

The Future of Experimental Pragmatics

The last decades have seen an upsurge of research into experimental pragmatics, i.e. the study of how interlocutors use language and how speaker's meaning is processed. However, in spite of the fact that the target of research within experimental pragmatics is speaker-hearer interaction, including among others the identification of speaker's intentions, the degree of informativity and addressee's tolerance, we have mainly relied on highly controlled, lab-based experiments. Yet, ecological validity seems to be crucial when investigating language use in interaction. In my talk, I will assess these past practices employed in the psycho- and neurolinguistic research and show that the time is ripe to move towards more naturalistic, less controlled settings. Such settings range from the presentation of audio book recordings to natural communicative situations.