

CBS Research Seminar

Presupposition and its application to clinical studies

Presented by

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Date: 10 Feb 2017 (Friday)

Time: 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Venue: GH803

ABSTRACT

Utterances often involve presupposed or backgrounded information which is mutually known or assumed by both speaker and addressee. For instance, an utterance such as ‘My brother likes swimming’ presupposes that the speaker has a brother. While an enormous amount of research has suggested that individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) have communication difficulties, little is known about their performance on presuppositions, a domain of knowledge which is crucial for successful communication. In this talk, I will present evidence from an experimental study on Cantonese-speaking children with ASD and their typically developing peers that (a) children with ASD show a deficit in the comprehension of presupposition relative to their typically developing peers, and (b) their deficit should be ascribed to the disorder rather than to deficits in general language ability or non-verbal intelligence. I will also discuss the implications of these findings for clinical studies.