

Mark Dingemans

Reasoning in interaction

In rational communication, cognitive constraints and considerations of efficiency conspire to explain properties of message formulation and interpretation. Given the context of RAILS I will consider the attractions of quantitative and probabilistic approaches to language use evident, so I will use my time to go off the beaten path. In particular, I will argue for the utility of moving beyond single-minded views of rationality and communication, and I will explore opportunities for productive exchange between empirical work on human interaction and computational models of language use (Dingemans & Enfield 2024). I will show how phenomena like interactive repair, parental scaffolding and liminal signs allow us to transcend individual resource limitations, distribute cognitive processes, and ride the coattails of ambiguity. The stark elegance of strategic one-shot communication may be the limiting case of processes that are better understood by studying language use as an interactional achievement.