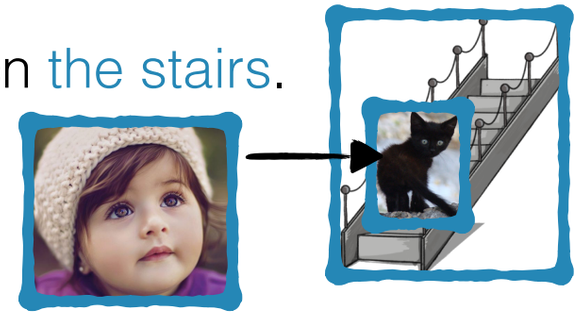
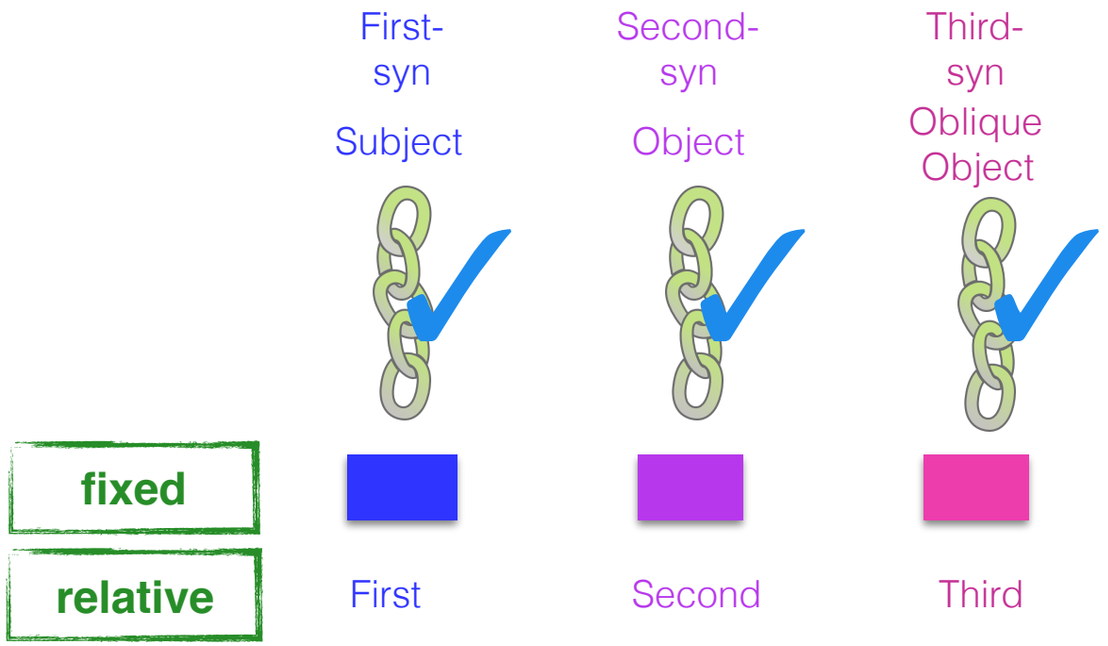


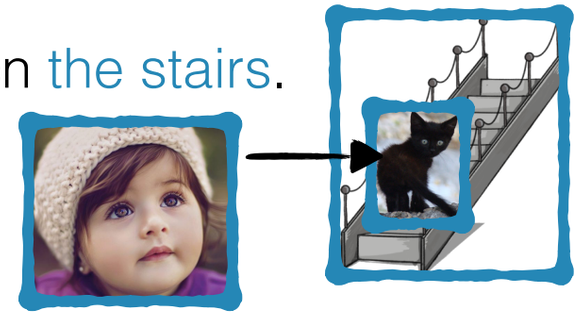
An alternative acquisition task for three 1-link theories:
Derive all three links from the input (and don't worry about binding them together — just have three 1-link theories)



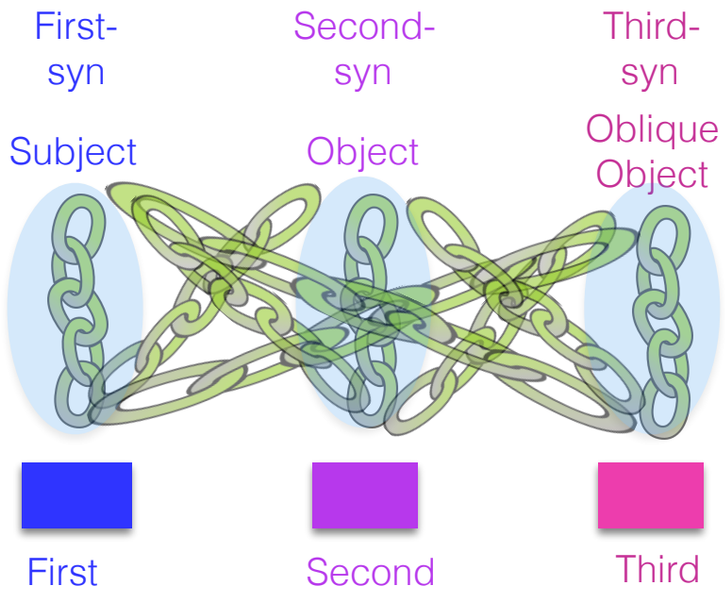
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

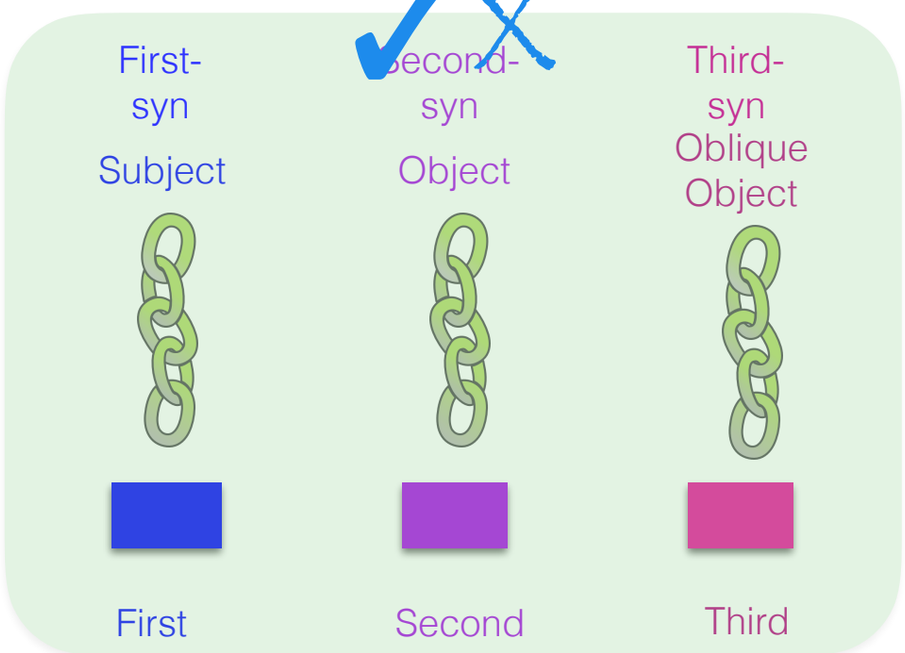
Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

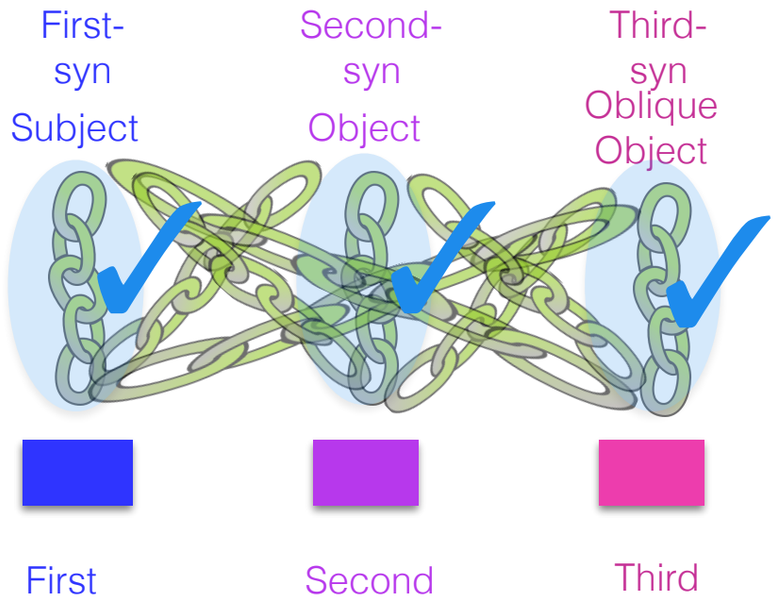


one 3-link theory





three 1-link theories



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Exploring how a linking theory could be derived from children's input

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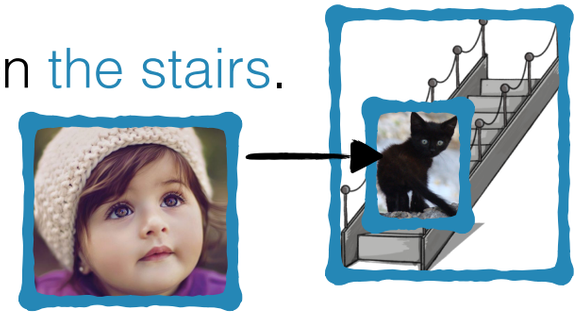
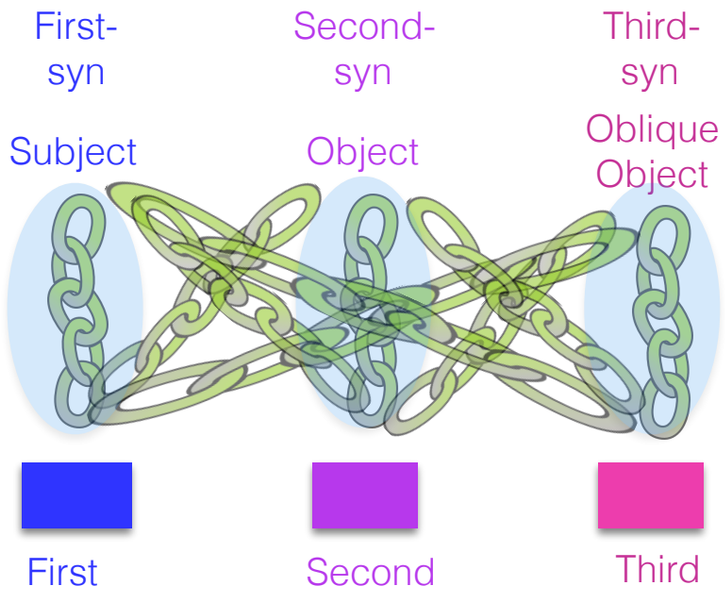
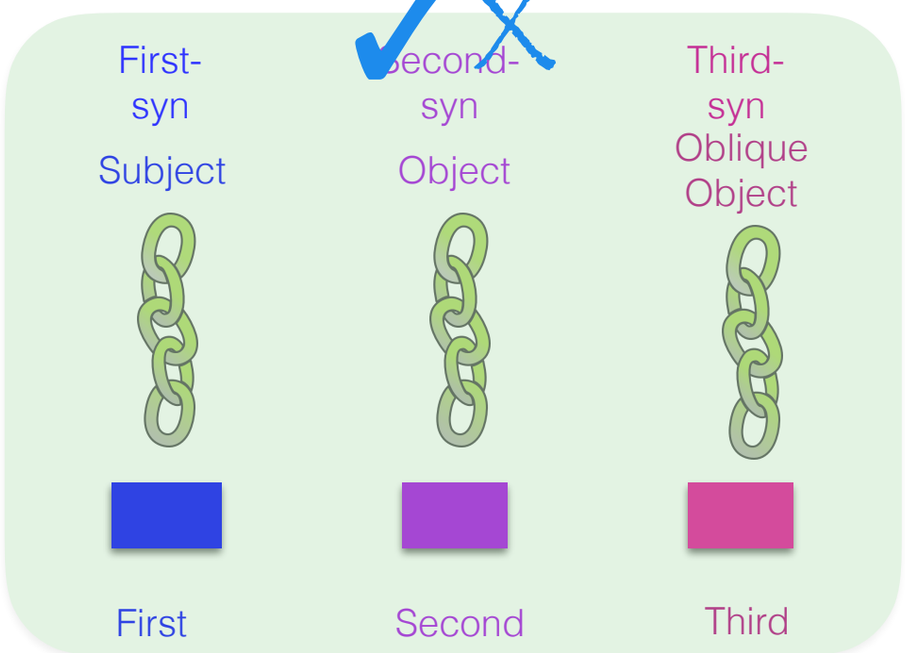


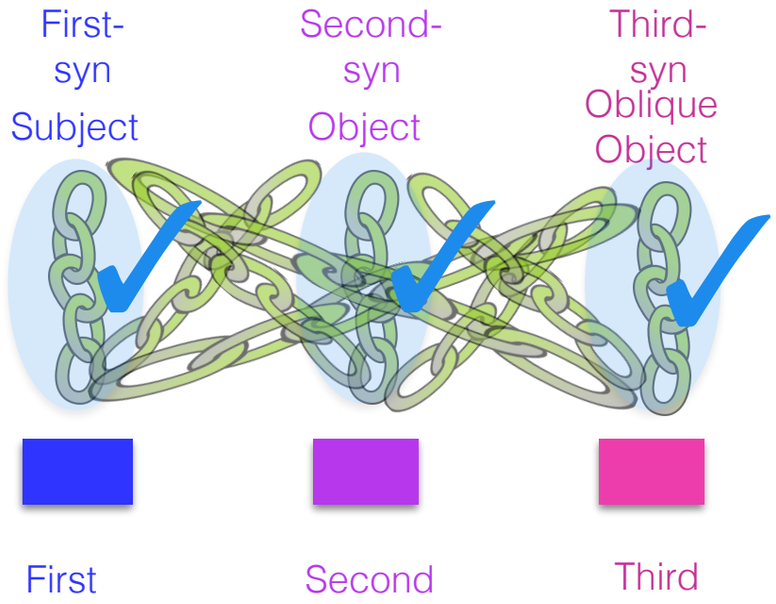
Is either of these possible, given the kind of input children get?

one 3-link theory



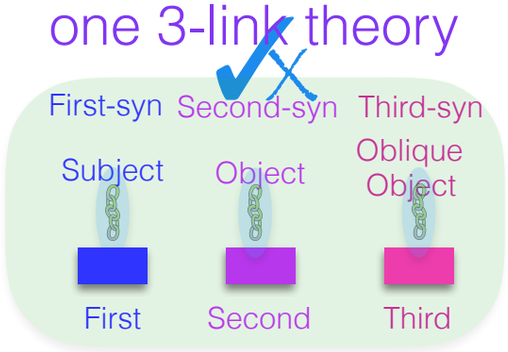


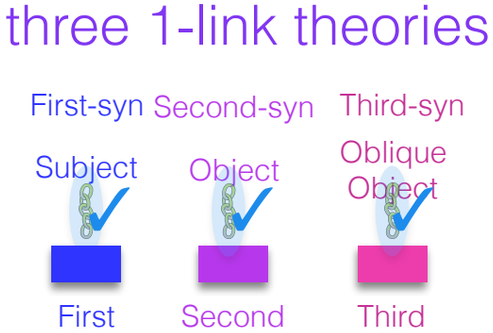
three 1-link theories



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task





five main parts to defining an acquisition task concretely

initial state

data intake

inference

learning period

target state

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

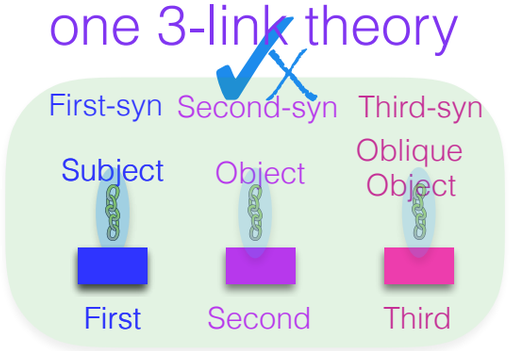
data intake

inference

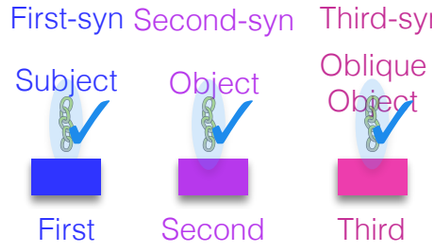
learning period

target state

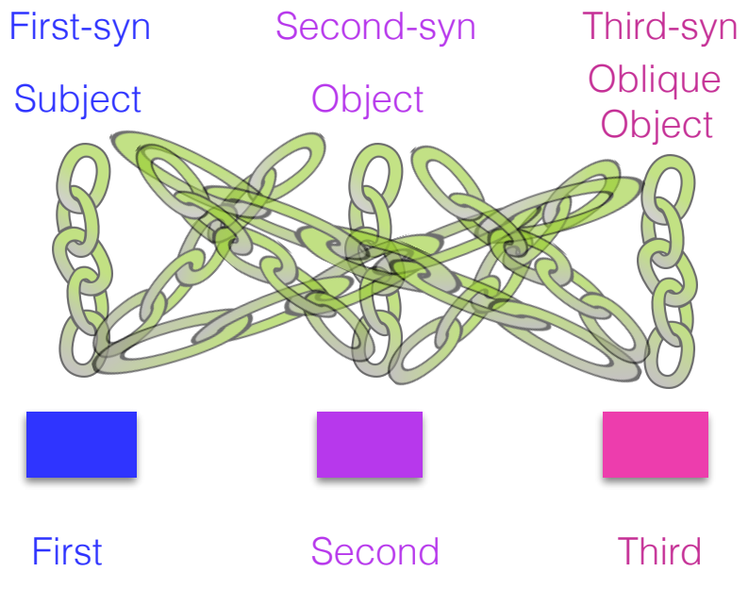
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



fixed

relative

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

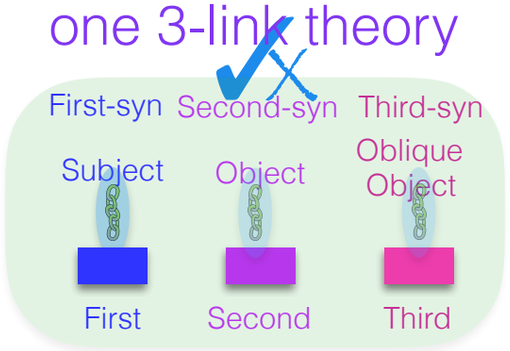
data intake

inference

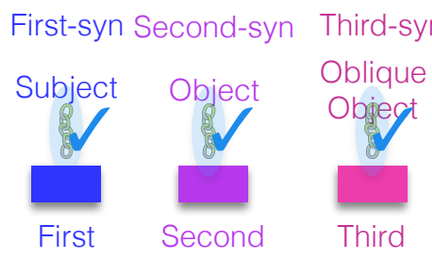
learning period

target state

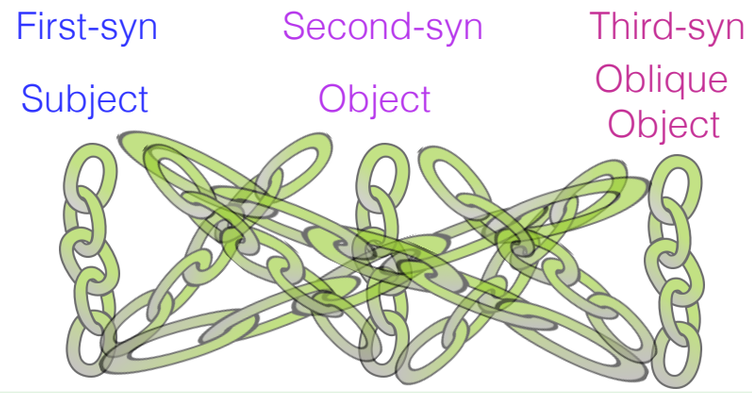
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



fixed

relative

First

Second

Third

Knowledge of intermediate thematic representation

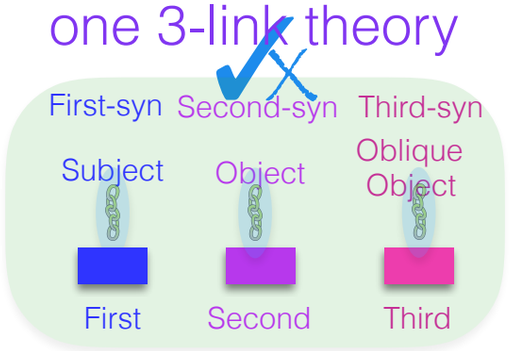
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

