

Preface to the series

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Pages xi–xii of

Grammar, Meaning and Pragmatics

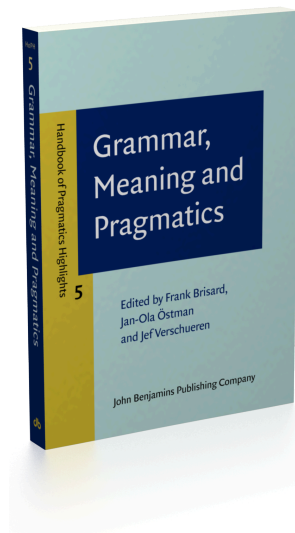
Edited by Frank Brisard, Jan-Ola Östman and Jef Verschueren

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Preface to the series

In 1995, the first installments of the **Handbook of Pragmatics (HoP)** were published. The HoP was to be one of the major tools of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA) to achieve its goals (i) of disseminating knowledge about pragmatic aspects of language, (ii) of stimulating various fields of application by making this knowledge accessible to an interdisciplinary community of scholars approaching the same general subject area from different points of view and with different methodologies, and (iii) of finding, in the process, a significant degree of theoretical coherence.

The HoP approaches *pragmatics* as *the cognitive, social, and cultural science of language and communication*. Its ambition is to provide a practical and theoretical tool for achieving coherence in the discipline, for achieving cross-disciplinary intelligibility in a necessarily diversified field of scholarship. It was therefore designed to provide easy access for scholars with widely divergent backgrounds but with converging interests in the use and functioning of language, in the topics, traditions, and methods which, together, make up the broadly conceived field of pragmatics. As it was also meant to provide a state-of-the-art report, a flexible publishing format was needed. This is why the print version took the form of a background manual followed by annual loose-leaf installments, enabling the creation of a continuously updatable and expandable reference work. The flexibility of this format vastly increased with the introduction of an online version, the **Handbook of Pragmatics Online** (see www.benjamins.com/online).

While the HoP and the HoP-online continue to provide state-of-the-art information for students and researchers interested in the science of language use, this new series of **Handbook of Pragmatics Highlights** focuses on the most salient topics in the field of pragmatics, thus dividing its wide interdisciplinary spectrum in a transparent and manageable way. The series contains a total of ten volumes around the following themes:

- Key notions for pragmatics
- Philosophical perspectives
- Grammar, meaning and pragmatics
- Cognition and pragmatics
- Society and language use
- Culture and language use
- The pragmatics of variation and change
- The pragmatics of interaction

- Discursive pragmatics
- Pragmatics in practice

This topically organized series of paperbacks, each starting with an up-to-date overview of its field of interest, each brings together some 12–20 of the most pertinent HoP entries in its respective field. They are intended to make sure that students and researchers alike, whether their interests are predominantly philosophical, cognitive, grammatical, social, cultural, variational, interactional, or discursive, can always have the most relevant encyclopedic articles at their fingertips. Affordability, topical organization and selectivity also turn these books into practical teaching tools which can be used as reading materials for a wide range of pragmatics-related linguistics courses.

With this endeavor, we hope to make a further contribution to the goals underlying the HoP project when it was first conceived in the early 1990s.

Jan-Ola Östman (University of Helsinki) &
Jef Verschueren (University of Antwerp)