

Preface

The volumes of this Handbook offer a comprehensive panorama of the languages of Amazonia, one of the most linguistically diverse regions on earth. The chapters presented here aim to provide systematic overviews of virtually every attested language family and language isolate in the region, some of which have remained effectively undescribed until now. Volumes 1 and 2 focus on language isolates, while the subsequent volumes address small and larger language families. While linguists represent a primary audience for this Handbook, the work is also intended to be accessible and useful to scholars and other interested readers from a range of disciplines and backgrounds.

The chapters within these volumes bring together the accumulated knowledge, experience, and contributions of a great many people. First and foremost, we recognize the speakers of the languages represented here, especially in light of the immeasurable challenges that many of them have faced in speaking, maintaining, passing on, or remembering their languages. We wish to express our profound debt to them: without their generosity in sharing their languages, and their commitment to teaching others about them, these volumes would not be possible.

We are also very grateful to the authors of the chapters presented in these volumes. Many of these authors have dedicated much of their lives to documenting and studying the languages they describe here. Some came on board at later stages of the project, in some cases at quite short notice, to help bring the work to fruition.

Many scholars also contributed to these chapters through the peer review process. For Volumes 1 and 2, we thank the following reviewers for their many helpful comments: Bernat Bardagil, Christine Beier, Martine Bruil, Luca Ciucci, Ángel Corbera Mori, Mily Crevels, Swintha Danielsen, Sebastian Drude, Stephanie Farmer, Simeon Floyd, Gale Goodwin Gómez, Katharina Haude, Elena Mihas, Andrew Nevins, Andrey Nikulin, Knut Olawsky, Mathias Pache, Doris Payne, Christopher Rogers, Jorge Emilio Rosés Labrada, Andrés Salanova, Racquel-María Sapién, Frank Seifart, Adam Singerman, Rik van Gijn, Marine Vuillermet, and Raoul Zamponi.

Our particularly heartfelt thanks go to Paige Erin Wheeler for her superb editing assistance. Paige Erin has worked through each chapter in this volume multiple times with extraordinary care and thoroughness. We have greatly valued her expertise as a linguist and her thoughtful contributions to fine-tuning the chapters on many different levels. We also are very grateful to Zachary O'Hagan for his excellent editing work in the earlier stages of the project.

This Handbook would perhaps never have come to fruition without the enormous support and endless patience of the team at de Gruyter Mouton. Barbara Karlson and Birgit Sievert have worked tirelessly to shepherd this project through its long trajectory and have offered their help and encouragement at every turn. We also thank Uri Tadmor for the original invitation that got this project underway.

Finally, we thank our departments and colleagues at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of California, Berkeley for providing us with such supportive and intellectually rich environments in which to carry out this work.

