Introduction

- Language learners must map lexical units to underlying semantic representations
- Syntactic bootstrapping:
  - learners use syntactic structure to acquire the meanings of novel verbs
- Structure Mapping:
  - children innately expect a 1-to-1 mapping from nouns to semantic arguments
  - they use this information to identify verbs and assign semantic roles to their arguments

This work:

- How can syntactic bootstrapping arise?
- Does identifying verbs help the learner to identify semantic roles?
- Are 'seed' verbs needed for verb identification?

Experiment 1
Are simple linear syntactic features sufficient to learn to understand simple sentences?

Experiment 2
Can nouns nouns and verbs be identified without syntactic feedback?

Experiment 3
What happens if the semantic feedback is not veridical?