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Motives for Language Change

This specially commissioned volume considers the processes involved in language change and the issues of how they can be modelled and studied. The way languages change offers an insight into the nature of language itself, its internal organisation, and how it is acquired and used. Accordingly, the phenomenon of language change has been approached from a variety of perspectives by linguists of many different orientations. This book brings together an international team of leading figures from different areas of linguistics to re-examine some of the central issues in this field and also to discuss new proposals. The volume is arranged in six parts, focusing on the phenomenon of language change, linguistic models, grammaticalisation, the social context, contact-based explanations and the typological perspective. It seeks to cover the subject as a whole, bearing in mind its relevance for the general analysis of language, and will appeal to a broad international readership.

RAYMOND HICKEY is Professor of Linguistics at the Department of English, Essen University, Germany. His main research interests are computer corpus processing, extraterritorial varieties of English (especially Irish English) and general questions of language change. In the first area he has published extensively and in the latter his most recent publications are *A source book for Irish English* (2002), and *Collecting views on language change* (special issue of *Language Sciences*, 2002).

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Acknowledgements

This book began as a volume intended to celebrate the scholar Roger Lass on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday in 2002. The response to an initial invitation to contribute was considerable and it soon became apparent that not all the projected papers could be accommodated within a single book. For this reason the editor, in consultation with Cambridge University Press, decided that the best way forward was to divide the group of contributions into a more general and a more specific set. Those contributions of a more general nature, which treated the theme of language change from a broader perspective, have been collected in the present volume. The other contributions, which touch on many issues of concern to Roger Lass in the course of his long and productive career, have appeared as a dedicated volume of the journal *Language Sciences*, entitled *Collecting views on language change* (2002, ed. Raymond Hickey). Readers interested in the questions presented in the present volume may consider consulting the special issue of the journal for other studies in a similar vein, dealing in particular, but by no means exclusively, with the history of English.

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RAYMOND HICKEY
September 2002

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