It is generally agreed that about 7,000 languages are spoken across the world today and at least half may no longer be spoken by the end of this century. This state-of-the-art Handbook examines the reasons behind this dramatic loss of linguistic diversity, why it matters, and what can be done to document and support endangered languages.

The volume is relevant not only to researchers in language endangerment, language shift and language death, but to anyone interested in the languages and cultures of the world. It is accessible to both specialists and non-specialists: researchers will find cutting-edge contributions from acknowledged experts in their fields, while students, activists and other interested readers will find a wealth of readable, yet thorough and up-to-date, information.

The Handbook covers the essentials of language documentation and archiving, and also includes hands-on chapters on advocacy and support for endangered languages, development of writing systems for previously unwritten languages, education, training the next generation of researchers and activists, dictionary making, the ecology of languages, language and culture, language and society, language policy, and harnessing technology and new media in support of endangered languages.

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Genuinely broad in scope, each handbook in this series provides a complete state-of-the-field overview of a major sub-discipline within language study and research. Grouped into broad thematic areas, the chapters in each volume encompass the most important issues and topics within each subject, offering a coherent picture of the latest theories and findings. Together, the volumes will build into an integrated overview of the discipline in its entirety.

Published titles

The Cambridge Handbook of Phonology, edited by Paul de Lacy
The Cambridge Handbook of Child Language, edited by Edith L. Bavin
The Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages, edited by Peter K. Austin and Julia Sallabank

Further titles planned for the series

The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics, edited by Rajend Mesthrie
The Cambridge Handbook of Pragmatics, edited by Keith Allan and Kasia M. Jaszczolt
The Cambridge Handbook of Language Policy, edited by Bernard Spolsky
The Cambridge Handbook of Biolinguistics, edited by Cedric Boeckx and Kleanthes K. Grohmann
The Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages

Edited by

Peter K. Austin
and
Julia Sallabank
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The idea for a *Handbook of Endangered Languages* was first proposed to Peter Austin by Andrew Winnard of Cambridge University Press back in 2006. Peter prepared a book outline, contacted potential authors, and submitted a detailed proposal describing the overall conception of the book and the scope of the individual chapters to CUP, which was duly refereed and accepted with some minor changes. The project stumbled along for a year and a half until Julia Sallabank joined SOAS in 2008 and agreed to co-edit the *Handbook*, bringing with her seventeen years of editorial experience at Oxford University Press, and a different and complementary perspective on language endangerment (as well as a different network of colleagues). The individual authors were then contracted to write their chapters, and the serious business of reading, editing and correcting drafts, cajoling and encouraging authors, and knocking the book into shape began in earnest.

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