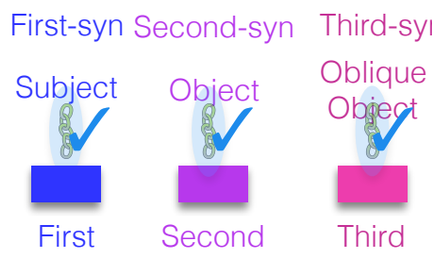
data intake inference

learning period target state

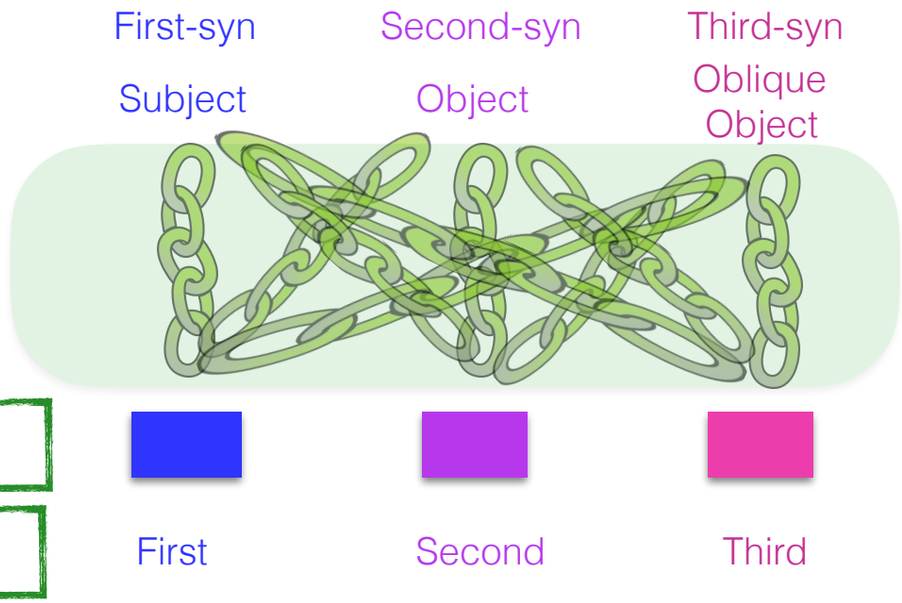
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



fixed

relative

Constraints on possible links

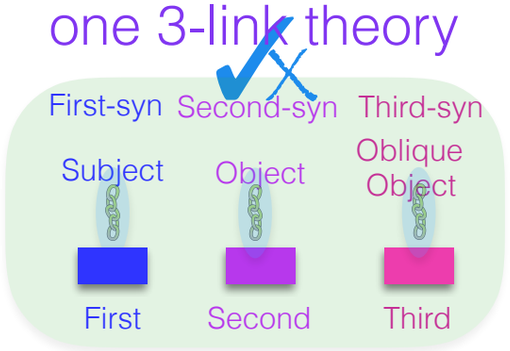
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

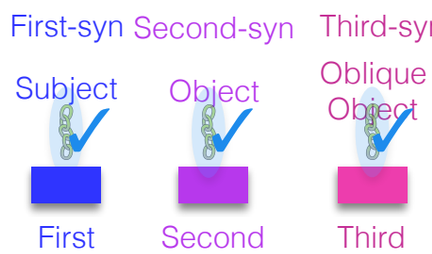
data intake inference

learning period target state

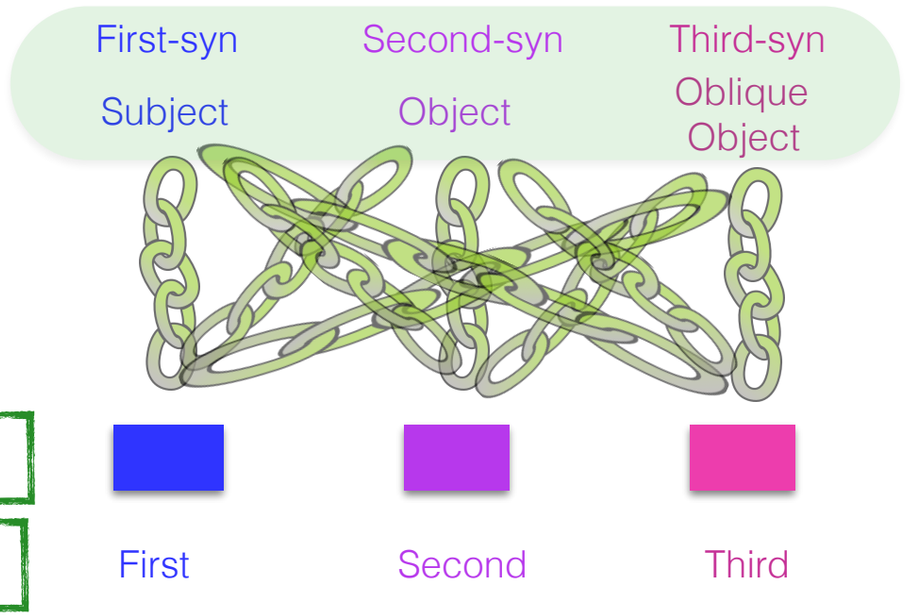
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



Constraints on possible links:

- Knowing which syntactic positions are relevant

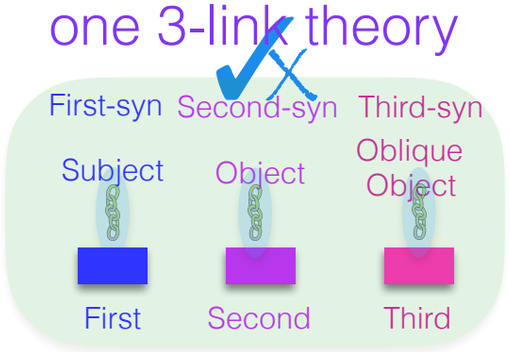
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

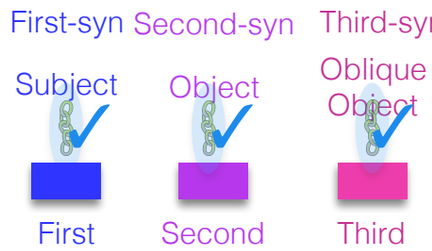
data intake inference

learning period target state

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state

First-syn	Second-syn	Third-syn
Subject	Object	Oblique Object

fixed

relative

First Second Third

Constraints on possible links:

- Knowing which syntactic positions are relevant
- A link can go from role to position…

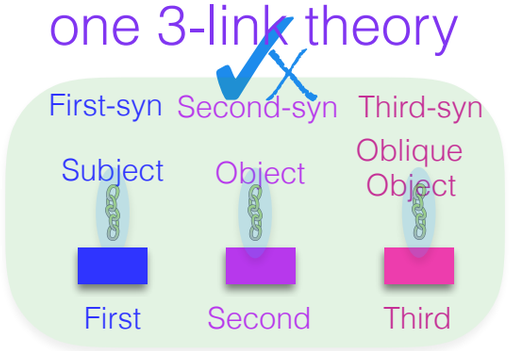
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

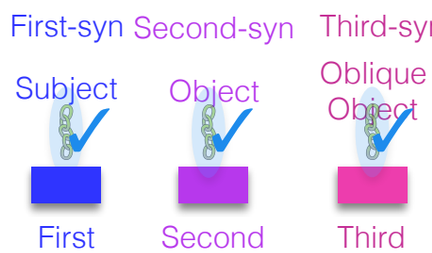
data intake inference

learning period target state

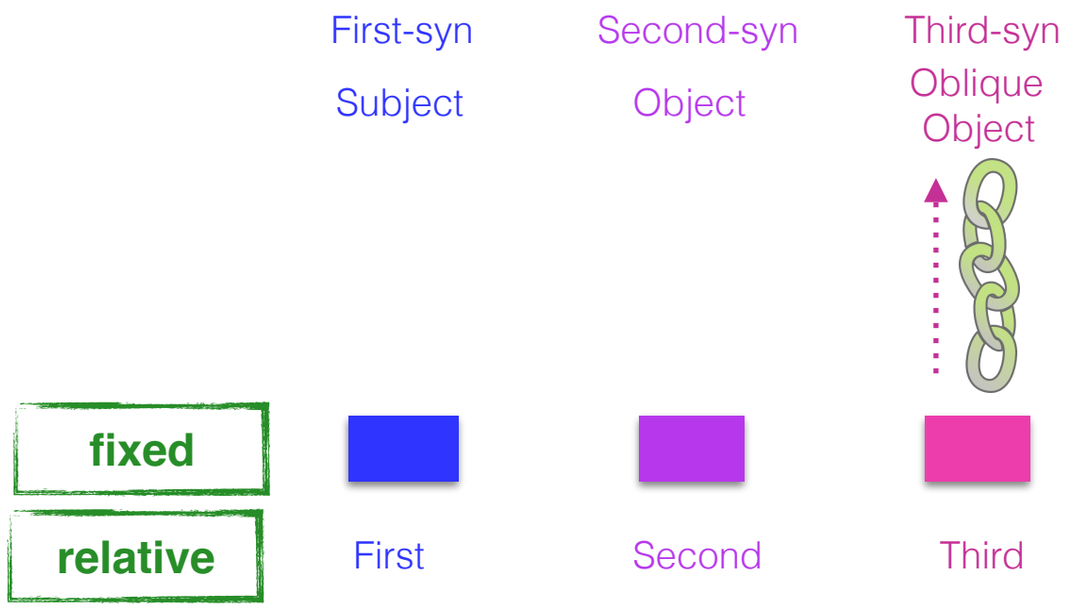
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



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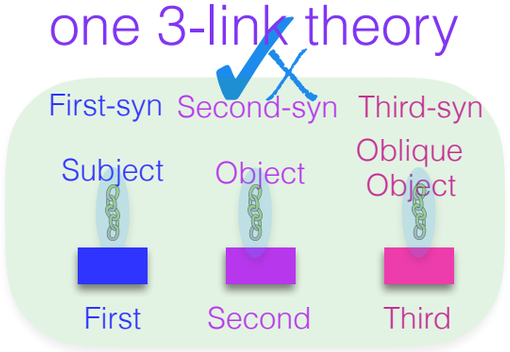
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

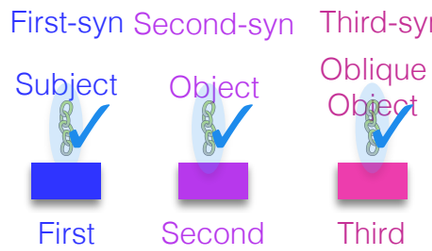
data intake inference

learning period target state

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state

First-syn	Second-syn	Third-syn
Subject	Object	Oblique Object

fixed

relative

First Second Third

Constraints on possible links:

- Knowing which syntactic positions are relevant
- A link can go from role to position or from position to role

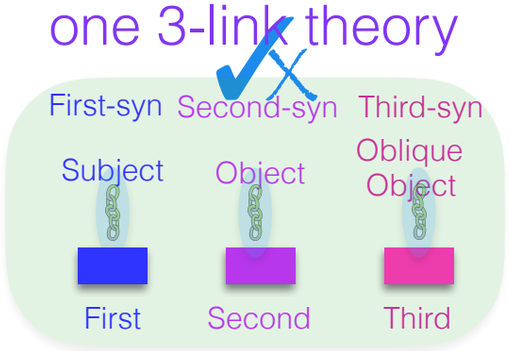
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

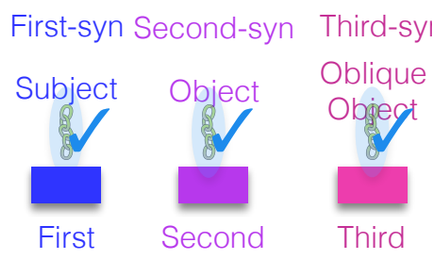
data intake inference

learning period target state

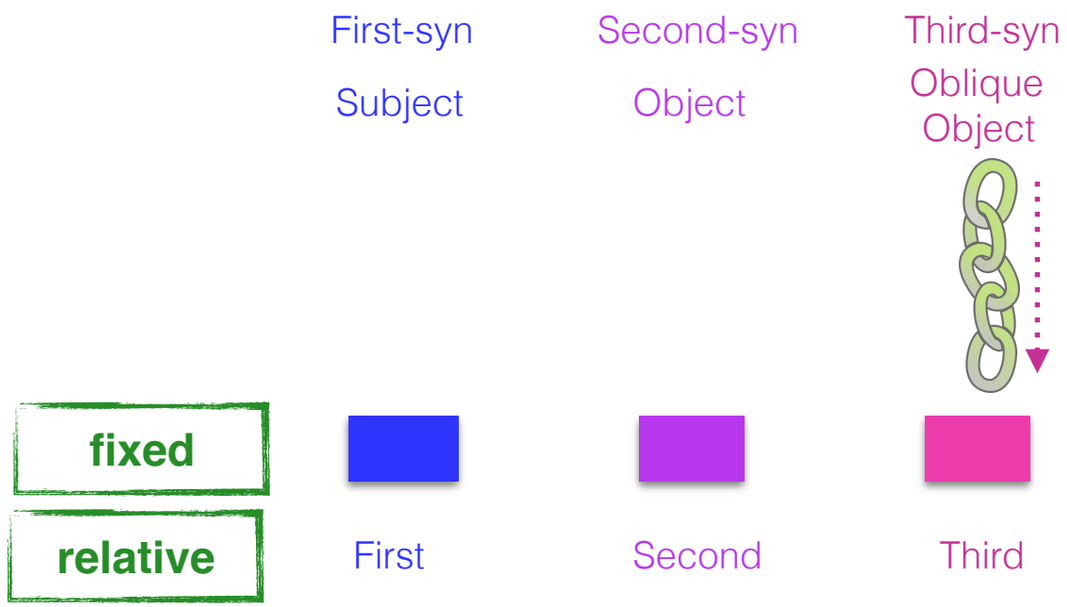
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



Constraints on possible links:

- Knowing which syntactic positions are relevant
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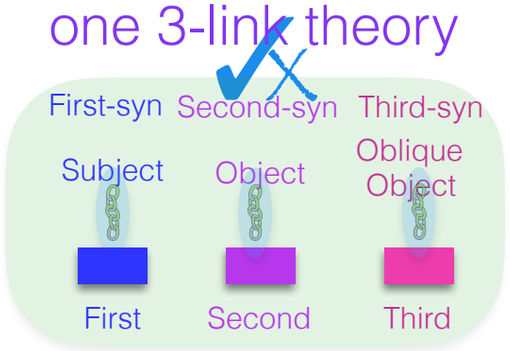
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

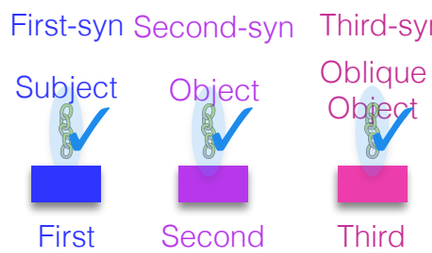
data intake inference

learning period target state

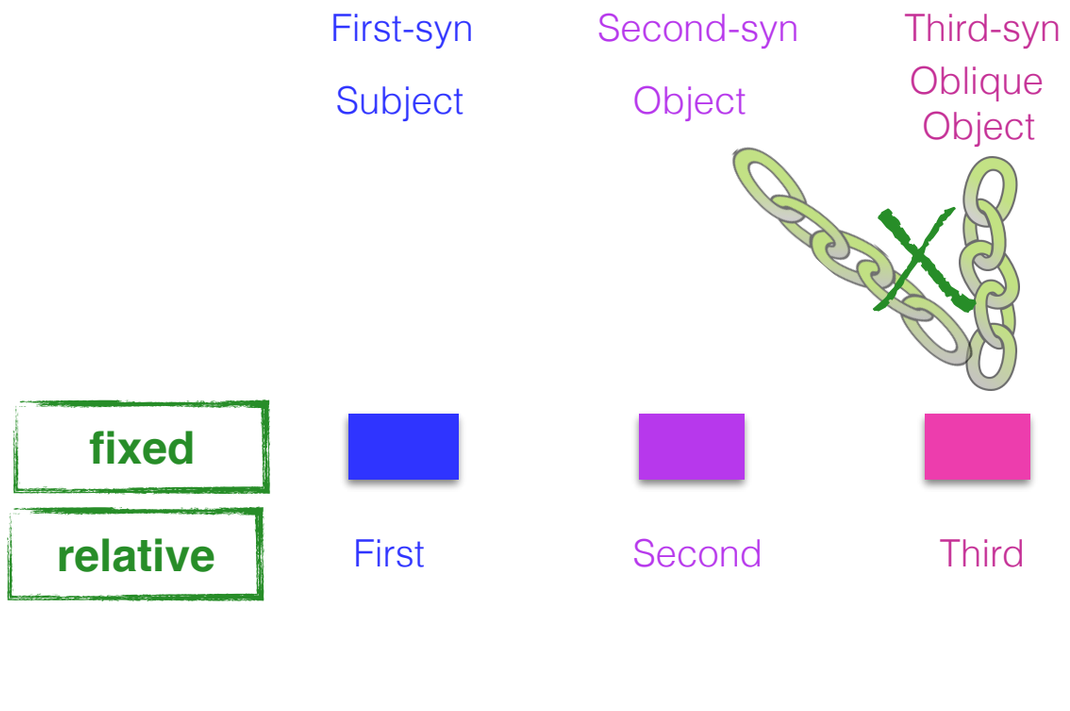
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



Constraints on possible links:

- Knowing which syntactic positions are relevant
- A link can go from role to position or from position to role
- A thematic role can only participate in one link at a time

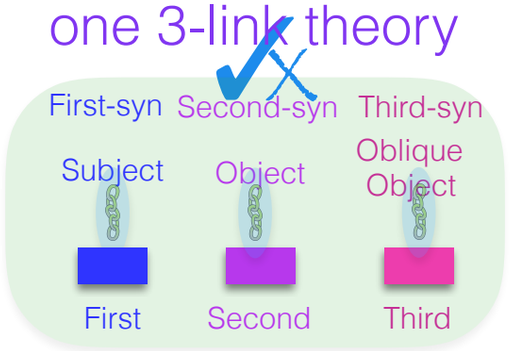
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

