TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract V

Acknowledgments IX

Introduction 1

Lexical learning in Autism Spectrum Disorder: An overview 1

Word learning theories: Divergence on the role of understanding of social intentions 3

Word-learning theories and ASD 7

Debates on Theory of Mind and language learning in children with and without ASD 10

Lexical processing in communication in children with and without ASD 14

Processing phonological neighbors in ASD 18

Summary 19

Chapter 1. Speaker accuracy but not speaker reliability influences word learning in ASD 21

Introduction 21

Sensitivity to speakers' accuracy: associative or inference-based? ... 23

Children's reasoning about speakers 25

Measuring attention to social information 27

Predictions 29

Materials and method 31

Procedure 32

Scenario of Task 2 34

Data preparation 35

Results 36

Task 1 36
Task 2 40
Discussion 44
Conclusion 48
Chapter 2. Referential processing in 3- and 5-year-old children is egocentrically anchored 51
Introduction 51
Materials and methods 60
Participants 60
Stimuli 61
Procedure 63
Results 67
Data preparation 67
Analyses 68
Discussion 70
Conclusion 73
Chapter 3. Struggling with alternative descriptions: impaired referential processing in children with ASD 77
Introduction 77
Materials and methods 84
Participants 84
Results 86
Data preparation 86
Analyses 86
Discussion 92

Chapter 4. Processing of novel phonological neighbors in children with ASD 97
Introduction 97
Method 103
Participants 103
Visual stimuli 105
Auditory stimuli 105
Procedure 106
Results 107
Discussion 115
General discussion 125
References 137