

## The Cambridge Handbook of Language Contact

### VOLUME 1

Language contact – the linguistic outcomes of populations speaking different languages coming into contact with each other – has been pervasive in human history. However, where histories of language contact are comparable, experiences of migrant populations have been only similar, not identical. Given this, how does language contact work? With contributions from an international team of scholars, this Handbook – the first in a two-volume set – delves into this question from multiple perspectives and provides state-of-the-art research on population movement and language contact and change. It begins with an overview of how language contact as a research area has evolved since the late nineteenth century. The chapters then cover various processes and theoretical issues associated with population movement and language contact worldwide. It is essential reading for anybody interested in the dynamics of social interactions in diverse contact settings and how the changing ecologies influence the linguistic outcomes.

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# The Cambridge Handbook of Language Contact

Population Movement and Language Change

Volume 1

Edited by

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# Preface

When we accepted the invitation to edit *The Cambridge handbook of language contact*, we did not realize what a big challenge the project would be. To begin with, we underestimated how difficult it would be to avoid producing a book that would simply replicate the contents of counterparts published earlier on the subject matter of language contact except in organizing the table of contents differently and having the chapters written by different experts. This would otherwise impart more or less the same information, though perhaps from some other perspectives and with other takes on certain topics and issues. We wanted to produce a book that would complement its predecessors in some ways without omitting subjects considered central to the research area that preceding handbooks include.

However, being a later addition to this line of publications, we were also determined to produce a state-of-the-art work that is as representative as possible of the various research topics that scholars claiming to do contact linguistics investigate nowadays. We wanted to show how the various subgroups of scholars associated with these research subareas have contributed to our understanding of language behavior “under contact conditions.” On the other hand, part of our discussion in Chapter 1 of this first volume also claims that nothing happens to any language, including the emergence of norms in a monolingual community, that has nothing to do with contact. The basic level of language contact is inter-idiolectal, although, to be sure, contact itself takes place in the minds of speakers or signers.

We also decided early on, consistent with our own research interests and with the very beginnings of the scholarship on language contact in the nineteenth century (see section 2 of Chapter 1, this volume), to give the project more of a diachronic than synchronic bias. So, many of the chapters are on language contacts as outcomes of population movements and changes in population structures. These can be considered as actuators of language change and of speciation, as well as of language spread and of the

emergence of language diasporas and language/linguistic areas. They are likewise associated with the emergence of lingua francas and language endangerment and loss where particular languages prevail as dominant vernaculars at the expense of the competition (see Volume 2). A particular category of language spread includes the dispersal of Western European languages, especially how they have evolved in various colonies. However, this volume includes other cases, which actually do shed light on the emergence of the European language diasporas, especially in the ways they highlight the actuating role of emergent population structures – among other ecological factors – in the formation of diasporic language varieties. (A subset of these are discussed in Volume 2, where the chapters have been allocated owing to other considerations that prevailed in our organization of the Handbook.) These chapters are all positioned in their own separate groups, in order to enable the reader to make comparisons more easily – across languages and across geographical regions – if they are so inclined.

However, there are many more topics that are dealt with in contact linguistics; and our original project grew in size to the point where one Handbook could not include them all. So, we had to split the book into two volumes and allocate the following other topics to Volume 2, on *Multilingualism in population structure*, a complement to this one on *Population movements and language change*. It includes several chapters on multilingualism and other developments from language coexistence in the individual and in society in our times, such as urban youth languages, super-diversity, the emergence of lingua francas, codeswitching and/or translanguaging, language endangerment, and borrowings. Most of the discussions are adequately embedded in the relevant population structures. In part of one chapter (Volume 2), one of the authors even presents longitudinal biographies of some individuals to highlight in part the role of personal motivation and of one's socioeconomic position in society, aside from other factors, in (dis)favoring the speaker's ability to sustain competence in one of the languages. There are also chapters on how Norman and English influence each other on the Channel Islands and about structural outcomes of language contact. These include the emergence of creoles, pidgins, and other mixed languages.

Together the two volumes are generally comprehensive, although we realized too late, while writing Chapter 1 of the present volume, that we could have invited contributions in the traditions of some forerunners of the present scholarship, such as on language shift and on diglossia, as well as on some important topics such as speech continua, which need not be associated only with creoles coexisting with the acrolectal varieties of their lexifiers nor with change.

Nonetheless, as the reader will undoubtedly also realize from Chapter 1 – a great deal of which is devoted to a historical survey of the scholarship of language contact (Section 2) – this research area is extensive and diverse. It has evolved and expanded significantly since its late-nineteenth-century

origins in Indo-European genetic linguistics. Then, as Western Europeans were engaging in the last phase of their colonization of the world and considered colonized subjects as inferior to them, most forerunners of linguistics as a profession disavowed as “bastard tongues” creoles and pidgins that had evolved from the contact of European languages with non-European ones. Colonialism entailed population movements and new population structures with unequal race-based distributions of economic and political power, compounded with negative social attitudes toward the dominated and minoritized people.

All these factors and others bear on the unfolding of language contact as a vast research area, advocating for the ecological approach initiated already explicitly or implicitly by a handful of dissenting forerunners in the late nineteenth century, an approach that today’s scholars can now augment with a dose of interdisciplinarity even in bridging language contact with other subfields of linguistics. Consequently, the authors could not write their chapters in ways that make them fit only in one of the categories adopted for the convenience of organizing the two volumes. We have allocated some of the chapters to groups that highlight aspects of the discussions that, we feared, might otherwise be overlooked by some readers. Thus, in Chapter 1 of this volume, we also discuss particular (but not all the) contributions of the chapters in an order that is not always consistent with the table of contents. We thought that doing so will help the reader navigate easily through the volumes to identify related chapters that are not grouped together, although they could have been. The subject and language indexes will also be very helpful. The parts of the two volumes, as we have conceived them, are intended to help the reader realize the ways in which the chapters grouped together complement each other, though they have affinities with chapters in other parts of the Handbook, as made evident by cross-references in our presentation.

As imperfect as we find the end result (in trying to show order out of apparent chaos), we are happy to share with the reader this compendium of scholarship on language contact and change. We apologize to the contributors for delays that the project has suffered since they responded to the first round of editing. But we also believe in the saying that “things of quality have no fear of time.” To the authors, many hearty thanks for your patience and diligence; and to the reader, we appreciate your interest. We are grateful to Helen Barton for trusting us, also patiently, with this monumental project, which we have found intellectually quite rewarding. We are also grateful to Cambridge University Press’s Syndicate for allowing us to produce two volumes with the full contents of the accepted chapters rather than asking us to curtail the Handbook down to one volume with shorter chapters or even without some of the chapters. The reader will appreciate the wealth of useful information they provide.