

Preface

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**Epistemic Modality, Language, and Conceptualization: A
cognitive-pragmatic perspective**

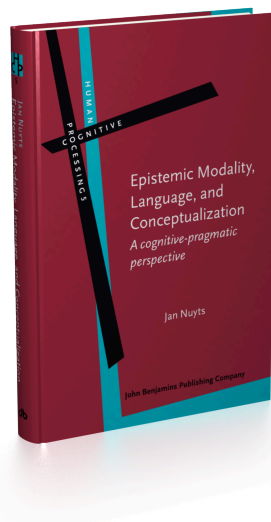
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Preface

Any product of the mind is also the product of the society to which the mind belongs. This is obviously true for the present monograph as well, not only in the general sense that it is deeply influenced by the intellectual frames of mind in which I happen to have been immersed during my academic development, but also in many much more concrete ways.

Basic funding allowing me to do the present research has been provided by the Science Fund Flanders (FWO, formerly the Belgian National Science Fund) and by the Research Council of the University of Antwerp (Special Research Fund — BOF). In addition, I have benefitted greatly from visits at a few institutions. The basic ideas for this investigation have been conceived during a research stay at the University of California at Berkeley (Department of Linguistics) in Summer 1991 (sponsored by the FWO). Thanks to Eve Sweetser and Chuck Fillmore for hosting me. A considerable part of the research (especially the German data analysis) has been done while I was an Alexander von Humboldt fellow (awarded by the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung in Bonn) in the ‘Sonderforschungsbereich 245: Sprache und Situation’ at the University of Heidelberg, all through 1995 and the first half of 1996. Thanks to Christiane von Stutterheim and Wolfgang Klein for support. Last but not least, from 1993 onwards (and continuing), my affiliation as a research associate at the Max-Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen has allowed me, in close collaboration with Wietske Vonk, to develop the experimental research program of which the results of the first major part are integrated here. These experiments were cosponsored by research grants from the FWO and the Research Council of the University of Antwerp, and (during 6 months in 1995) by a ‘Eurostipendium’ from the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung. Many thanks to Pim Levelt, Wolfgang Klein and Steve Levinson for their (very) long-term hospitality, and especially to Wietske Vonk for a most pleasant and stimulating working relationship.

Numerous people have contributed to a better understanding of some of the issues involved here, but I would particularly like to single out Johan van der Auwera, Marta Carretero, Dirk Geeraerts, Louis Goossens, Jiansheng Guo, Peter Harder, Kees Hengeveld, Wolfgang Klein, Ann De Roeck, Georges De Schutter, Eve Sweetser, Robert Van Valin, Co Vet and Wietske Vonk. Chapter 5 of this monograph in particular reports on research done jointly with Wietske Vonk (see Nuyts and Vonk 1999). Also thanks to two anonymous referees and the series editors Ray Gibbs and Marcelo Dascal for useful suggestions.

On the more practical side, I am grateful to my colleague Luc Vandenberg for allowing me to use his corpus of Dutch, and to the Institut für deutsche Sprache in Mannheim for providing me access to their (online) corpora of German.

Some parts of this book build on work published earlier (cf. Nuyts 1993a, 1996b, 1998, 1999, 2000a, b, and Nuyts and Vonk 1999). Thanks to Mouton De Gruyter and Lincom Europa for permission to reuse materials published by them.

This book is devoted to the memory of two people who, in different ways, have been of enormous importance to me. It is devoted to the memory of Simon Dik, who died March 1st, 1995, while I was working on this monograph. I would like to acknowledge the strong influence he has had on nearly all of my work, including the present (even if our views differ in quite a few very substantial respects), and I will never forget the many stimulating hours of discussion as well as of pleasant leisure time we had on numerous occasions. It is equally devoted to the memory of my father, Emiel Nuyts, who died July 30th, 2000, when this book was in press. His role in making my work possible at all simply cannot be grasped in words.