

The pragmatics of human-machine interaction

Organized by: *Rita Vallentin, Miriam Lind, Britta Schneider*

Even though the field of human-machine interaction (HMI) is blooming and both computer science and linguistics provide increasingly detailed insight into the communicative abilities of voice-based devices and the ways humans engage with emerging technologies, pragmatic aspects of actual in-the-wild interaction are rarely addressed. Existing pragmatics research on HMI largely addresses two areas, politeness and communication breakdowns/repair strategies. Studies on politeness in HMI are predominantly done for English and don't reach beyond the use of greetings, thank you and please which are then dismissed as "mindless politeness" (Lopatovska/Williams 2018) and indirectness (Briggs/Williams/Scheutz 2017). The repair of communication breakdowns is largely a human responsibility and takes place through repetition, reformulation, and adjustments of prosody/articulation (Beneteau et al. 2019). Other aspects of pragmatics, e.g. implicature and presupposition, deixis and reference, information structure, affective and evaluative linguistic practices remain unaddressed.

This panel aims to provide a first step towards a richer engagement with the pragmatics of human-machine interaction. We invite contributions that address any aspects of pragmatics in the sense of language use in everyday HMI, taking "a general functional perspective on (any aspect of) language, i.e. as an approach to language which takes into account the full complexity of its cognitive, social, and cultural (i.e. 'meaningful') functioning in the lives of human beings" (Verschueren 2012). Particularly welcome is research on the pragmatics of HMI in languages other than English and in multilingual settings.

Abstracts (300-500 words) should be submitted no later than October 31st 2022 through the conference website: <https://ipra2023.exordo.com/login>

For further instructions on how to submit your abstract see:

<https://pragmatics.international/page/CfP>

References:

- Beneteau, Erin et al. (2019): Communication Breakdowns Between Families and Alexa. In: Chi 2019 , May 4-9, 2019, Glasgow, Scotland, UK. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1145/3290605.3300473>.
- Briggs, Gordon/Williams, Tom/Scheutz, Matthias (2017): Enabling Robots to Understand Indirect Speech Acts in Task-Based Interactions. In: Journal of Human-Robot Interaction 6 (1), 64-94. DOI: 10.5898/JHRI.6.1.Briggs.
- Lopatovska, Irene/Williams, Harriet (2018): Personification of the Amazon Alexa: BFF or a Mindless Companion? In: CHIIR' 18 , DOI: 10.1145/3176349.3176868.
- Verschueren, Jeff (2012): The pragmatic perspective. In: Jeff Verschueren; Jan-Ola Östman (eds.) Handbook of Pragmatics 2012. DOI: 10.1075/hop.16.prag.