Cambridge Language Sciences Annual Symposium 2023

Language and Mental Wellbeing: 16 November 2023

Research Dialogue 1: The relationship between language and more general cognition, and implications for wellbeing

Language in its own right: boundaries with thought and communication

[Ianthi Tsimpli](#) (Professor of English & Applied Linguistics, Cambridge)

By general consensus, language is the optimal communication system humans possess. Deconstructing communication into its component parts, however, is a challenge - particularly when looking for causal links between formal language and domain-general cognition. Children growing up with language and communication difficulties present asymmetries in their cognitive profiles along with considerable heterogeneity. Enhanced language experience, in the form of bilingualism or parent education levels, has direct or indirect effects on cognitive skills but it's unclear which aspects of the component parts of communication drive the differences. Focusing on longitudinal data from autistic children, I will explore the question of causality linking properties of language, (non-linguistic) cognition and communication.

[WATCH TALK RECORDING](#)