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By Bernard Comrie, Stephen Matthews, Maria Polinsky

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The origins of language have long been the subject of myth and conjecture. Today, scientists and scholars are rendering these origins less obscure with clues from linguistic and archaeological evidence. Written by a panel of eminent linguists, this book guides the general reader through the mysterious and exciting world of languages and linguistics. In a detailed account of the language families of each region of the world, this comprehensive work identifies and explains interesting and sometimes unique features of vocabulary and grammar. The evolution of more than 200 languages and their deep-seated similarities as well as surprising differences are revealed in clear, precise language. The writing systems of the world are also examined in some detail and the issue of disappearing languages is addressed.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Bernard Comrie has a Ph.D. in linguistics from Cambridge University in England. He is currently professor of linguistics at the University of Southern California. Among his many publications are Language Universals and Linguistic Typology: Syntax and Morphology and The Russian Language in the Twentieth Century. Stephen Matthews earned his Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Southern California. Since 1990 he has lectured in linguistics at the University of Hong Kong. Maria Polinsky earned a Ph.D. at the Institute for Linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences. She is a professor of linguistics at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

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