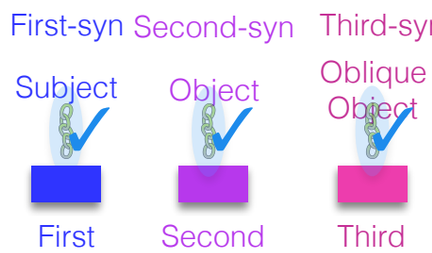
data intake inference

learning period target state

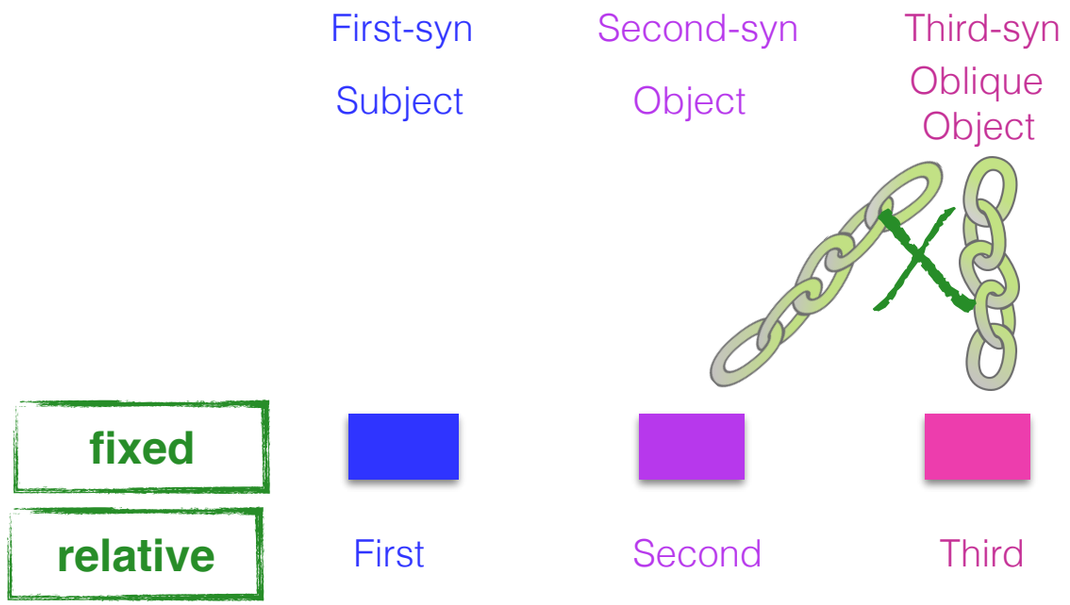
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



Constraints on possible links:

- Knowing which syntactic positions are relevant
- A link can go from role to position or from position to role
- A thematic role can only participate in one link at a time
- A syntactic position can only participate in one link at a time

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

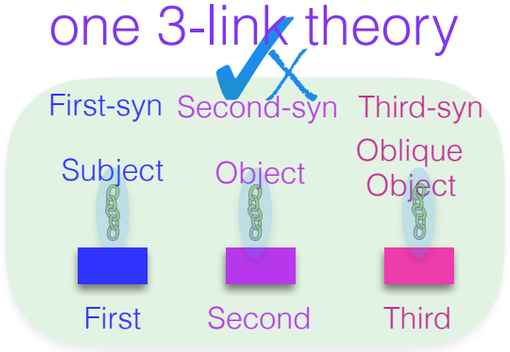
data intake

learning period

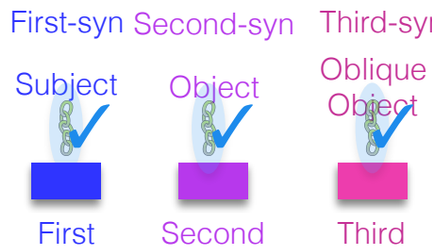
inference

target state

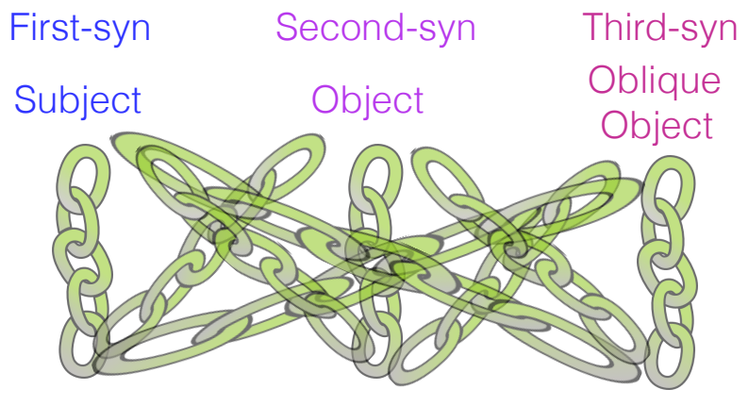
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



initial state



fixed

relative

+ whatever abilities are required to do inference

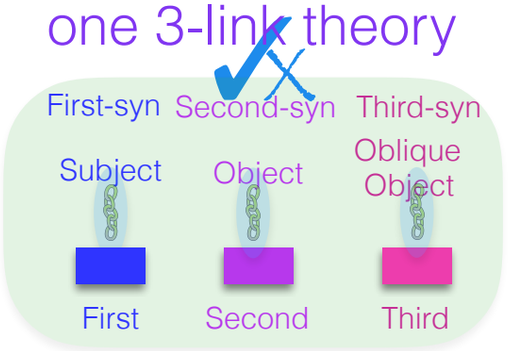
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

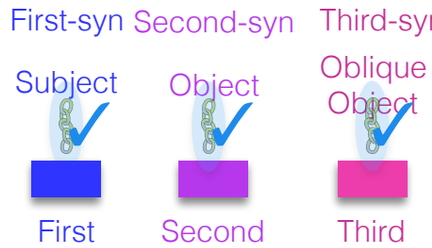
initial state inference

learning period target state

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



input that yields data intake

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

Samples of child-directed speech

CHILDES Treebank

Pearl & Sprouse 2013

<3yrs

18 and 32 months
~40,000 utterances
239 verbs

<4yrs

18 and 48 months
~51,000 utterances
267 verbs

<5yrs

18 and 58 months
~56,500 utterances
284 verbs

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

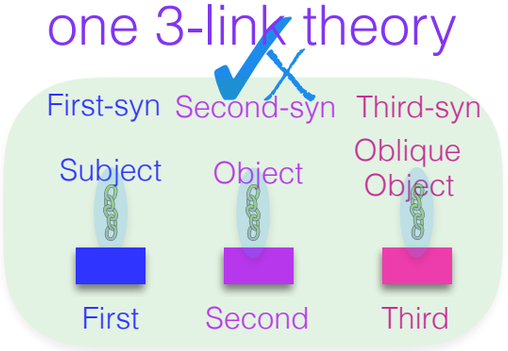
initial state

learning period

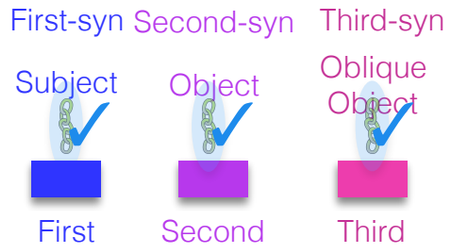
inference

target state

one 3-link theory



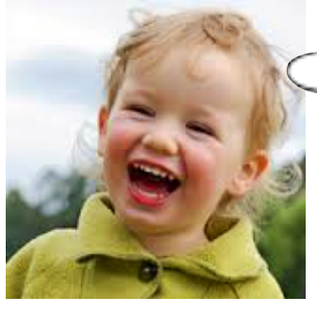
three 1-link theories



input that yields data intake

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.

blick:
Subject/First-syn = proto-Agent/First
Object/Second-syn = proto-Patient/Second
Oblique/Third-syn = Other/Third



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

initial state

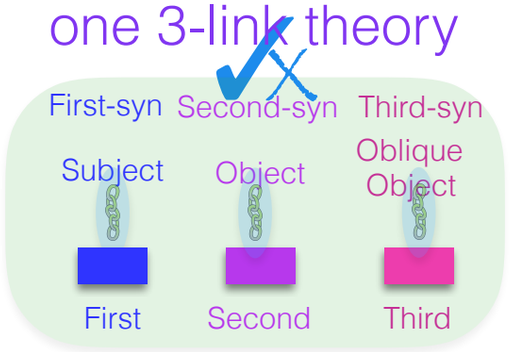
data intake

learning period

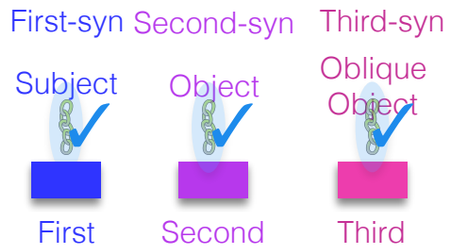
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



Remember that the acquisition process we imagined hinges on a child perceiving individual links and multi-link theories as "**reliable enough**", given the input.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

initial state

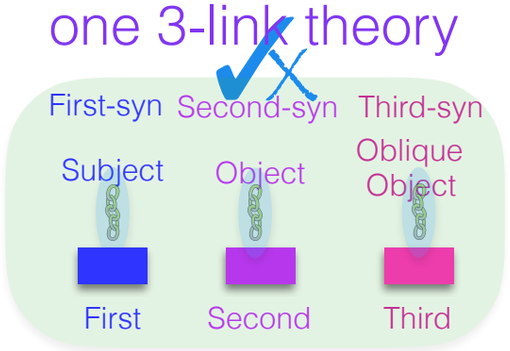
data intake

learning period

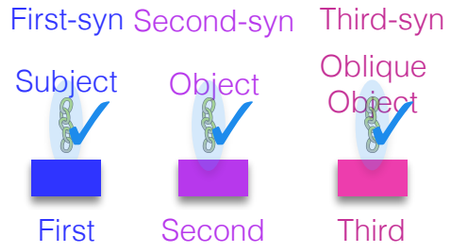
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



How can "**reliable enough**" be implemented?

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

initial state

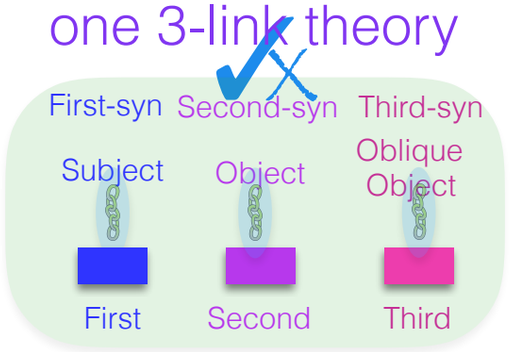
data intake

learning period

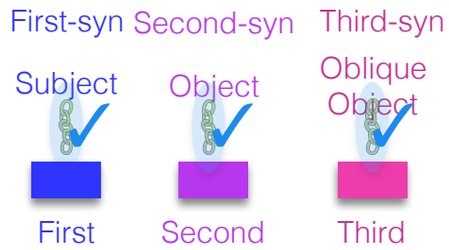
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



One answer: **The Tolerance Principle** (Yang 2005, 2016)

This principle is derived from considerations of knowledge storage and retrieval in real time, incorporating how frequently individual items occur, the absolute ranking of items by frequency, and serial memory access.

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

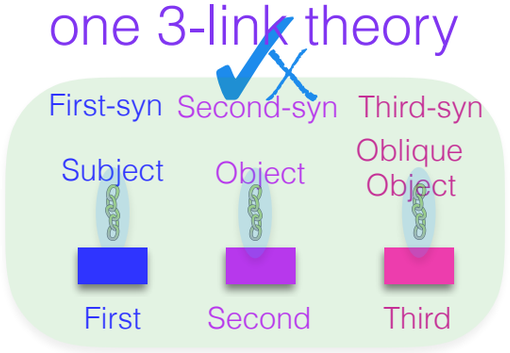
data intake

learning period

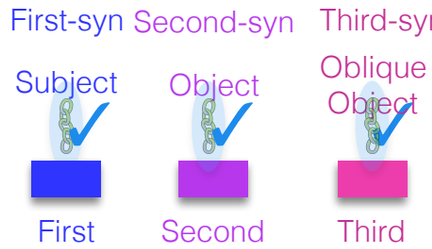
target state

inference

one 3-link theory

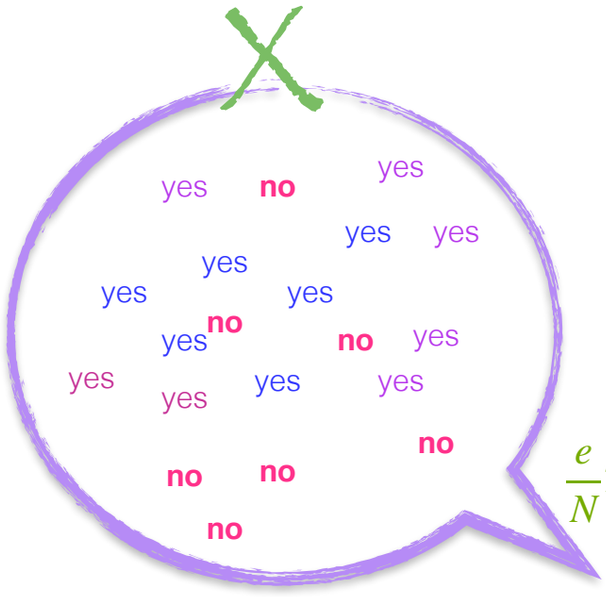


three 1-link theories



The Tolerance Principle (Yang 2005, 2016)

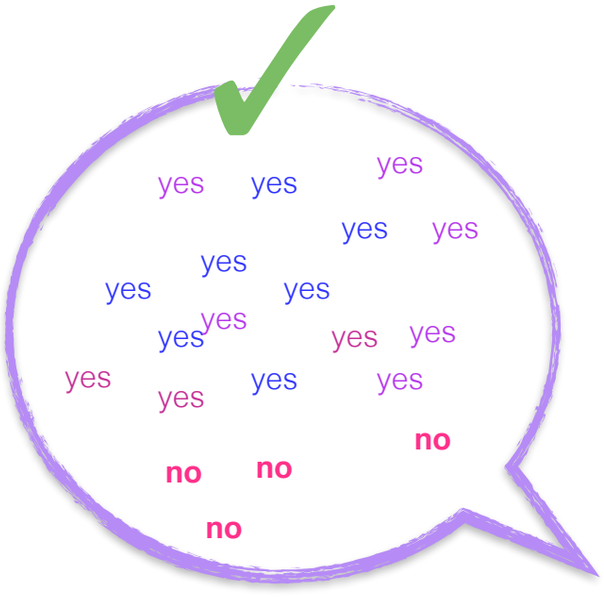
Designed for situations where there are exceptions to a potential rule — provides a **precise threshold** for how many exceptions a potential rule can tolerate before it's no longer worthwhile to have the rule in terms of average retrieval time.



$$Time(N,e) < Time(N,N)$$

$$\frac{e}{N}Time(e,e) + (1-\frac{e}{N})e < \sum_{r=1}^{N} r\frac{1}{rH_n}$$

$$\frac{e}{N}\frac{e}{\sum_{k=1}^{e}\frac{1}{k}} + (1-\frac{e}{N})e < \sum_{r=1}^{N}\frac{1}{\sum_{k=1}^{N}\frac{1}{k}}$$



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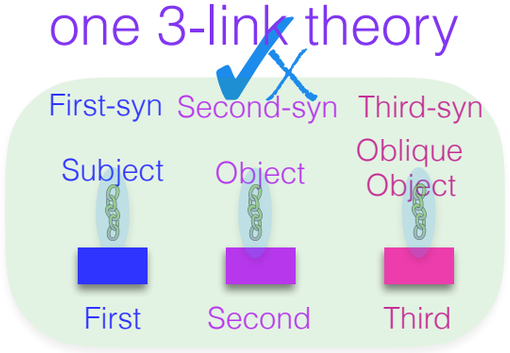
Defining the acquisition task

initial state data intake

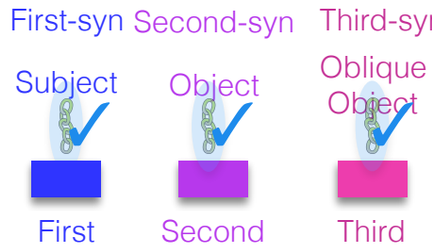
learning period target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



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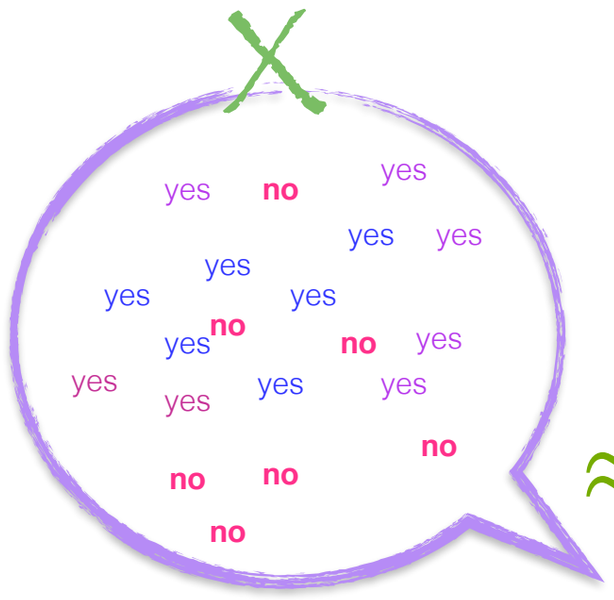
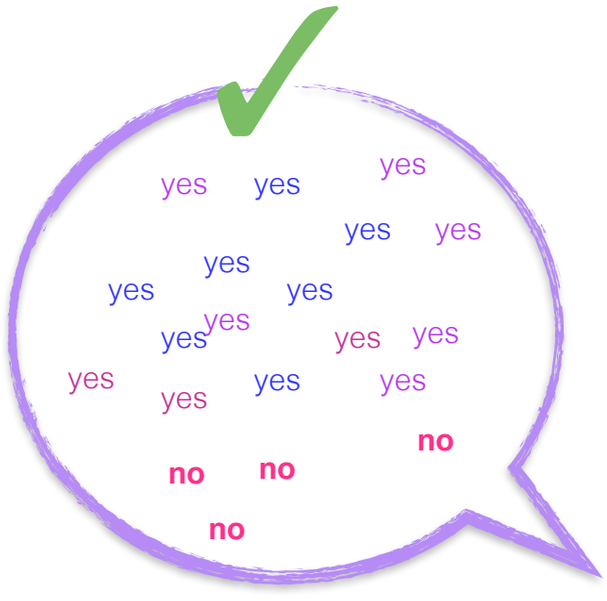


$$\approx \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

N = # of items that the rule could apply to



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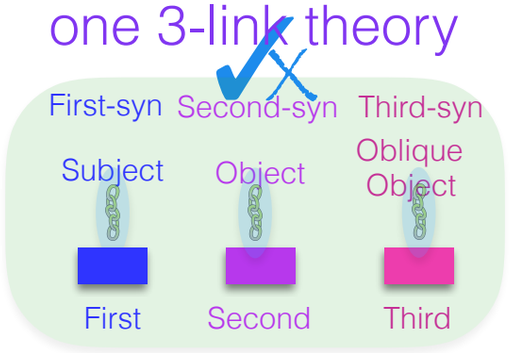
Defining the acquisition task

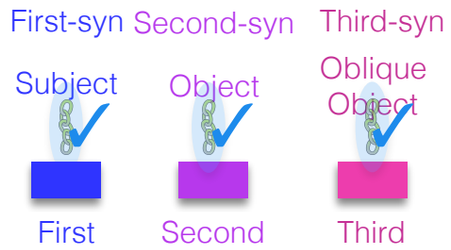
initial state data intake

learning period target state

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



inference

$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

The Tolerance Principle (Yang 2005, 2016)

Here we can use it to evaluate both individual links and multi-link theories.

