Heritage languages are minority languages learned in a bilingual environment. These include immigrant languages, aboriginal or indigenous languages, and historical minority languages. In the last two decades, heritage languages have become central to many areas of linguistic research, from bilingual language acquisition, education, and language policies to theoretical linguistics. Bringing together contributions from a team of internationally renowned experts, this handbook provides a state-of-the-art overview of this emerging area of study from a number of different perspectives, ranging from theoretical linguistics to language education and pedagogy. Presenting comprehensive data on heritage languages from around the world, it covers issues ranging from individual aspects of heritage language knowledge to broader societal, educational, and policy concerns in local, global, and international contexts. Surveying the most current issues and trends in this exciting field, it is essential reading for graduate students and researchers, as well as language practitioners and other language professionals.

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In memory of Olga Kagan and Janne Bondi Johannessen: Outstanding scholars and tireless advocates for heritage languages, linguistics, and education whose work will continue to inspire so many.
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The spirit of this volume, and our vision of it, grew from the annual Heritage Language Institutes at the National Heritage Language Resource Center at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), which started in 2007 and whose main goal has been to bring together scholars from diverse disciplines to discuss the state of heritage languages, heritage language linguistics, and heritage language education from a global perspective. While different communities of heritage languages and heritage language groups present their own unique characteristics, at the heart of the annual institutes has been the purpose of studying heritage languages on a global scale and focusing on commonalities among heritage languages and cultures.

We dedicate this handbook to the memory of two colleagues who have been at the forefront of this effort and whose vision is represented here: Olga Kagan and Janne Bondi Johannessen.