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Sommario/riassunto

The ten volumes of Handbook of Pragmatics Highlights focus on the most salient topics in the field of pragmatics, thus dividing its wide interdisciplinary spectrum in a transparent and manageable way. While other volumes select philosophical, grammatical, social, variational, interactional, or discursive angles, this third volume focuses on the interface between language and cognition. Language use is impossible without the mobilization of a large variety of cognitive processes, each serving a different purpose. During the last half century cognitive approaches to language have been particularly successful, and the broad spectrum of contributions to this volume testify to this success. As cognitive approaches to language are by definition a subset of the larger enterprise of cognitive science, a contribution on this general topic sets the stage. This is joined by a chapter on cognitive grammar, a theoretical study of the architecture of human language that is deeply inspired by general cognitive principles. A chapter on experimentation offers a crash-course on basic issues of experimental design and on the rationale behind statistical testing in general and the most important statistical tests in particular, offering a methodological toolkit for understanding many of the other contributions. Different chapters cover a broad range of topics: language acquisition, psycholinguistics, specialized topics within the latter field (e.g. the bilingual mental lexicon, categorization), and aspects of language awareness. Some chapters home in on what have become indispensible perspectives on the cognitive underpinnings of language: the way language is represented and processed in the human brain and simulation studies. The ever-growing success of the latter type of studies is exemplified, for instance, by the highly flourishing connectionist tradition and
the more general paradigm of artificial intelligence, each of which is dealt with in a separate contribution.