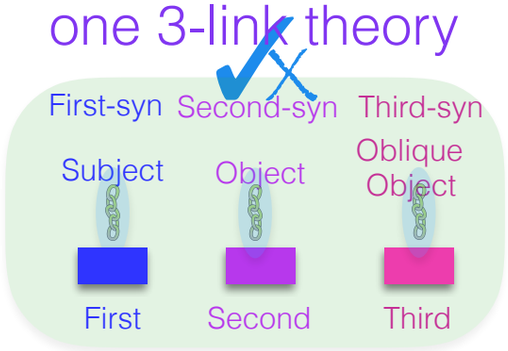
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

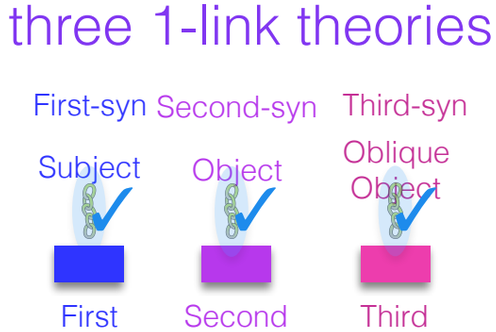
Defining the acquisition task

initial state

data intake

target state





inference

$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

The Tolerance Principle (Yang 2005, 2016)

Here we can use it to evaluate both individual links and multi-link theories.

learning period

As before, we'll be using an ideal learner model, where the learner applies the Tolerance Principle to all the data available, rather than deploying it with the cognitive limitations and incremental learning restrictions real children have.

Goal: Is it possible to derive the linking theories from realistic child input?

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Defining the acquisition task

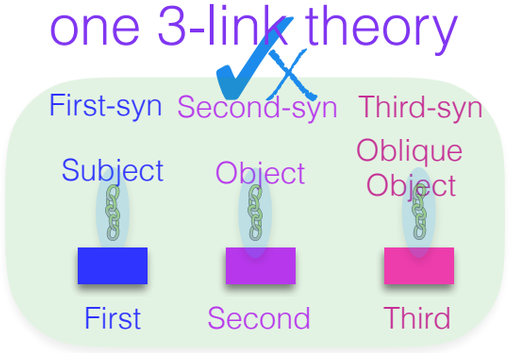
initial state

data intake

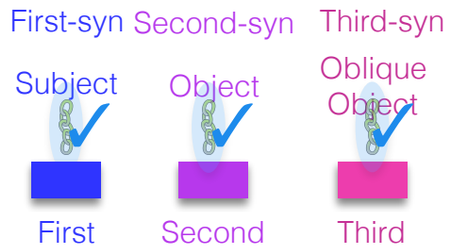
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

How do we evaluate an individual link?

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

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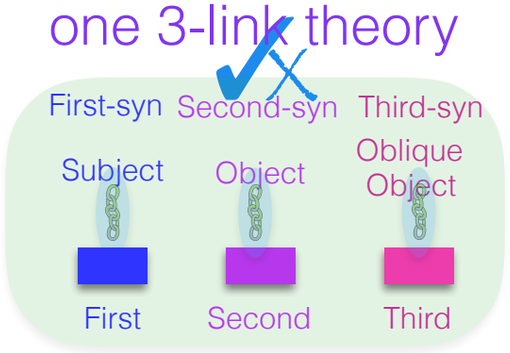
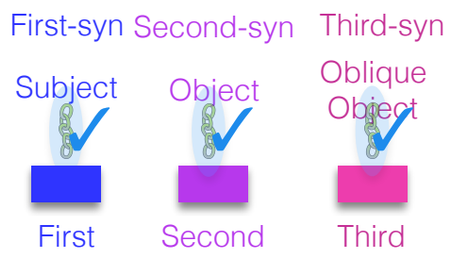


three 1-link theories



$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

How do we evaluate an individual link?

If it goes from role to position, we compare this link to the others that link from this role.

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Defining the acquisition task

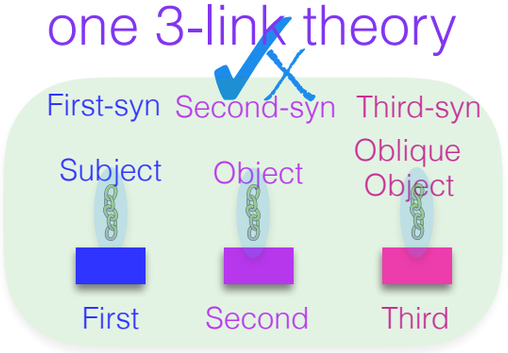
initial state

data intake

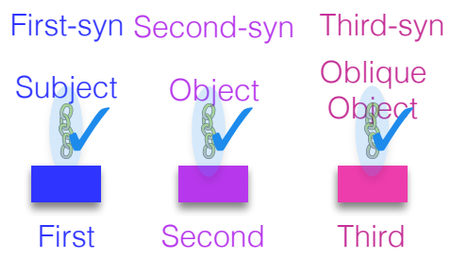
target state

inference

one 3-link theory

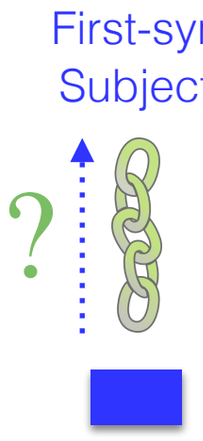


three 1-link theories



$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

How do we evaluate an individual link?



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Defining the acquisition task

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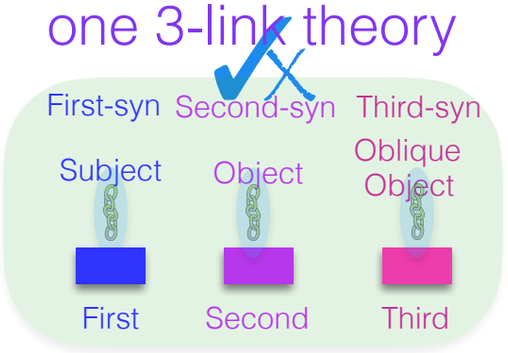
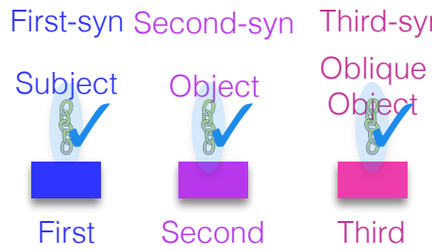
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



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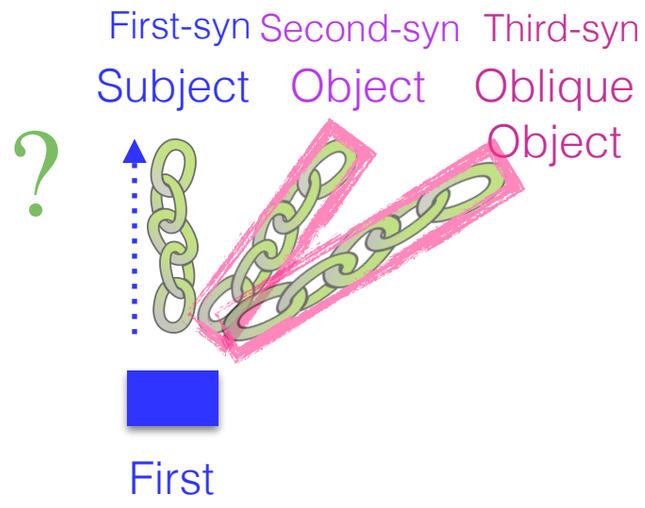

If it goes from role to position, we compare this link to the others that link from this role (the exceptions to this link).

$$< \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

Does it have few enough exceptions according to the child's intake?

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Defining the acquisition task

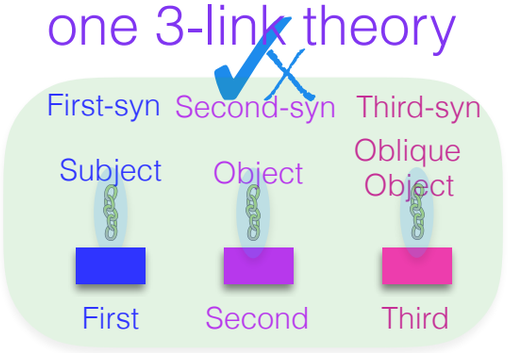
initial state

data intake

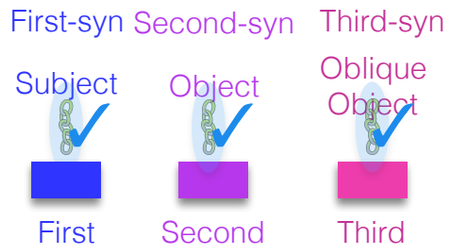
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate an individual link?

First-syn
Subject

First

If it goes from position to role, we compare this link to the others that link from this position.

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

data intake

target state

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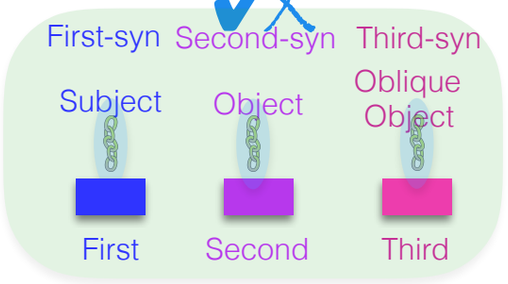
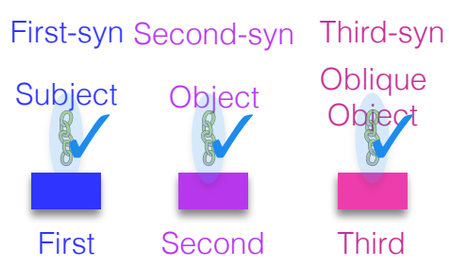
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



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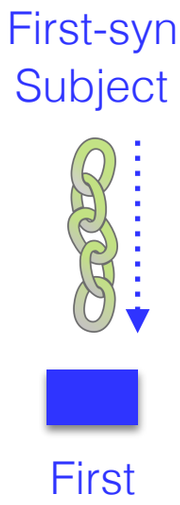

If it goes from position to role, we compare this link to the others that link from this position.

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

data intake

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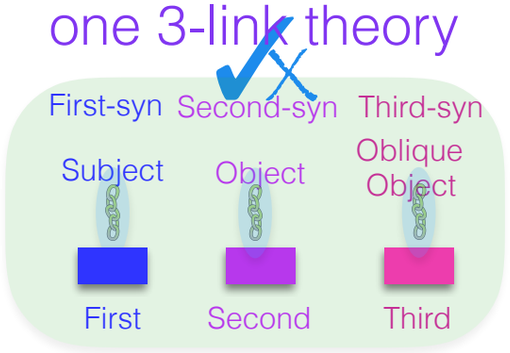
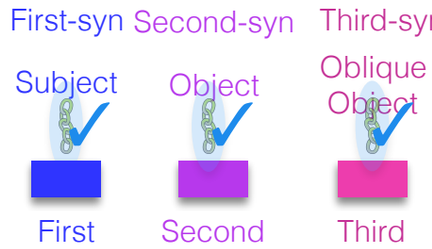


three 1-link theories



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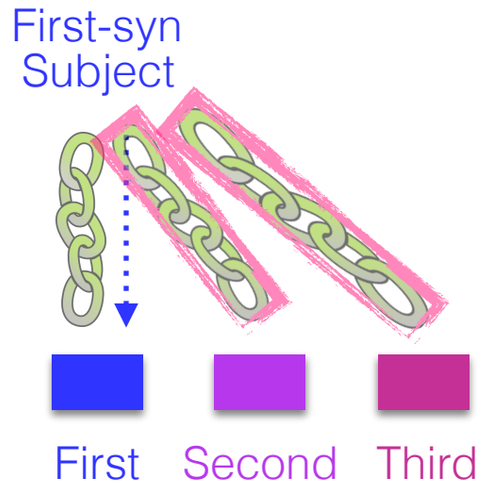

If it goes from position to role, we compare this link to the others that link from this position (the exceptions to this link).

$$< \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

Does it have few enough exceptions according to the child's intake?

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

data intake

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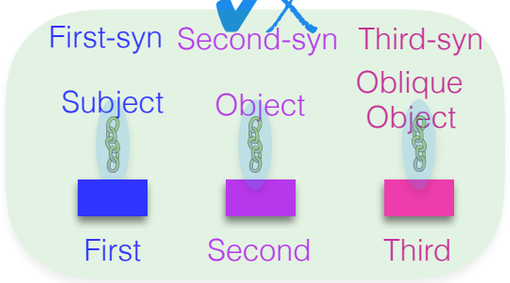
inference

one 3-link theory



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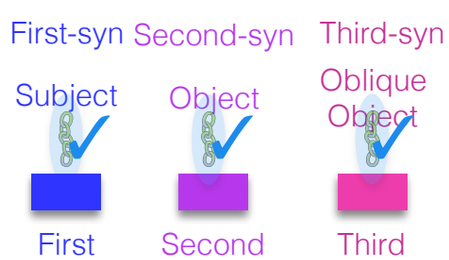
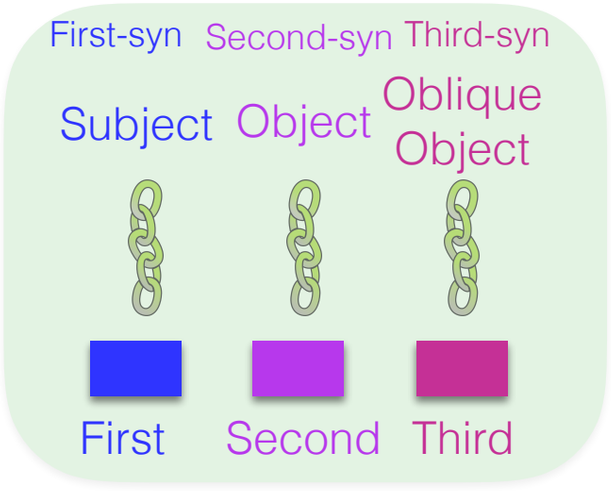


How do we evaluate multi-link theories?



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Defining the acquisition task

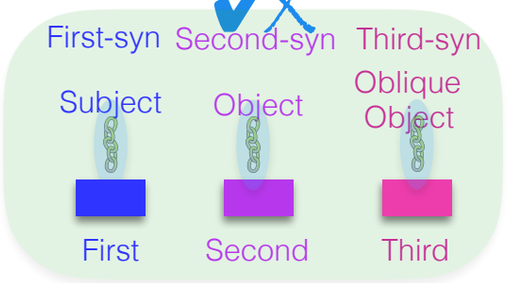
initial state

data intake

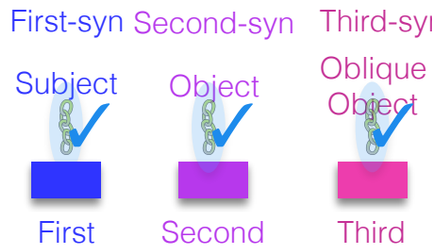
target state

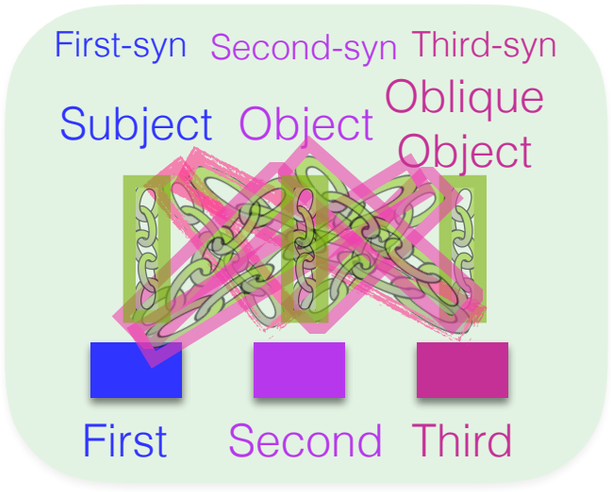
inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories





How do we evaluate multi-link theories?

We compare the link instances that follow the multi-link theory against the link instances that don't (the exceptions to this multi-link theory).

$$< \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

Note: This is a simple binary distinction between links that follow the multi-link theory and links that don't.

Does the 3-link theory have few enough exceptions according to the child's intake?

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

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inference

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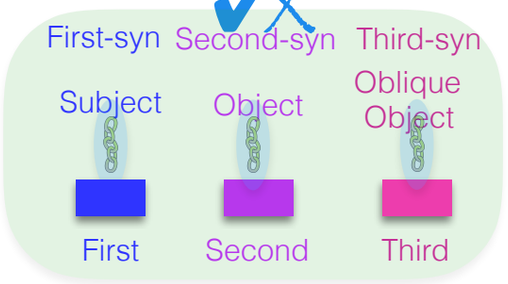
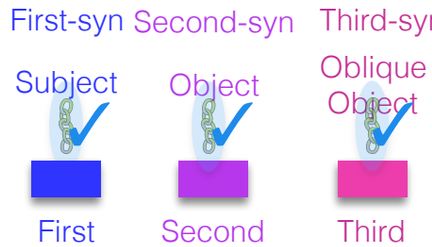


three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

A linking theory should hold for the verb *lexical items* (types).

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

data intake

target state

inference

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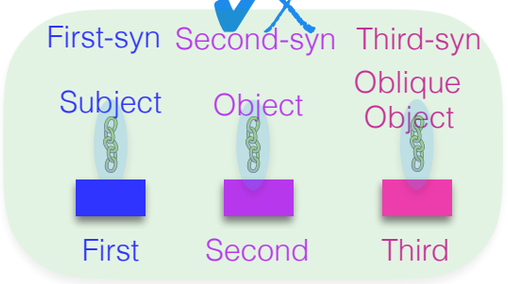

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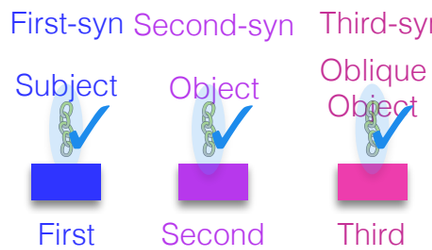

How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

So, a linking theory is evaluated over the verb types — how many obey the linking theory and how many are exceptions?

fall kick like hug love think belong hear ?

