

Lucas P. Butler & Ellen M. Markman (2012): Finding the Cause: Verbal Framing Helps Children Extract Causal Evidence Embedded in a Complex Scene, Journal of Cognition and Development, 13:1, 38-66

This study asks whether

adult framing of problems

affects

causal learning and reasoning

in children

Independent variable

adult framing of problems

is operationalized as

adults asking specifically framed questions to guide children's behavior and reasoning

&

causal learning and reasoning

is measured in terms of

how accurately children answer and interpret the question

Dependent variable

The authors find

Implications

Children have the ability to reason about cause and effect and understand causal structures, but can reach even richer generalizations with scaffolding from adults, pointing to the value of adults in supporting learning.

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