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The Cambridge Handbook of the Philosophy of Language

The philosophy of language is central to the concerns of those working across semantics, pragmatics, and cognition, as well as the philosophy of mind and ideas. Bringing together an international team of leading scholars, this handbook provides a comprehensive guide to contemporary investigations into the relationship between language, philosophy, and linguistics. Chapters are grouped into thematic areas and cover a wide range of topics, from key philosophical notions, such as meaning, truth, reference, names, and propositions, to characteristics of the most recent research in the field, including logicality of language, vagueness in natural language, value judgments, slurs, deception, proximization in discourse, argumentation theory, and linguistic relativity. It also includes chapters that explore selected linguistic theories and their philosophical implications, providing a much-needed interdisciplinary perspective. Showcasing the cutting edge in research in the field, this book is essential reading for philosophers interested in language and linguistics, and linguists interested in philosophical analyses.

PIOTR STALMASZCZYK is Professor and Chair of English Language and Linguistics at the University of Lodz (Poland). His research is concerned with philosophy of language and linguistics. Recent publications include the edited volume *Philosophical Insights into Pragmatics* (De Gruyter 2019), and two edited volumes on predication theory (both with Peter Lang, 2017). In 2017 he was elected president of the Polish Linguistics Association.

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Preface

The Cambridge Handbook of the Philosophy of Language constitutes a comprehensive guide to contemporary investigations dealing with the intricate relations between language, philosophy, and linguistics. The volume is divided into six parts. After an introductory chapter which discusses different definitions and descriptions of the field, especially within the analytic tradition (assumed in most contributions), Part I provides an overview of the origins and main stages in the development of philosophy of language; it also offers suggestions for future directions. Part II investigates some selected foundational issues. The chapters concentrate on the relations between language, ontology, and logic, and on the philosophical foundations of language, on issues connected with philosophy of language and mind, and different theoretical perspectives on language and meaning. Part III discusses such fundamental concepts as truth, reference, names, natural kinds, vagueness, and indexicals. The authors not only discuss those concepts but also comment on the current debates and controversies. Chapters in Part IV focus on issues in semantics and pragmatics (within different theoretical approaches), such as entailment, presupposition, implicature, speech acts, events, and also on value judgments, and slurs. Part V is devoted to the philosophical implications of selected linguistic theories (generative grammar, conceptual semantics, Relevance Theory) and of the theory of mental files, and to an overview of the relations between philosophy of language and discourse studies. Finally, chapters in Part VI offer a range of possible extensions to some less traditional areas of investigation, such as the philosophy of argument, the philosophical assumptions explicit and implicit in analyzing denial, deception, irony, and metaphor. This part concludes with chapters on the analytic philosophy of literature, and on the philosophical implications of linguistic relativity. The volume is furnished with a cumulative list of references, which may serve as a comprehensive bibliography for philosophy of language.

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The topics discussed in this *Handbook* include notions belonging to the core of any philosophical discussion (e.g. truth, reference, names, propositions), concepts crucial to semantic and pragmatic theories, and also some nonobvious extensions, characteristic of the most recent research (e.g. logicality of language, vagueness in natural language, value judgments, slurs, deception, proximization in discourse, argumentation theory, linguistic relativity); the volume also includes chapters discussing selected linguistic theories and their philosophical implications.

The Cambridge Handbook of the Philosophy of Language is aimed at graduate and PhD students, but it is also meant for all scholars interested in the more philosophical inquiries into language and linguistics, especially different aspects of meaning and language use.

A publication like this would not have been possible without the involvement and joint effort of numerous people. First and foremost, I want to thank all the contributors for accepting my invitation, for their enthusiasm, reliability, and hard work; it has been my pleasure to work with you (a word of warning: I am already looking forward to further projects!).

The very idea of this *Handbook* would not have been possible without the initiative and most helpful suggestions from the publisher. The idea was suggested to me by Helen Barton, whom I would like to thank for constant encouragement and support at every stage of the project; many thanks also to Isabel Collins for her invaluable assistance, and to Jacqueline French for her positive attitude and highly professional copyediting.

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