

Preface

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Certainty-uncertainty – and the Attitudinal Space in Between

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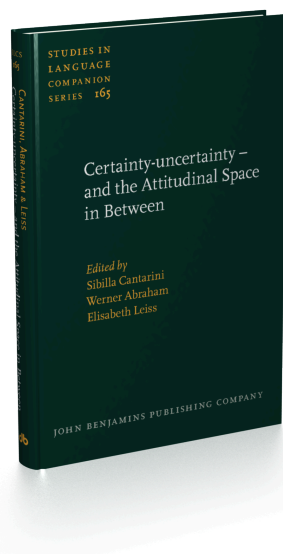
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Preface

The papers collated in this volume were all presented at the international conference entitled *The Communication of Certainty and Uncertainty: Linguistic, Psychological and Philosophical Aspects* held at the University of Macerata from 3rd to 5th October 2012. Conceived as a forum for interdisciplinary comparison on the general theme of the communication of certainty and uncertainty, the conference had great resonance in the scientific community. Organized by Andrzej Zuczkowski (University of Macerata, President), Sibilla Cantarini (University of Verona, Co-president), Anita Fetzer (University of Würzburg, Co-president), and Ramona Bongelli, Ilaria Riccioni, and Carla Canestrari (University of Macerata, Organizing Committee), the issues were analysed from the perspective of various research topics and methods, making it an important inter- and multidisciplinary event. The invited speakers were: **Werner Abraham** (University of Vienna & Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich); **Elisabeth Leiss** (Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich); and **Jan Nuyts** (University of Antwerp).

In addition, there were a further 134 speakers from 32 different countries across all the 5 continents: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Sweden, Hungary, the Russian Federation, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Italy, Canada, Colombia, México, Brazil, South Africa, Tunisia, Lebanon, Turkey, the USA, Japan, China, Morocco, Australia, Argentina, and India. The programme comprised the following sessions: Religion, Specific Languages, Music, Media, Law, Multimodality, Communicative Interaction, Scientific Writing, Theory of Mind, Interaction at School, (Un)Certainty across Ages, Decision making, Humour, Politics, Literature, Second Language and Contrastive Studies, Academic-Institutional Discourse, Doctor-Patient Interaction, Philosophy, and Argumentation and Persuasion, as well as three specific sessions devoted to the Italian, German, and French Languages.

The conference was dedicated to Franz Hundsniß, Professor Emeritus at the University of Münster, known to the entire international scientific community for his studies on dialogue, and János Sándor Petőfi, Professor of Philosophy of Language at the University of Macerata from 1989 to 2006. János Sándor Petőfi, who unfortunately passed away in February 2013, was known for his Text Theory, in particular his model of deep structure – the so-called Atomic Text. This is one of the theoretical backbones of the research on the relationships between language and cognitive processes being carried out at the Research Centre for

the Psychology of Communication by Andrzej Zuczkowski and his team, namely Ramona Bongelli, Ilaria Riccioni, and Carla Canestrari.

The parallel and plenary sessions of the conference provided opportunities for fruitful and fascinating discussion on various themes related to the communication of certainty and uncertainty. Looking at the topics from different perspectives we feel that this volume provides interdisciplinary comparison of the latest research, methods and findings, with a common focus on human communication. It is hoped that this volume works as a compendium of state-of-the-art papers from just some of the fields touched upon at the conference and that it can truly fill a void in the linguistic research published to date.

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