

Preface

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Multimodal Im/politeness: Signed, spoken, written

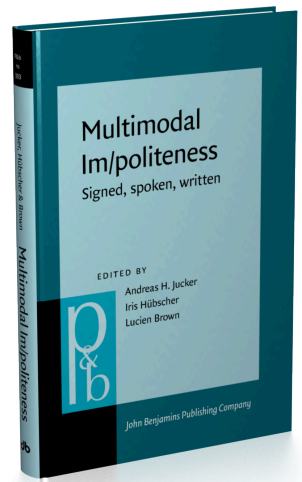
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Preface

Research on politeness and impoliteness has so far focused almost exclusively on the linguistic aspects of polite and impolite behaviour. This volume extends the scope and brings together a range of papers that explore the multimodal nature of im/politeness. They are based on the conviction that people communicate polite and impolite attitudes towards each other not only through the words that they exchange but also – and in many cases perhaps even more importantly – through their intonation, tone of voice, their facial expressions, their gestures, the positioning of their bodies towards each other, and so on. The papers in this volume go back to a workshop and a conference panel on the topic of multimodal im/politeness. The first was the one-day “Symposium on Multimodal Im/politeness: Gesture, Sign and Spatial Configurations” hosted by the University Research Priority Program “Language and Space” at the University of Zurich in October 2020. The second was a panel entitled “Multimodal im/politeness in spoken, sign and written language” at the seventeenth conference of the International Pragmatics Association organised by the University of Applied Sciences in Winterthur in June 2021. Because of the Covid pandemic, both events had to be carried out via online conferencing tools, which added some unexpected new insights to our understanding of the importance of spatiality in communicative exchanges. The current volume brings together a selection of what we believe to be the most significant contributions at these events.

Our thanks go to the contributors of this volume for their patience and for their co-operation with our many requests for modifications and revisions, and to the two anonymous reviewers of the book series for their very careful reading of our manuscript and the numerous important suggestions for improvements. We also wish to thank the University Research Priority Program “Language and Space” at the University of Zurich for their support.

Andreas H. Jucker, Iris Hübscher and Lucien Brown, December 2022