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Defining the acquisition task

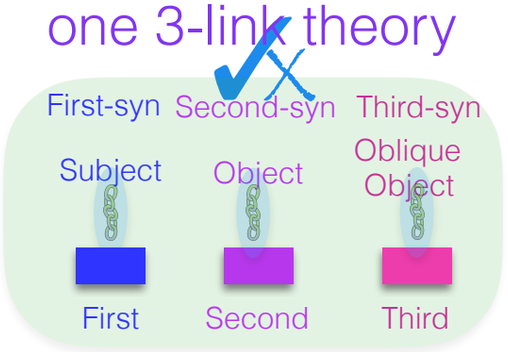
initial state

data intake

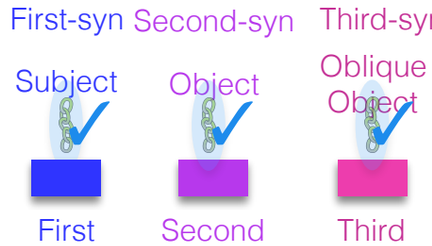
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

So, a linking theory is evaluated over the verb types — how many obey the linking theory and how many are exceptions?

fall kick like hug love think belong hear ?

$$< \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

N = verb types this theory could apply to

We want the number of verb types that disobey this linking theory to be less than the Tolerance Principle threshold.

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Defining the acquisition task

initial state

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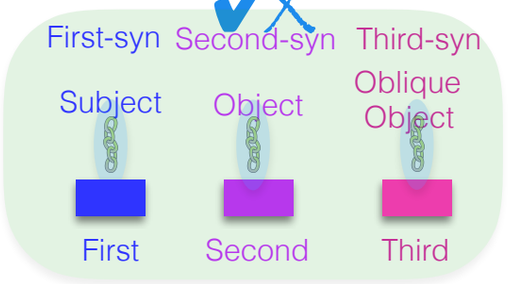
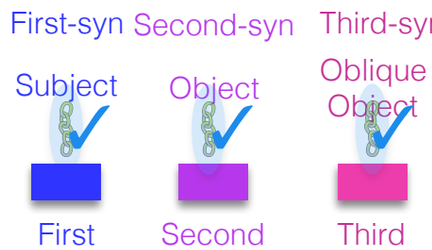
inference

one 3-link theory

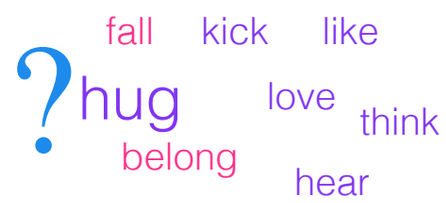


three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

How do we tell if a verb type obeys the linking theory or is an exception?



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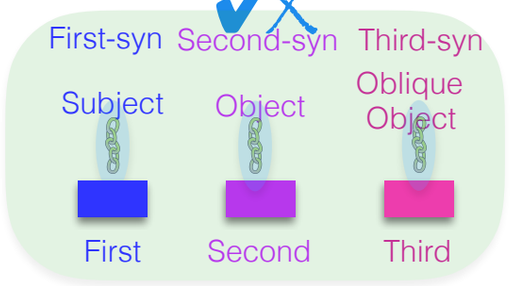
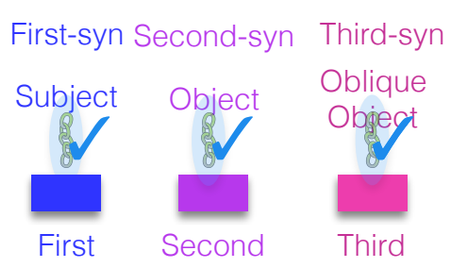
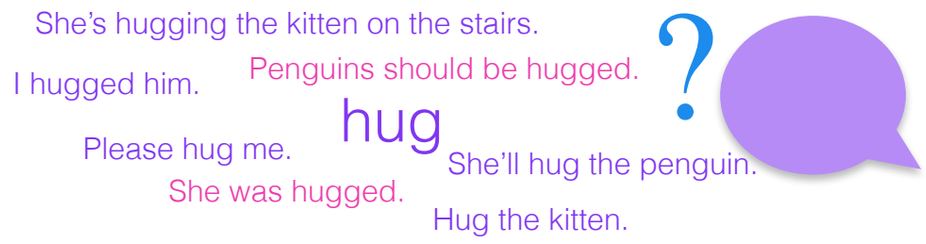


three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

We evaluate that verb type's instances according to whether they follow the linking theory or not.



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

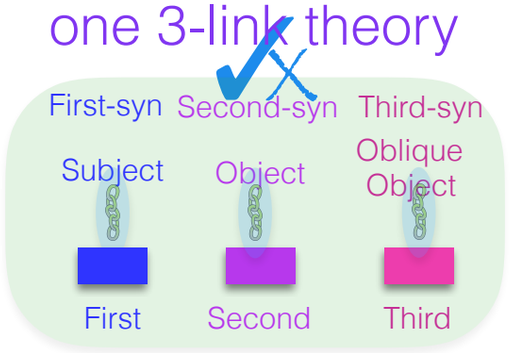
initial state

data intake

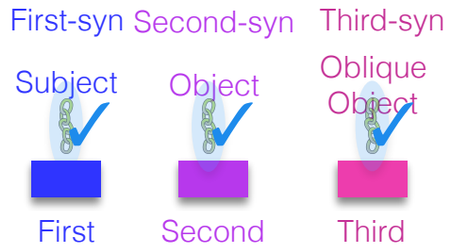
target state

inference

one 3-link theory

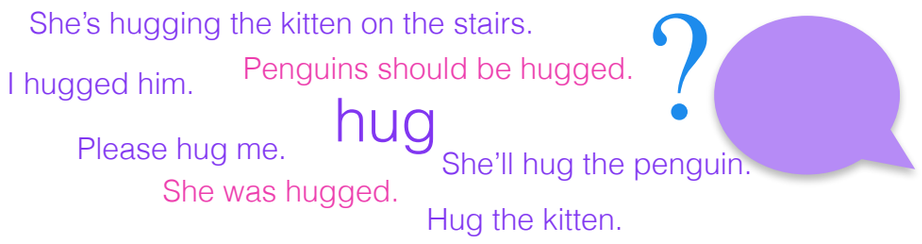


three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

So, a linking theory is evaluated over the verb type instances — how many obey the linking theory and how many are exceptions?



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

initial state

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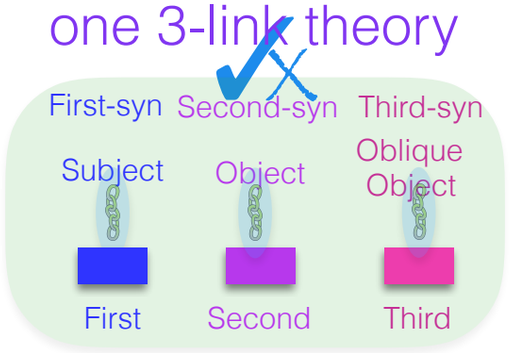
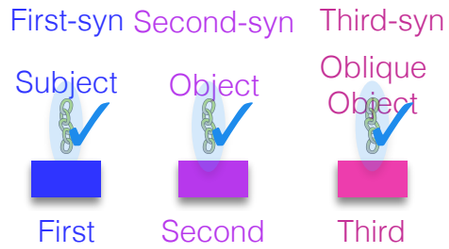
one 3-link theory

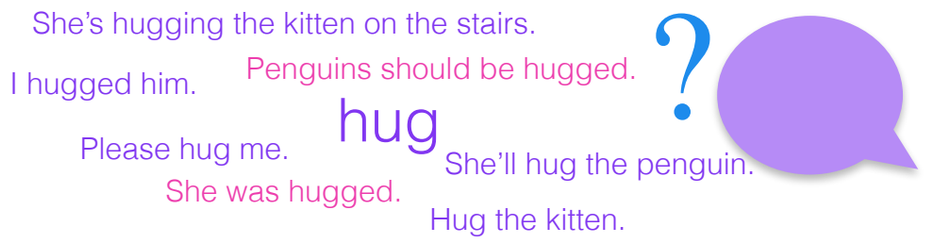


three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

So, a linking theory is evaluated over the verb type instances — how many obey the linking theory and how many are exceptions?



$$< \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

= verb type instances this theory could apply to

We want the number of verb type instances that disobey this linking theory to be less than the Tolerance Principle threshold.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

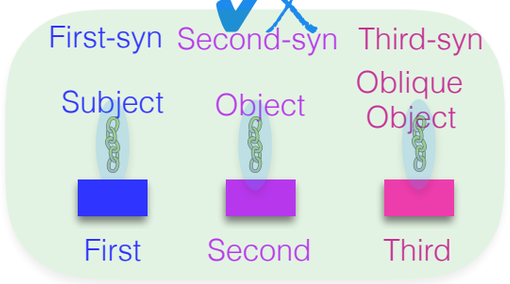
initial state

data intake

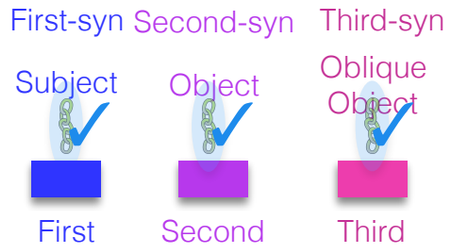
target state

inference

one 3-link theory

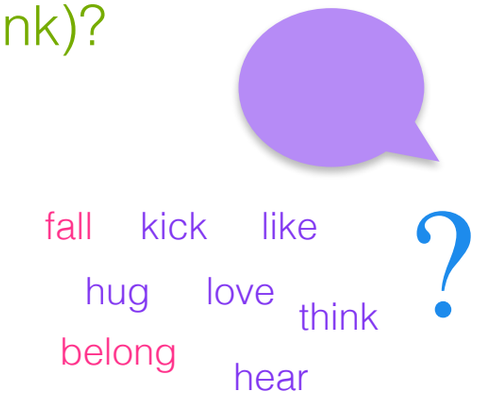


three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

We do this for each verb type, and then we know how many obey the linking theory and how many are exceptions.



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Defining the acquisition task

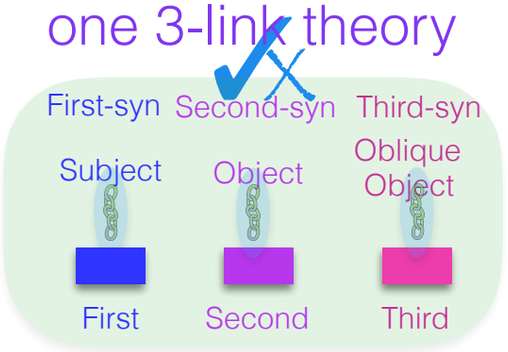
initial state

data intake

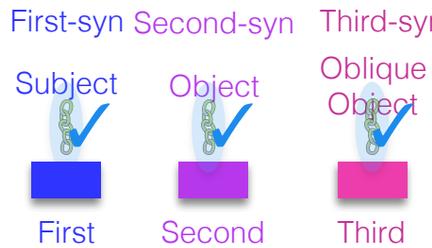
target state

inference

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



How do we evaluate theories (1-link or 3-link)?

We do this for each verb type, and then we know how many obey the linking theory and how many are exceptions.

fall kick like

hug love think

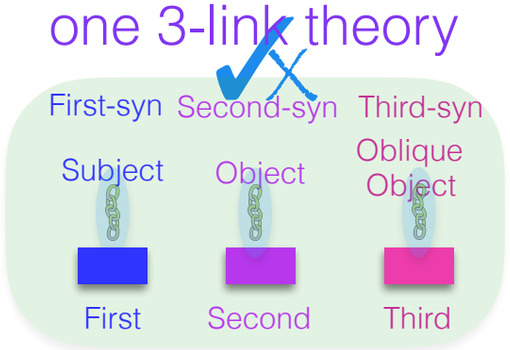
belong hear

$$< \frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

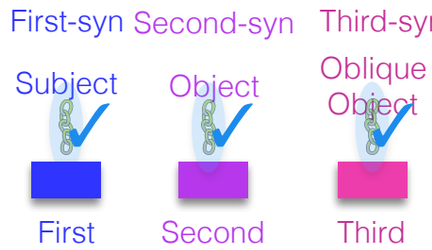
If the exceptions are less than the Tolerance Principle threshold, the linking theory is reliable enough for the verb types.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories

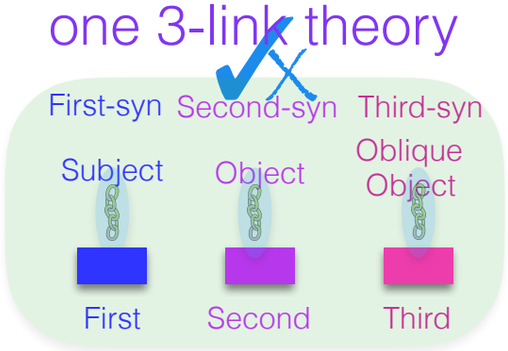


So which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

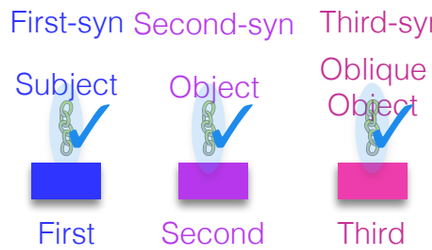
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



<3yrs

<4yrs

<5yrs

Same results for all three ages.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

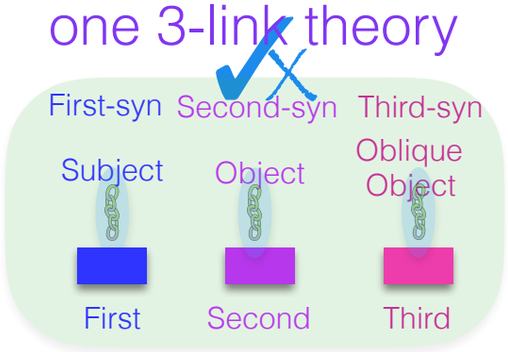
Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

<3yrs

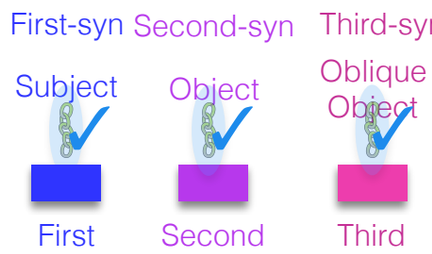
<4yrs

<5yrs

one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



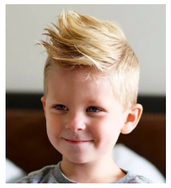
Let's look at individual links first.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?


<3yrs

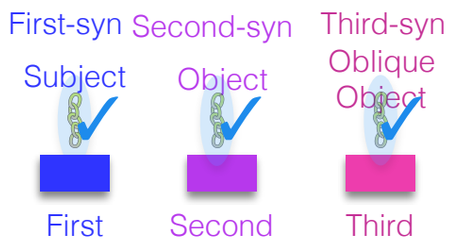

<4yrs


<5yrs

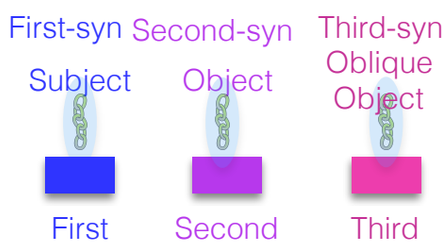
Let's look at individual links first.

Individual links are the 1-link theories and the building blocks for the 3-link theories.

three 1-link theories



one 3-link theory

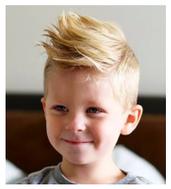


Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

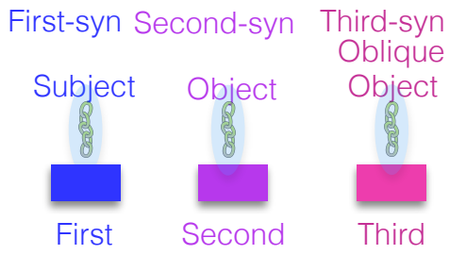
<3yrs

<4yrs

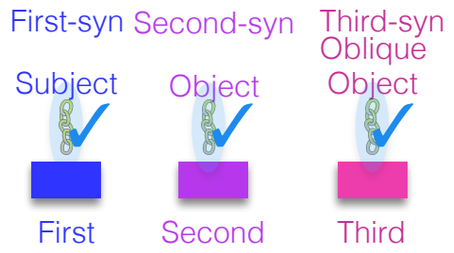


<5yrs

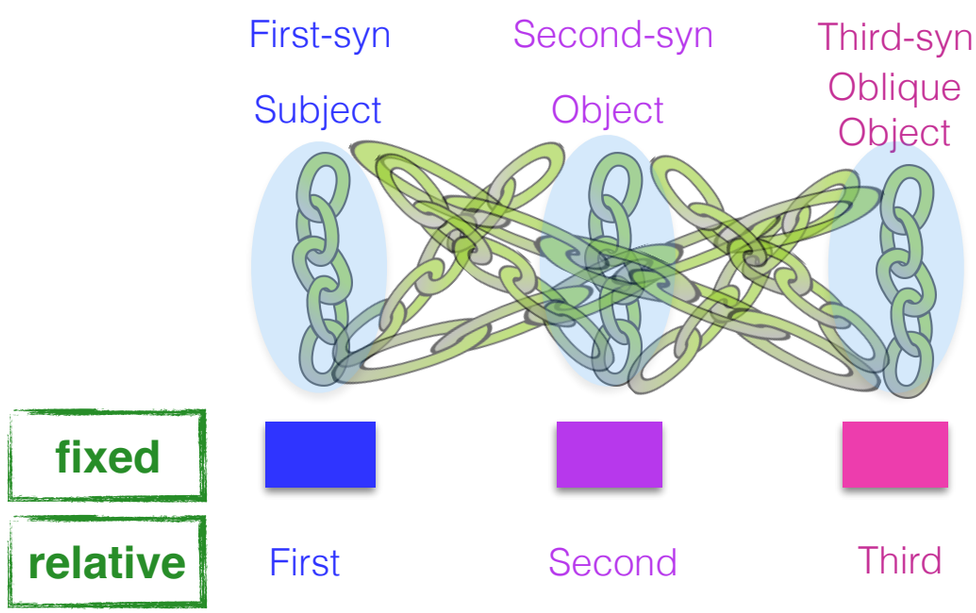
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



Are the individual links reliable enough?

