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The EVOLUTIONARY EMERGENCE of LANGUAGE

Evidence and Inference

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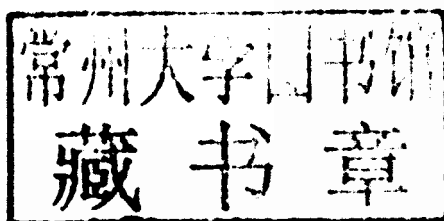
RUDOLF BOTHA
AND MARTIN EVERAERT

STUDIES IN THE EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE

The Evolutionary Emergence of Language

Evidence and Inference

Edited by
Rudolf Botha
Martin Everaert



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The Evolutionary Emergence of Language

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Preface and acknowledgements

This volume grew out of the 8th International Conference on the Evolution of Language (EVLANG8), held in Utrecht, the Netherlands, in April 2010. Based on a selection of papers presented at the conference, the chapters are state-of-the-art discussions of a wide range of facets of the evolution of language. The chapters considerably extend our understanding of what the evolution of language may have involved and, moreover, illustrate in a concrete way how scholars in diverse fields deal with issues of evidence and inference that arise in their study of this phenomenon. In clarifying these issues, the volume explores the potential and limitations of various kinds of evidence—linguistic, cognitive (developmental), ethnographic, archaeological, palaeo-anthropological, primatological, anatomical, neurological, genetic, molecular, etc.—which seem to bear on hypotheses about language evolution. The linguistic evidence at issue comes from a variety of sources, including variation, structure, use, gesture, homesign and emerging new sign languages, acquisition, and pathology. Contributing authors were encouraged to make their accounts maximally accessible to a wide audience of readers, the evolution of language being an area in which scholars and students from multiple disciplines rub shoulders.

We would like to thank the following colleagues for their contribution to organizing EVLANG8: Bart de Boer, Henriëtte de Swart, Sabine Preuss, Tanja Schols, Marieke Schouwstra, and Willem Zuidema. Without financial support from the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics (OTS), the Municipality of Utrecht, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and John Benjamins Publishing Company, it would not have been possible to hold the conference. We do appreciate the generosity of these institutions. We are also indebted to John Davey, Karen Morgan, and their OUP colleagues for the support that we received in various stages of the editing of this volume. We also warmly thank Walter Winckler for many suggestions from which the readability of the Introduction has benefited greatly, as well as Connie Park for her outstanding work in compiling,

reformatting, and copy-editing the manuscripts. And we are most grateful to a large number of reviewers whose comments have contributed significantly to the quality of the volume.

Rudolf Botha, Stellenbosch
Martin Everaert, Utrecht

August 2012

List of abbreviations

ABSL	Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language
Adp	adposition
AFP	anterior forebrain pathway
ASL	American Sign Language for the Deaf
CMM	caudomedial mesopallium
CV	consonant-vowel
DVD	Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia
ERP	Event Related Potential
FLB	the language faculty broadly construed
FLN	the language faculty narrowly construed
fMRI	functional magnetic resonance imaging
hIPS	horizontal segment of the intraparietal sulcus
HRAF	Human Relations Area Files
HVC	cortical/pallial song control region
IPS	intraparietal sulcus
ITL	Iambic-Trochaic Law
Ka/kya	thousand years ago
Ma/mya	million years ago
MRI	magnetic resonance imaging
mRNA	messenger ribonucleic acid
N	Noun
NCM	caudomedial nidopallium
NP	Noun Phrase
NSL	Nicaraguan Sign Language
PFC	prefrontal cortex
Poss	possessive
PossP	Possessive Phrase
PP	Prepositional Phrase
S	Sentence
SD	standard deviation
SE	standard error

SMP	song motor pathway
SNPs	single nucleotide polymorphisms
SRN	simple recruitment network
UG	Universal Grammar
VC	Vapnik-Chervonenkis dimension
VP	Verb Phrase

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