



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Science

of

HANNAH MOHUN

BSc (University of Victoria, 2014)

“Theory of Mind and Perspective-taking in Young Children”

Department of Psychology

August 28, 2017

10:00 A.M.

Cornett Building

Room A228

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Ulrich Mueller, Department of Psychology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Mauricio Garcia-Barrera, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Gina Harrison, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Yin-Man Lam, Department of Anthropology, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Based on past research that suggests an association between perspective-taking and theory of mind, the present study investigates the relationship between these two constructs by administering three perspective-taking and three theory of mind tasks, along with one measure of inhibition and one measure of expressive language, to eighty-four 3- and 4-year olds. The goals of this study were to (1) evaluate the relative difficulties of the six perspective-taking and theory of mind tasks, (2) assess whether the theory of mind and perspective-taking tasks scale onto the same dimension, (3) examine the distinctions proposed within the construct of perspective-taking, (4) investigate the relationship between inhibition and verbal ability with theory of mind and perspective-taking, and (5) examine the relationship between perspective-taking and theory of mind. The results show that the six theory of mind and perspective-taking tasks develop along a single continuum and produce a scale of the understanding of subjectivity for preschoolers. Results also demonstrate that the ability to take someone else's perspective without directly confronting it with one's own perspective is the least challenging, and understanding that others' beliefs can be false is the most challenging task. Finally, results indicate that inhibition and verbal ability account for the relationship between almost all of the perspective-taking and theory of mind tasks.