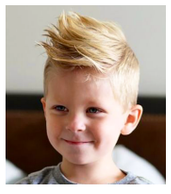


Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

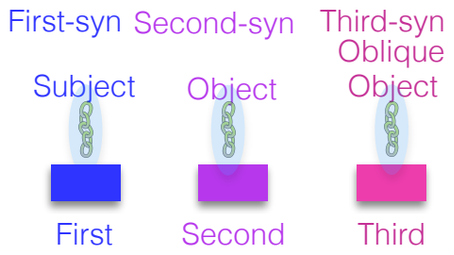
<3yrs

<4yrs

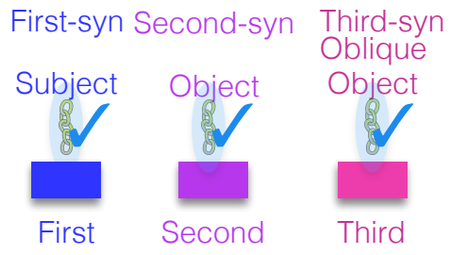


<5yrs

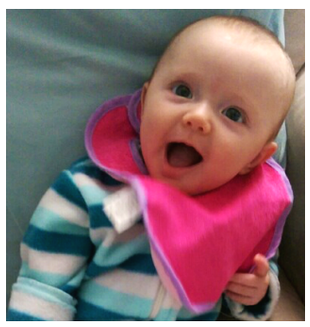
one 3-link theory

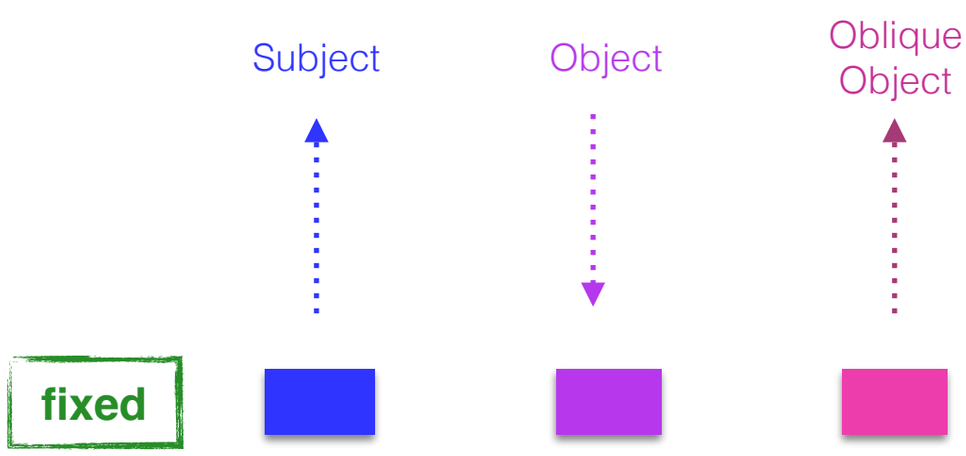


three 1-link theories



Here are the ones that are.





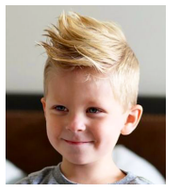
Good: At least one in one direction (role to position or position to role) for each of the three posited links.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

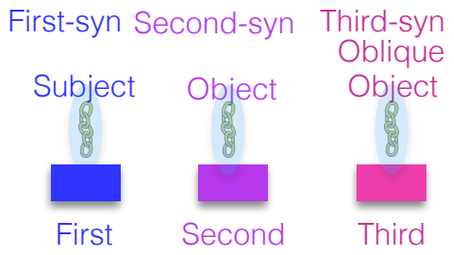
<3yrs

<4yrs

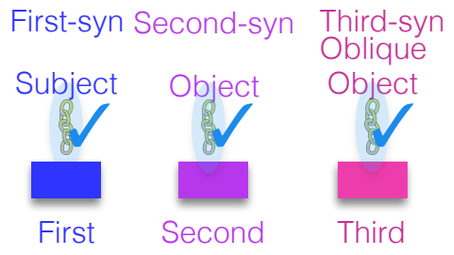


<5yrs

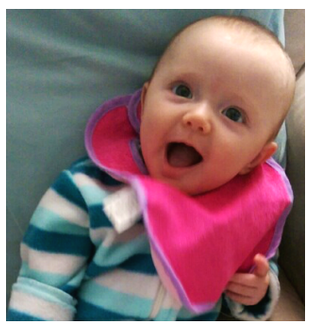
one 3-link theory

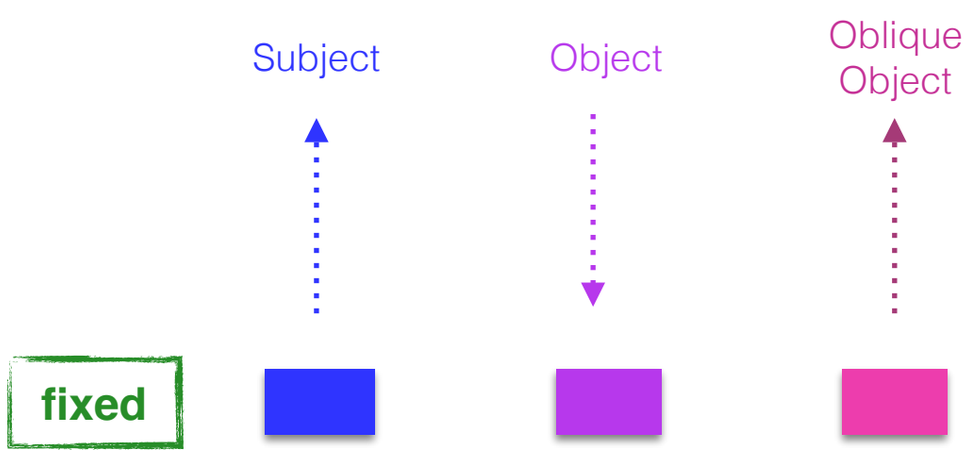


three 1-link theories



Here are the ones that are.





Good: At least one in one direction (role to position or position to role) for each of the three posited links.

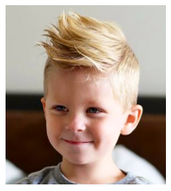
Good: No extraneous links are reliable enough.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

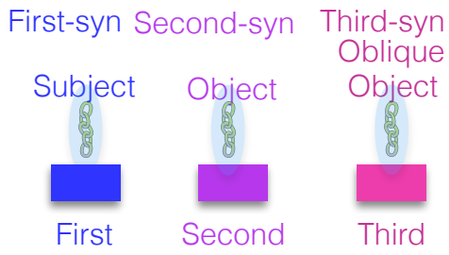
<3yrs

<4yrs

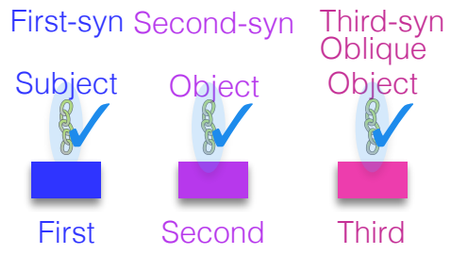


<5yrs

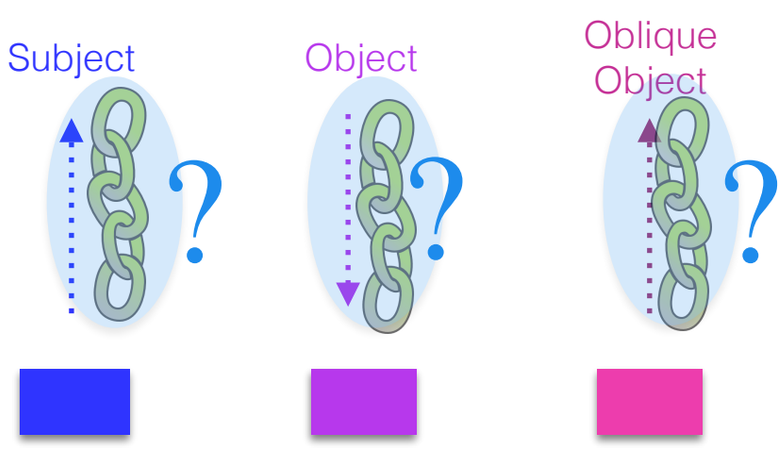
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



Here are the ones that are.



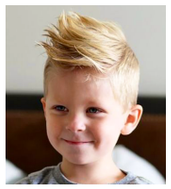
…but none have a reliable link in both directions, and it's not clear if both directions are needed to posit a link for the linking theory.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

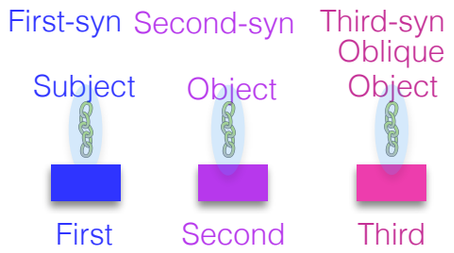
<3yrs

<4yrs

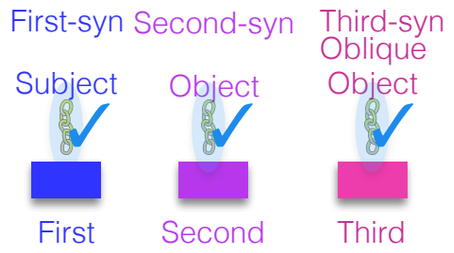


<5yrs

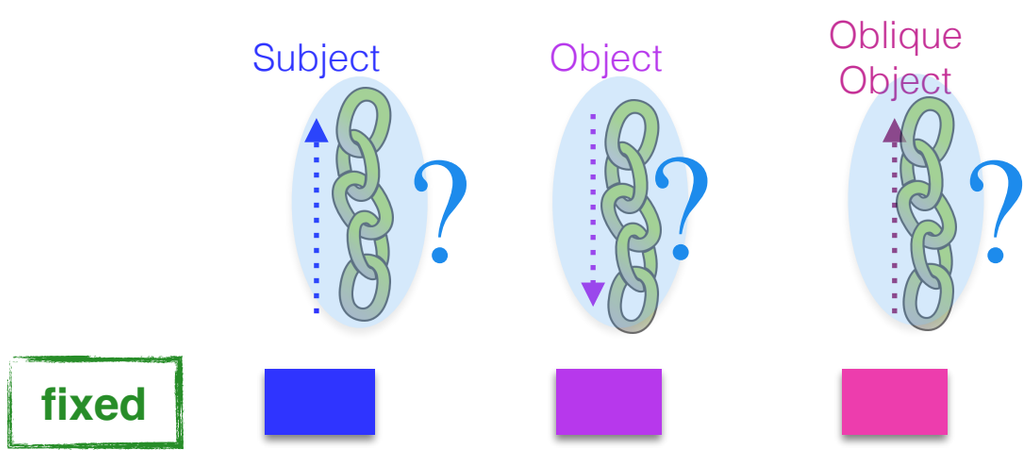
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



Here are the ones that are.



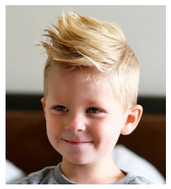
Only the most liberal approach to positing theories from links (one link in either direction is sufficient) would allow a child to posit the appropriate 1-link theories or the appropriate building blocks for the 3-link theory.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

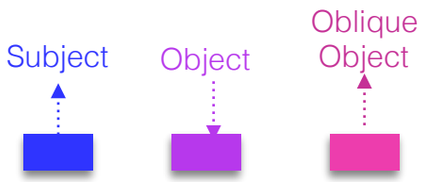
Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

<3yrs

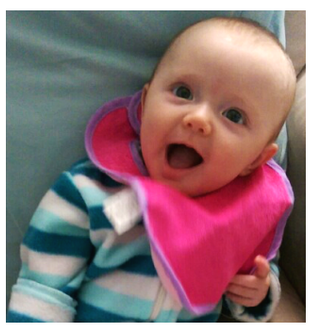
<4yrs



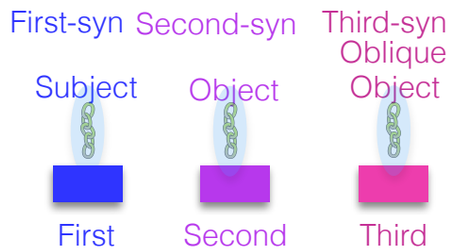
<5yrs



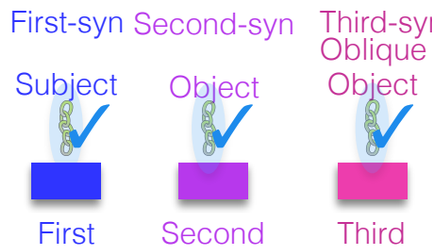
fixed



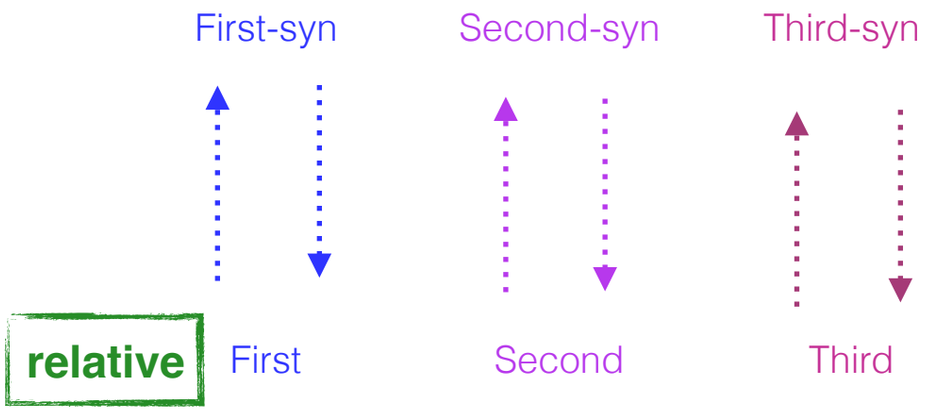
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories



Here are the ones that are.



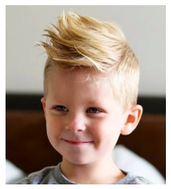
This contrasts with the relative thematic system, where links in both directions are reliable enough (and there are also no extraneous links).

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

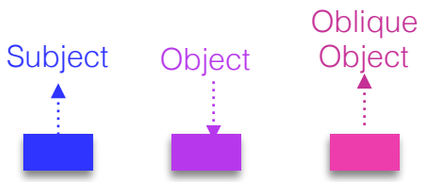
Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

<3yrs

<4yrs

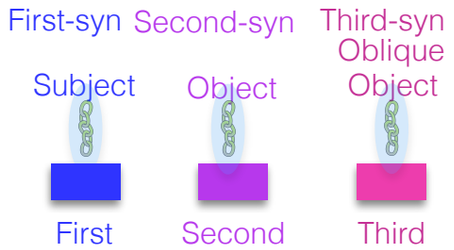


<5yrs

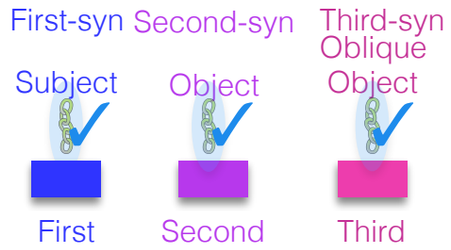


fixed

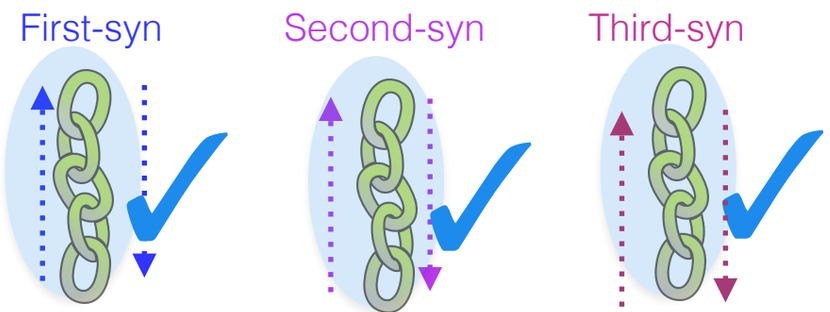
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories

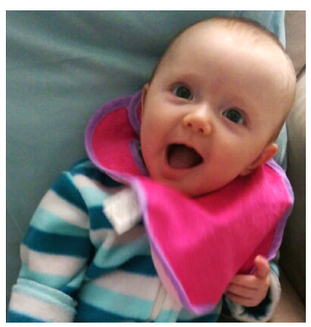


Here are the ones that are.



relative

First Second Third



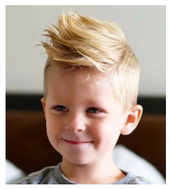
So more conservative strategies for positing theories from links (e.g., needing a link in both directions) would also posit the appropriate theories or building blocks.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

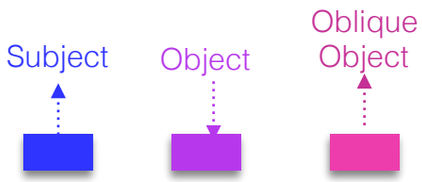
Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

<3yrs

<4yrs

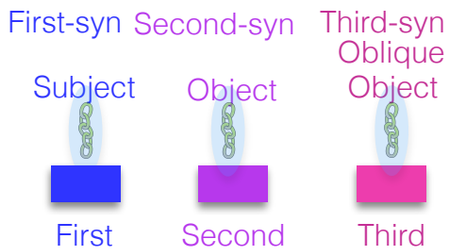


<5yrs

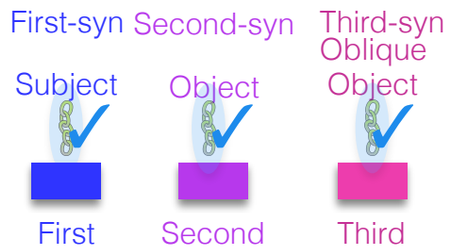


fixed

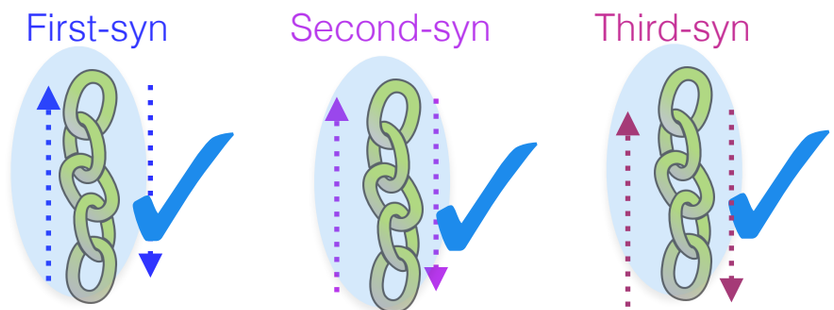
one 3-link theory



three 1-link theories

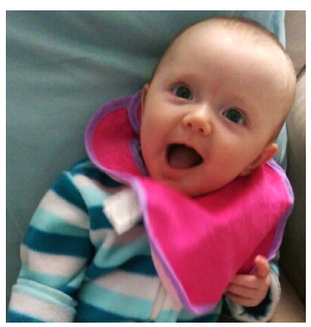


Here are the ones that are.



relative

First Second Third

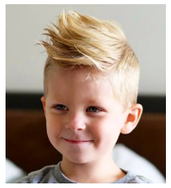


This means relying on relative thematic representations is more robust to different learning scenarios.

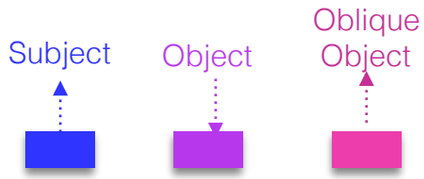
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

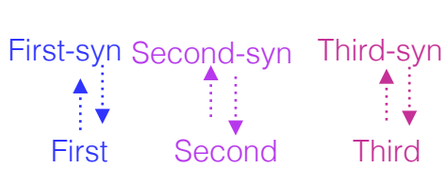




<3yrs <4yrs <5yrs



fixed

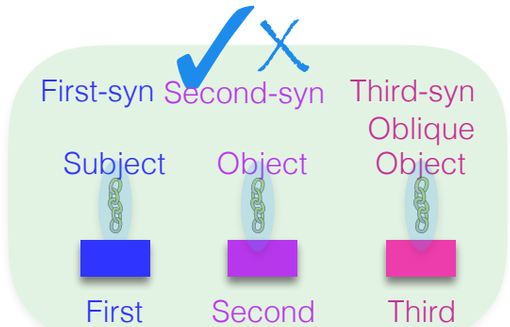


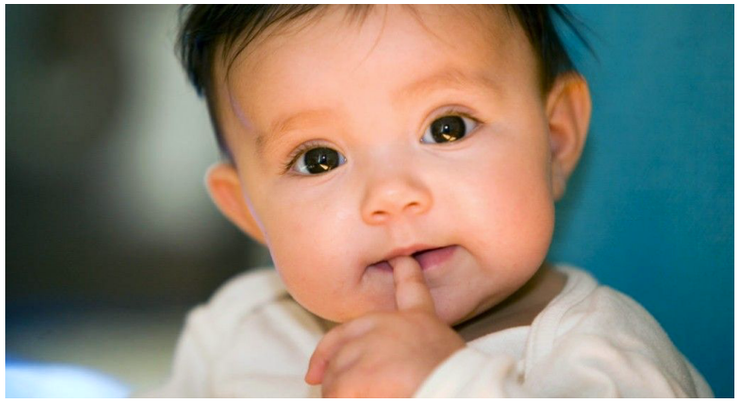
relative


But what about the 3-link theories?

