Preface

Interdisciplinary Linguistic and Psychiatric Research on Language Disorders is a special issue containing studies and discussions presented at the International Scientific Workshop on Clinical Linguistics. The workshop was organized as a part of a project entitled *Clinical linguistics: Psycholinguistic parameters in lexical-semantic processing in patients with schizophrenia*, funded by the University of Zagreb, under the guidance of Professor Vlasta Erdeljac, PhD, Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. The Workshop was held at the Education Centre of the University Psychiatric Hospital Vrapče on 20 November 2018.

The book consists of eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides insight into the theoretical background of psycholinguistic studies in schizophrenia with an emphasis on first-episode and early-course psychosis in schizophrenia-spectrum disorders. It also gives an overview of the psycholinguistic parameters used in the experimental studies in schizophrenia mentioned in the following chapters. The next two chapters provide empirical evidence of language disorders with a focus on the correlation between neuropsychological domains and language dysfunctions. Chapter 2 deals with limitations in language functioning (the comprehension of passives) in individuals with intellectual disabilities (adults with Down syndrome and Williams syndrome). In order to identify neuropsychological correlates underlying verbal fluency deficits in schizophrenia, chapter 3 explains how executive dysfunctions are associated with verbal fluency performance. The following chapters outline studies on lexical-semantic processing in schizophrenia. Chapter 4 gives an overview of a study which examines the language processing of lexical-semantic category boundaries in first-episode psychosis. Chapter 5 presents a study of the lexical-semantic animacy feature and taxonomy relations (hyponym–hypernym relations) in first-episode and early-course psychosis. Chapter 6 examines the effect of lexical semantic features of imageability and frequency on language association and production in subjects with first-episode and early-course schizophrenia-spectrum psychosis. The last

chapter on lexical-semantic processing in psychosis and schizophrenia, chapter 7, presents a study on the processing of the lexical-semantic typicality feature based on verbal category fluency in schizophrenia subjects. Chapter 8 reviews the main approaches to the understanding of semantic knowledge with special emphasis on a recently developed approach to operationalizing conceptual representations that relies on the relevance of perceptual information. It presents the novel approach of describing word meaning in schizophrenia in the form of profiles of sensory experience across different sensory modalities.

The aim of this book was to offer some possible language elements as indicators which could improve the diagnostic value of tests for the early detection and follow-up of illness in subjects with high risk for psychosis, first-episode psychosis, and schizophrenia. There is a need for precise measurement instruments which could enable the identification of persons with a greater risk for psychosis, as some cognitive deficits in schizophrenia can be revealed before the onset of the illness. Experts in the field have invested great effort into designing fine-grained scoring procedures for assessing the measurement of the multiple cognitive processes underlying fluency performance on which the language processing of different types of deficits is based. Still, it is unclear which independent components are necessary to describe language processing in psychiatric cases in different tasks of language. This book is a pioneering work, especially when one considers its various linguistic-psychiatric interdisciplinary studies on the Croatian language, as well as its studies conducted by our colleagues abroad who are experts in the same field of research. Our goal was to present the results of current studies and to elucidate the path that future systematic studies in related topics should take.

The Editors