

# New Research From Psychological Science

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## [Long-Term Temporal Tracking of Speech Rate Affects Spoken-Word Recognition](#)

*Melissa M. Baese-Berk, Christopher C. Heffner, Laura C. Dilley, Mark A. Pitt, Tuuli H. Morrill, and J. Devin McAuley*

Past studies have indicated that the timing of speech can influence the perception of spoken words; however, many of these studies have been performed in a short-term context — altering the timing of a single phrase, for example. In this study, participants heard a series of utterances played at one of three different global-speech rates. The researchers manipulated the speed of a portion of each utterance (distal-speech rate) so that it was heard at a faster, a slower, or the same pace as the global-speech rate. The researchers found that global-speech rate influenced the words participants heard, indicating that both global- and distal-speech rates are important for identifying spoken words.

## [Who's Talking Now? Infants' Perception of Vowels With Infant Vocal Properties](#)

*Linda Polka, Matthew Masapollo, and Lucie M  nard*

Although studies have investigated how infants categorize speech sounds produced by adults and children, researchers have yet to investigate how infants categorize their own or other infants' speech sounds. Infants were habituated to vowel sounds produced in simulated adult male, adult female, and child voices. They then listened to the habituated vowel sounds and novel vowel sounds produced in a simulated infant's voice. The infants paid more attention to the novel vowel sounds than to the habituated vowel sounds. This indicates that infants can categorize their own vocalizations and recognize them as being phonetically similar to child and adult speech sounds.

## [Domain-Specific Genetic Influence on Visual-Ambiguity Resolution](#)

*Ying Wang, Li Wang, Qian Xu, Dong Liu, and Yi Jiang*

Because the visual world is often ambiguous, the same visual experience can be interpreted in many ways. Research has found that people often display biases in the way they interpret ambiguous visual patterns, and in the current study, the authors examined whether there is a genetic basis for this variation. Monozygotic and dizygotic twins viewed points of light representing biological or inanimate motion. The motion of the points of light was ambiguous so that it could be interpreted as moving toward or away from the participant. The researchers found a genetic contribution to the perception of animate motion but not inanimate motion, providing some of the first findings to demonstrate a possible genetic influence on visual-ambiguity resolution.