MITTWOCHSVORTRAGSREIHE AM PSYCHOLOGISCHEN INSTITUT
DER UNIVERSITÄT SALZBURG
IN ZUSAMMENARBEIT MIT DER SALZBURGER GESELLSCHAFT FÜR PSYCHOLOGIE

Vortrag am: 20.04.2005

Vortragender: Martin Doherty, University of Sterling

Thema: Children's understanding of ambiguous figures: Which cognitive developments are necessary to experience reversal?

In three experiments involving 200 3- to- 5-year-olds we examined the claim that a complex understanding of ambiguity is required to experience reversal of ambiguous stimuli (Gopnik & Rosati, 2001). In Experiment 1 we failed to find a strong correlation between understanding of ambiguity (measured by the 'Droodle' task) and tendency to reverse. In Experiment 2 a novel Production task measured the ability to acknowledge both interpretations of ambiguous figures. This was as easy as and significantly correlated with the False Belief task, and easier than the Droodle task. In Experiment 3 we found again that the Droodle and Reversal tasks were of the same difficulty but not specifically related. Both were harder than the False Belief and Production tasks, which were as difficult as each other, and significantly correlated. We conclude that children only attempt reversal once they understand false belief. The process resulting in reversal however is hard, probably requiring additional developments in executive functioning and imagery abilities.