If in fact the appropriate building blocks are composed into the appropriate 3-link theories, are those theories reliable enough?

one 3-link theory





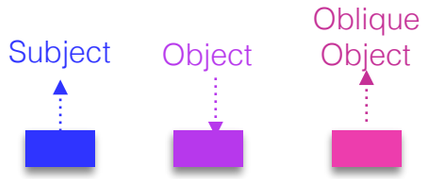
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

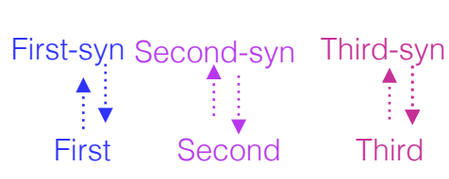

<3yrs


<4yrs


<5yrs

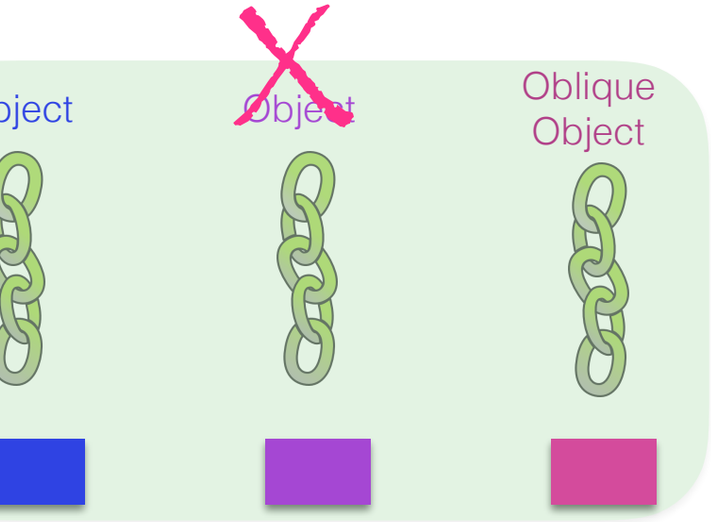


fixed



relative

one 3-link theory



fixed

relative

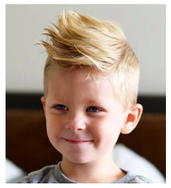
First
Second
Third

It turns out that the 3-link theory relying on a fixed thematic representation isn't reliable enough — not enough verb types obey it.

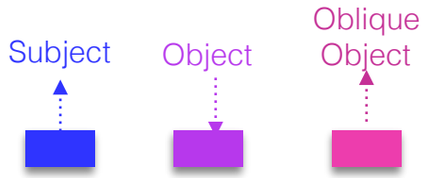
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

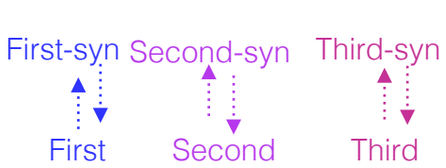


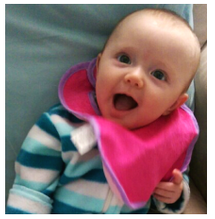


<3yrs <4yrs <5yrs

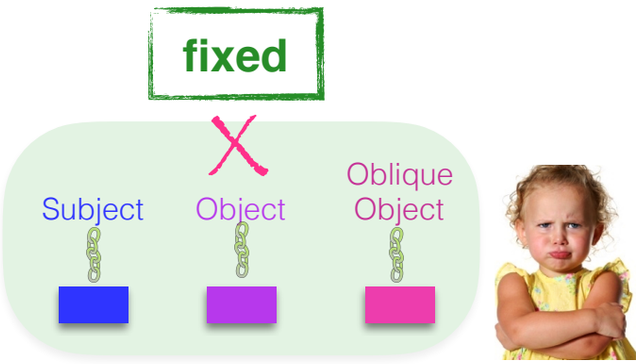


fixed

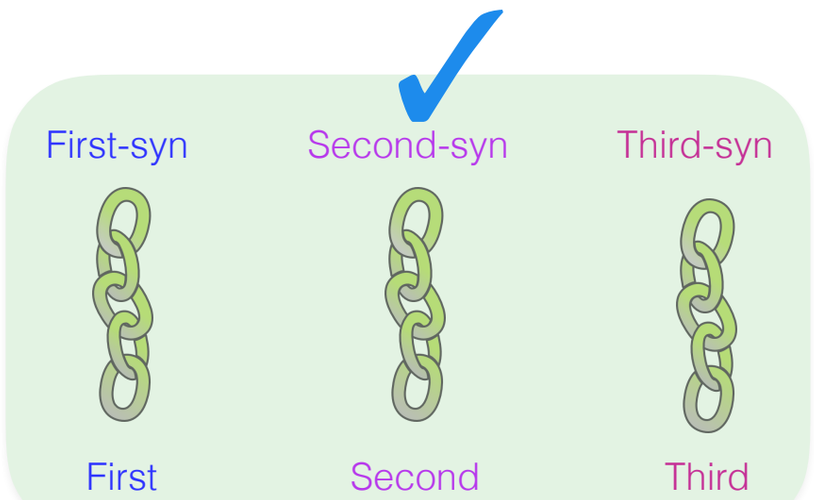




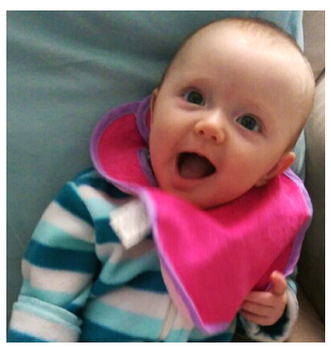
relative

one 3-link theory



relative



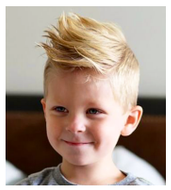
Meanwhile, the 3-link theory using the relative thematic representation is reliable enough as a unit.

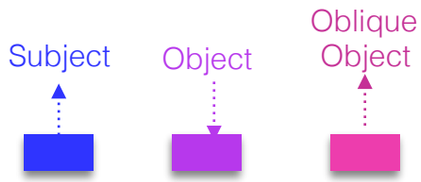
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

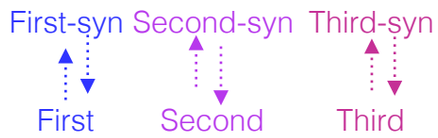

<3yrs


<4yrs

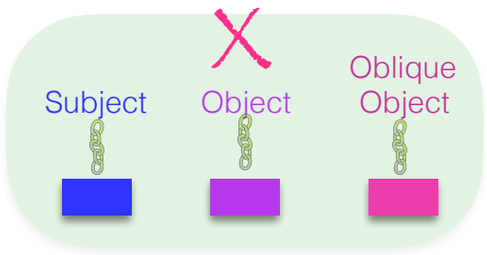

<5yrs

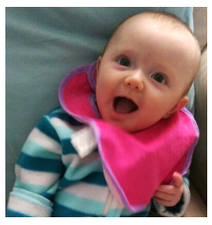


Takeaway 1: Relying on a relative thematic representation makes it **easier** to derive three 1-link theories of the kind compatible with those that linguists have theorized (rUTAH).

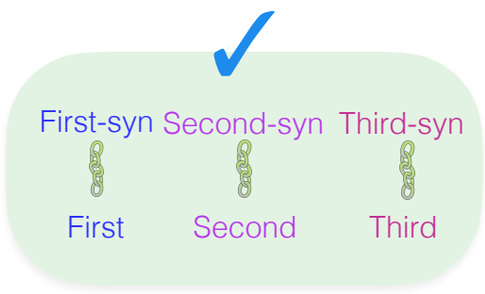


fixed





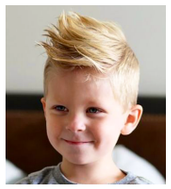
relative



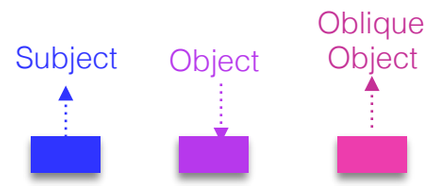
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?



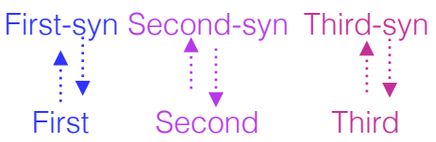


<3yrs <4yrs <5yrs

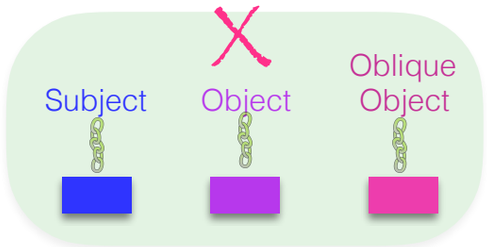


harder

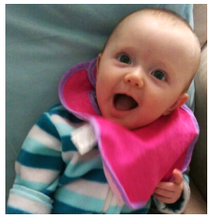
easier



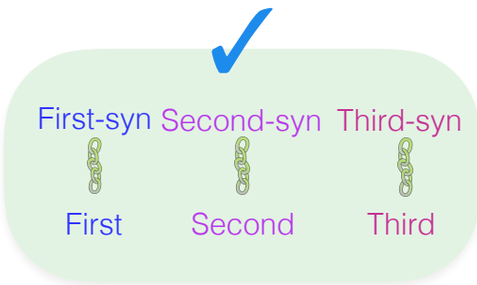
fixed



Takeaway 2: Relying on a relative thematic representation is the **only** way to derive a 3-link theory of the kind linguists have theorized (rUTAH).



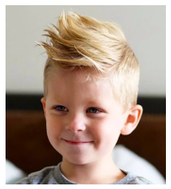
relative



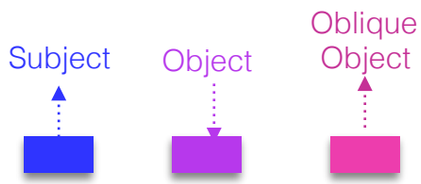
Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Which linking theories are derivable from children's input?

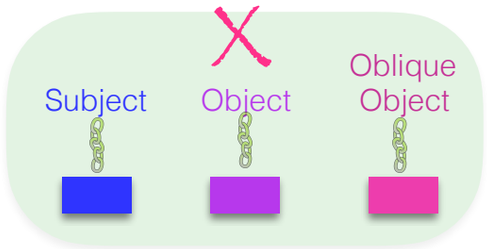




<3yrs <4yrs <5yrs

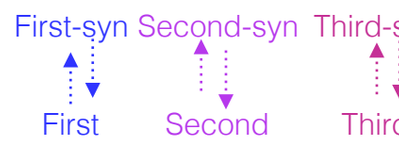


fixed

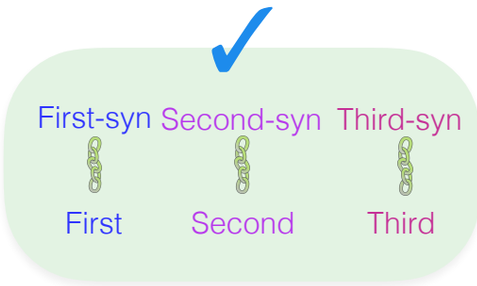


Bigger takeaway:
Acquisition support for relative over fixed.

Whether we think the linking theories that humans use are multi-link theories or multiple 1-link theories, it seems that English children would need to rely on a relative thematic representation if they're going to derive these linking theories from their input.



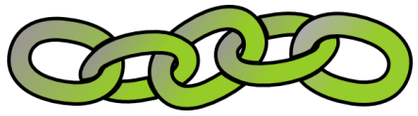
relative



Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

What we learned about linking theories using the lens of acquisition

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.



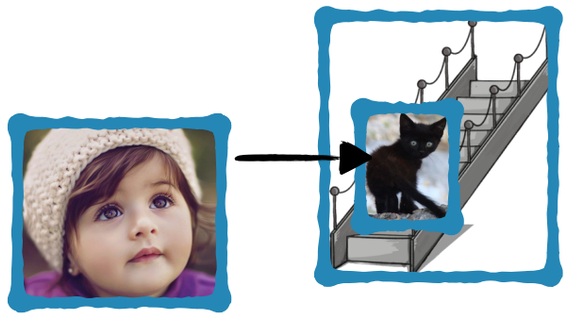
rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed



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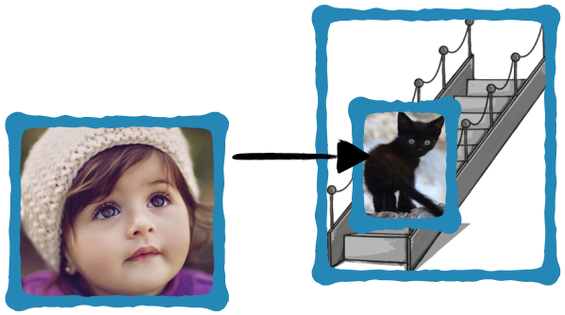

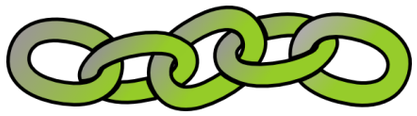

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

UTAH

relative

fixed

Linking theory proposals relying on innate knowledge require late maturation if they're going to be compatible with what we know about English children's developing verb knowledge.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

What we learned about linking theories using the lens of acquisition

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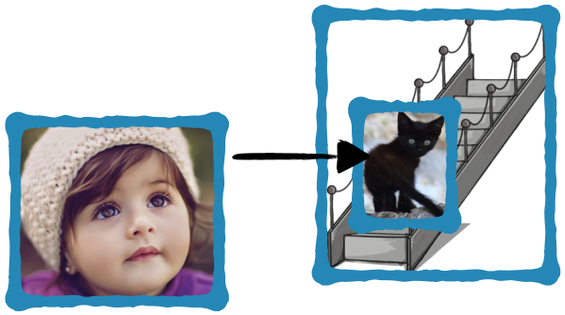

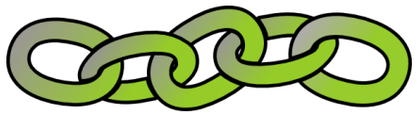

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

relative

UTAH

fixed

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Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

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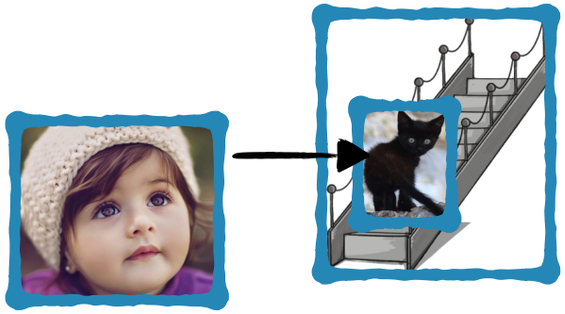
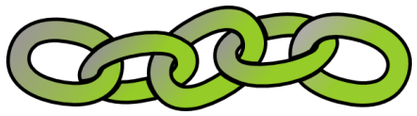




Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

UTAH

relative

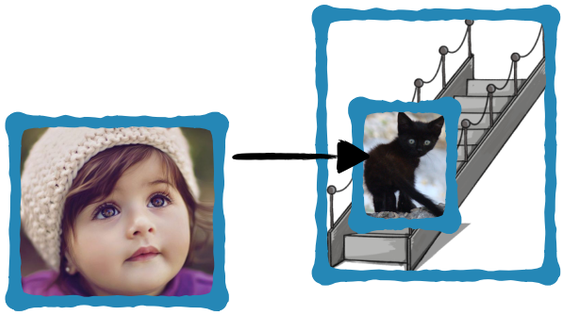
fixed

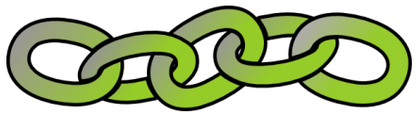
Linking theory proposals relying on derived knowledge are also compatible with what we know about English children's developing verb knowledge.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

What we learned about linking theories using the lens of acquisition

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.





Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

relative

UTAH

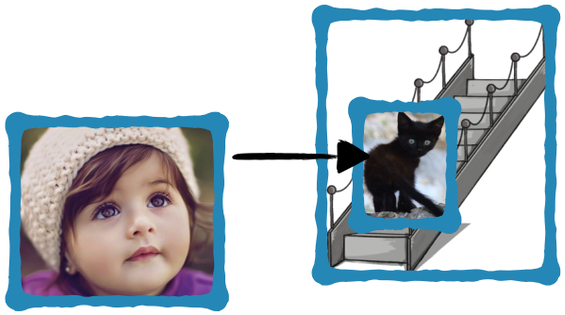
fixed

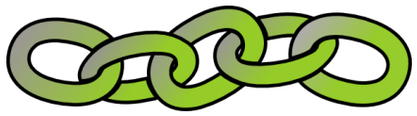
Linking theory proposals relying on derived knowledge are also compatible with what we know about English children's developing verb knowledge.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019a

What we learned about linking theories using the lens of acquisition

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.





rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer > Theme > Patient > (Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

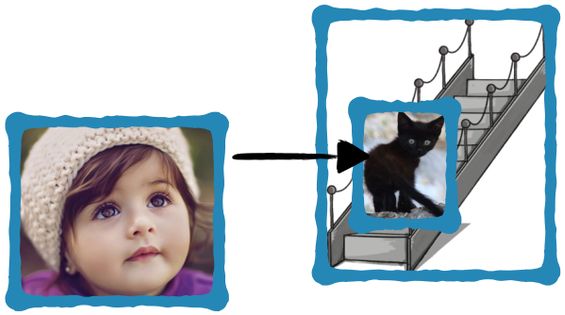
fixed

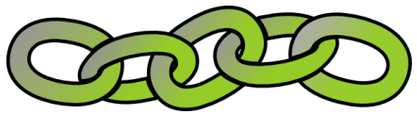
We provided an existence proof for how linking knowledge could be derived from realistic English child input. It only works for learners relying on relative thematic representations.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

What we learned about linking theories using the lens of acquisition

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.





Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

relative

UTAH

fixed

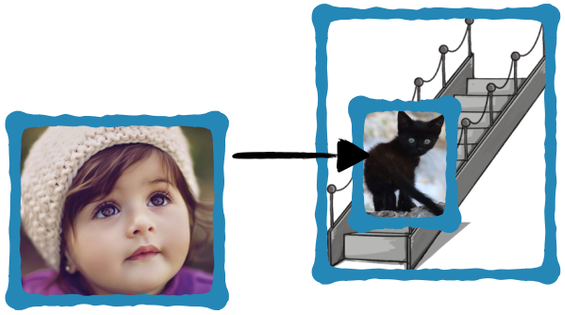
We provided an existence proof for how linking knowledge could be derived from realistic English child input. It only works for learners relying on relative thematic representations.

