Signaling under uncertainty
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In his *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins* Jorge Luis Borges criticizes attempts to make universal classifications. He exemplifies the arbitrariness and conjectural nature of such classifications by conjuration of a Chinese encyclopedia that purports to give a universal animal taxonomy. In it, animals are divided into categories such as belonging to the Emperor, fabulous, stray dogs, included in this categorization, et cetera, or those that look like flies when seen from afar. Acknowledging, with the right words and in the right place, all those that have contributed, directly or otherwise, to shaping the content of this investigation, and me along the way, feels a little like writing entries in Borges’ fictional encyclopedia myself. The good news is that I’m not, as Wilkins and others, trying to come up with a universal scheme. I will therefore take the liberty to let my subjective views seep through these initial pages, while accepting that a couple of paragraphs will not be able to capture all I would want to convey on these matters. I hope the reader will indulge me; it’s not often that I write a book.

First, I wish to thank my supervisor Robert van Rooij. Throughout these years, Robert has given me the opportunity to prod and poke in many directions. Some of these efforts led to the material found in this thesis. As may be expected, others turned out to be less fruitful, or their outcomes were too remote to be included here. Irrespective of the result, I wish to thank Robert for the trust placed in me throughout this journey, as well as for guidance along it. Thanks for giving me time to explore and err, but also for (much needed) pragmatism when it came down to finishing projects.

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T.S. Brochhagen

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