

Ira Noveck (French National Centre for Scientific Research, CNRS-Université de Lyon):
“What children's choices reveal: Linguistically encoded meaning, inference and mindreading in reference resolution”

For a relatively mature addressee, the linguistically encoded meaning of a sentence, such as “Give me the hat”, suffices in order to identify a single hat when it is the only one in view; however, it would not be enough if there were two. Presumably, the speaker had one in mind and the addressee would need to figure out which. The adjective in “Give me the black hat” suffices for distinguishing between two hats, one black and one hat; however, a listener would be non-plussed if there were only one black hat in view. This depiction of mature referential skills is not always evident among children. In the talk, I aim to bring reference resolution in line with other pragmatic phenomena before asking a new question: What actually develops? The talk considers two candidates as an answer to this question, inferential abilities and mindreading.