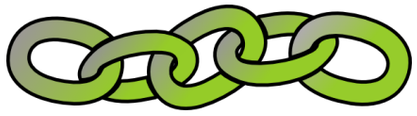
This can be interpreted as an argument from acquisition for theories of relative thematic representations over theories of fixed thematic representations.

Pearl & Sprouse 2019b

Open questions

The little girl *blicked* the kitten on the stairs.





Agent > Experiencer >
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(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

relative

UTAH

fixed

So now what?

Open questions

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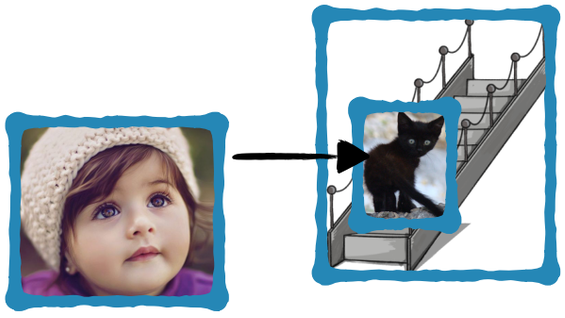

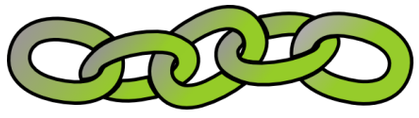

Agent > Experiencer >
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(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

relative

UTAH

fixed

(1) A broader assessment of children's verb class knowledge

Open questions

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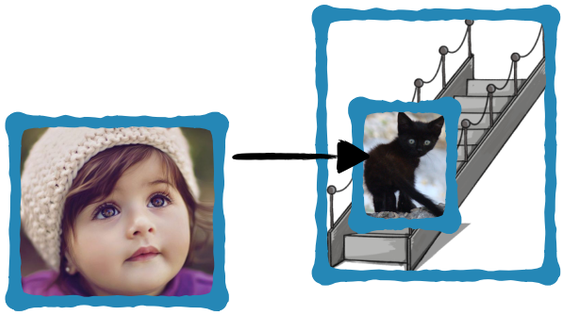

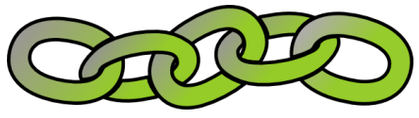

rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

relative

UTAH

fixed

(1) A broader assessment of children's verb class knowledge

This will allow us to further validate our acquisition modeling results for these theoretical proposals.

Open questions

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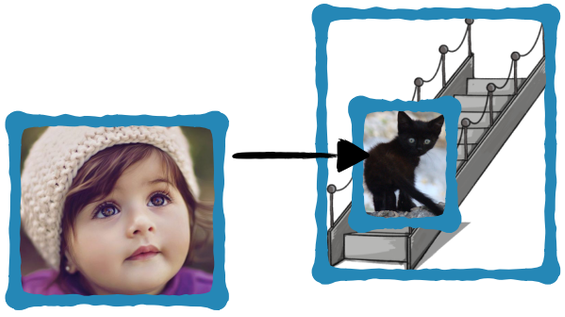

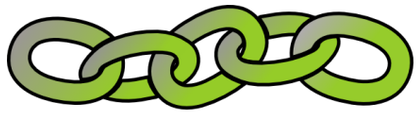

Agent > Experiencer >
Theme > Patient >
(Source, Goal, Location)

rUTAH

relative

UTAH

fixed

(1) A broader assessment of children's verb class knowledge

	<3yrs	<4yrs	<5yrs
			
Children's input	239 verbs	267 verbs	284 verbs
Children's known behavior	15 classes of 60 verbs	23 classes of 76 verbs	24 classes of 82 verbs

Open questions

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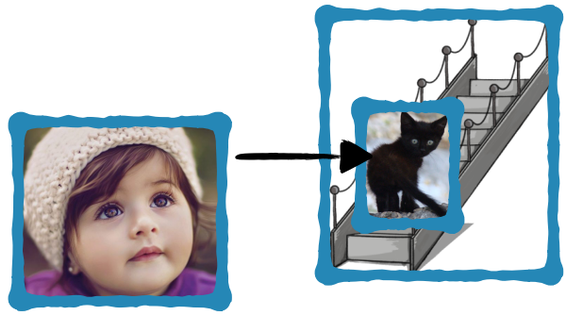

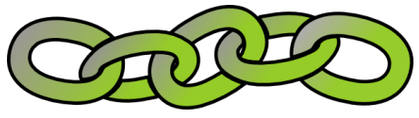

rUTAH

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(1) A broader assessment of children's verb class knowledge

	<3yrs	<4yrs	<5yrs
			
Children's input	239 verbs	267 verbs	284 verbs
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There are nearly 200 verbs in each age that we have acquisition model predictions for based on children's input but no behavioral data for.

Open questions

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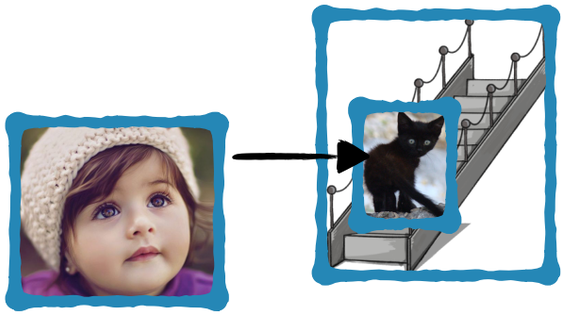

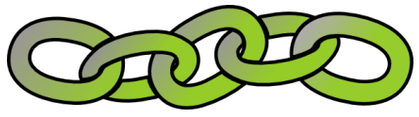

rUTAH

Agent > Experiencer >
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(Source, Goal, Location)

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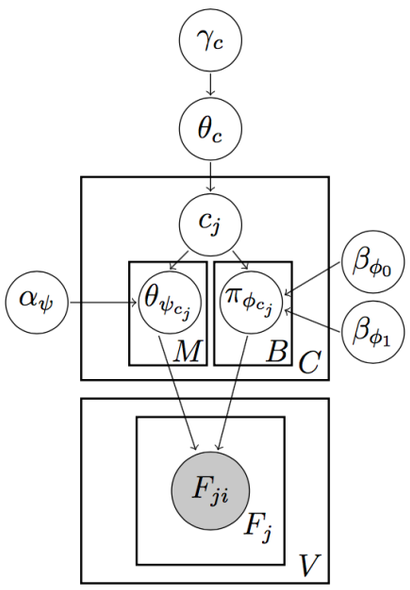
UTAH

fixed

(2) Models incorporating more cognitively plausible assumptions



$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

Open questions

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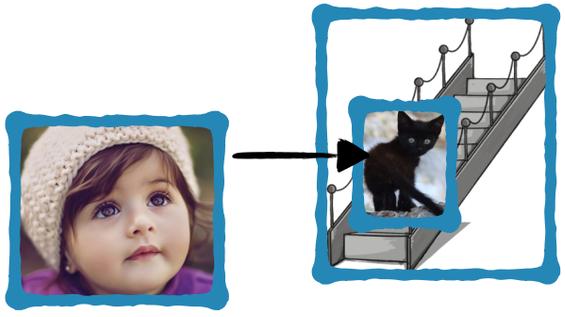

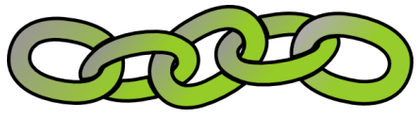

rUTAH

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UTAH

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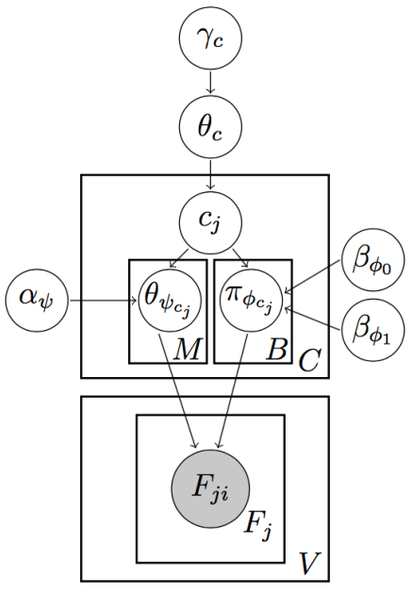

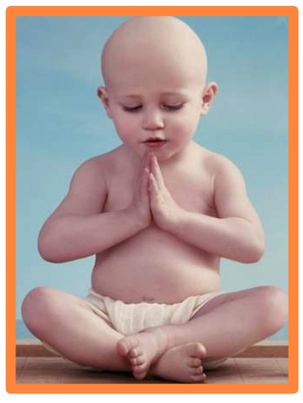

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Open questions

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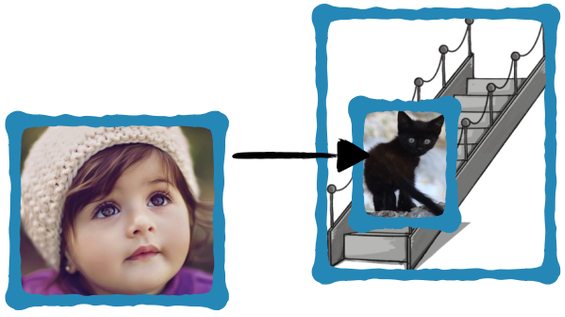

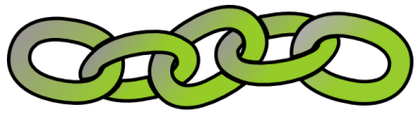

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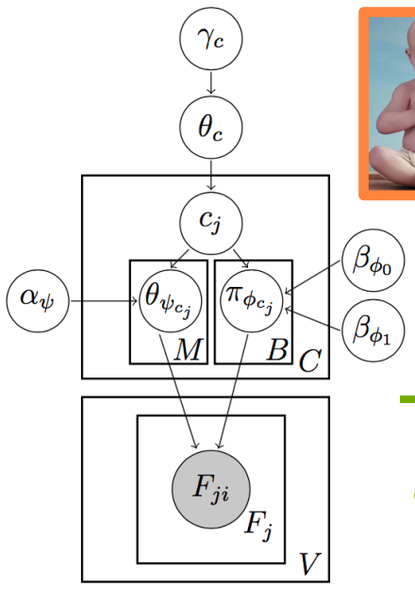

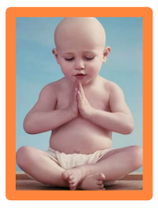

$$\frac{N}{ln(N)}$$

about intake & inference:
+memory & processing limitations

Is what's useful actually useable by children?

Open questions

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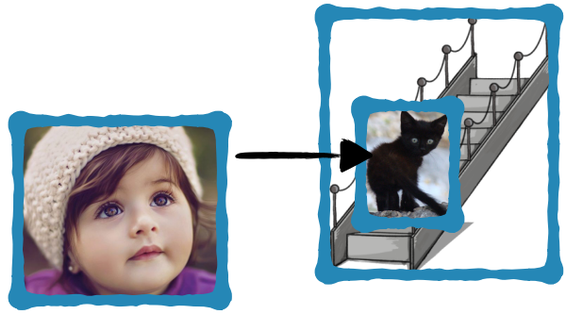

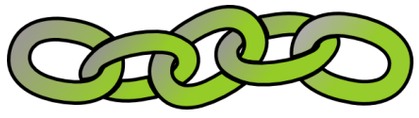

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Agent > Experiencer >
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UTAH

fixed

(2) Models incorporating more cognitively plausible assumptions

about developing grammar:
+incorporating additional
age-appropriate information

"It seemed to be right"

NP __ IP-finite —> NPraised __ [IP-finite __NP]

Open questions

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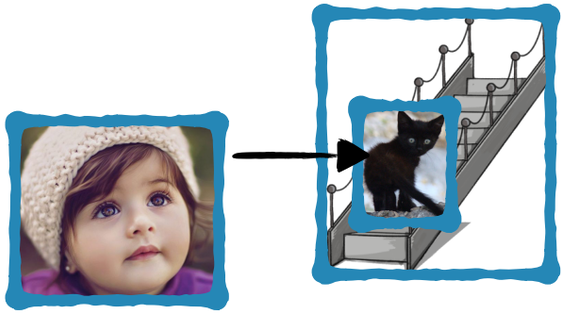

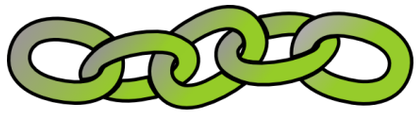

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(Source, Goal, Location)

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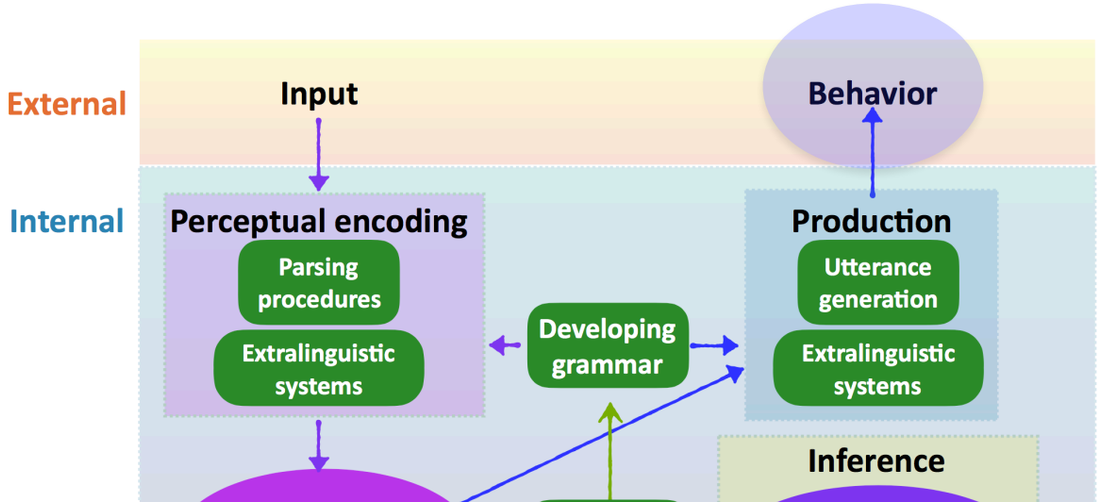
UTAH

fixed

(2) Models incorporating more cognitively plausible assumptions

about target state:
+predicting behavioral data
available from experiments



Open questions

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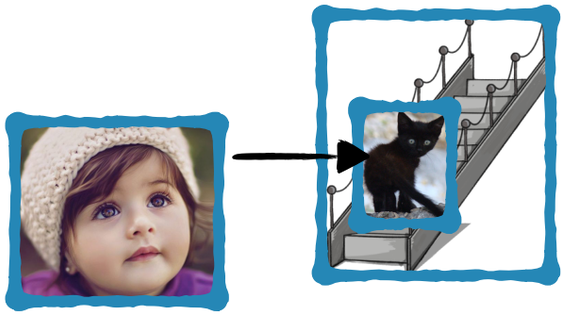

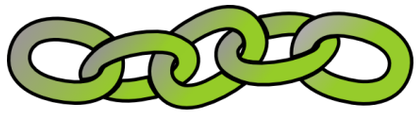

Agent > Experiencer >
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rUTAH

relative

UTAH

fixed

? ? ?

(3) Are there other theoretical options for linking thematic role information to syntactic structure that are compatible with what we know about development?

Open questions

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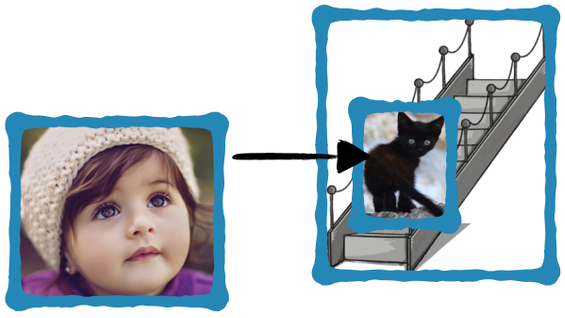

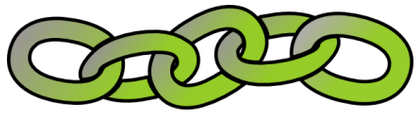

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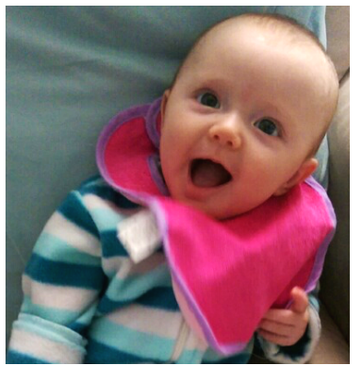
We can use these acquisition modeling approaches to investigate them.



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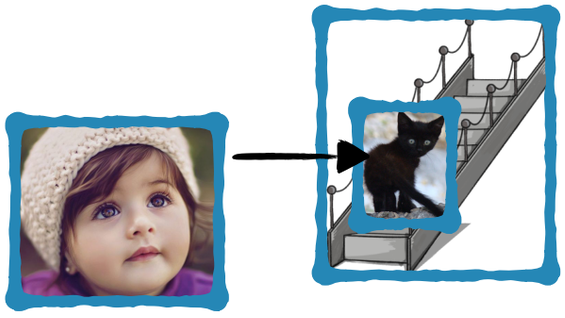

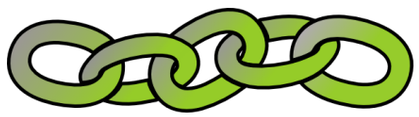

Agent > Experiencer >
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UTAH

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? ? ?

These acquisition modeling approaches allow us to connect theories of linguistic representation with theories of language development and so understand more about both.

Thank you!

Jon Sprouse

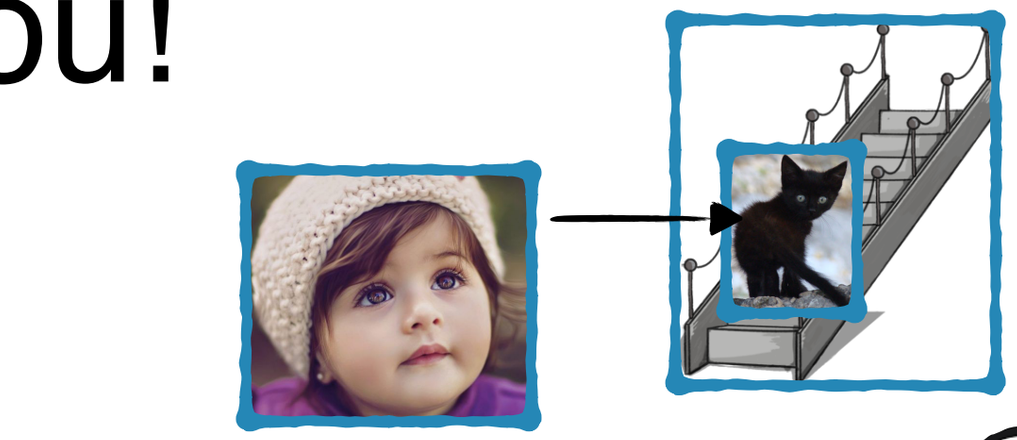
IMBS @ UCI 2018

MathPsych 2017

UCI Linguistics 2017

SynLinks workshop 2016

McGill Linguistics 2016



Computation of Language Laboratory

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