Experimenting with (Conditional) Perfection

Abstract

We present and discuss a series of experiments designed to test one of the most promising pragmatic accounts of conditional perfection—the phenomenon according to which conditionals can sometimes be strengthened to biconditionals. We test the idea that conditional perfection is a form of exhaustification triggered by the kind of question that the conditional is used to answer. We uncover evidence that conditional perfection is a form of exhaustification, but not that it is triggered by a relationship to a salient question.