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Book Review / Рецензия

**Review of Eda Derhemi and Christopher Moseley (eds.). 2023.
Endangered Languages in the 21st Century.
London: Routledge**

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The book “Endangered Languages in the 21st Century” offers research on endangered languages in the contemporary world, the challenges that still need to be addressed, the work that remains to be done, and the methods and practices that have come to characterize efforts to revive and maintain disadvantaged indigenous languages around the world. With contributions from scholars across the field, the book provides fresh data and insights into this crucial, yet relatively young, field of linguistics. While recognizing the unprecedented threat of language loss, the studies primarily focus on cases that exhibit resilience and explore pathways towards

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sustainable progress. The articles also serve as a tribute to the 25 years of work by the Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL) and as a farewell gift to FEL's founder and quarter-century chair, Nick Ostler.

Scholars delve into endangered languages globally, examining factors contributing to their endangerment and efforts to preserve them. Nettle and Romaine (2000) depict their disappearance from the world, while Tsunoda (2004) provides a comprehensive overview of endangerment, covering degrees, definitions, causes, speakers, and documentation methods. Harrison (2008) focuses on the profound question of what is lost when a language dies, emphasizing the invaluable knowledge embedded within their structures and vocabularies. He showcases the dwindling number of speakers and the irreversible loss of cultural heritage, practical knowledge of nature, and insights into the human mind. This work appeals to linguists, anthropologists, and general readers, highlighting the pressing issue of language death and humanity's vast knowledge.

The authors in this book bring forth new data and cutting-edge research on endangered languages, allowing readers to develop a comprehensive understanding of the state of these languages. They explore effective methods and practices for revitalizing and preserving marginalized languages, including strategies for revitalization, language education, documentation, and collaboration with indigenous language communities. Moreover, the book also serves as a celebration and acknowledgement of the role played by FEL and its founder, Nick Ostler. The authors recognize the importance of this foundation in raising awareness and taking action to protect and promote endangered languages.

The book "Endangered Languages in the 21st Century" is a comprehensive collection of chapters that celebrates the resilience and progress of endangered languages in the contemporary world. Motivated by the departure of Nicholas Ostler, the founder of the organization dedicated to language preservation, and the 25th anniversary of the organization's work, this book offers a wide-ranging snapshot of the state of endangered languages, historical background, revival efforts, and the challenges that lie ahead. It also investigates unexplored geographical areas and presents comparative narratives. With an optimistic and realistic approach, the book aims to provide hope and inspiration for the sustainable progress of endangered languages.

Chapter 1 of the book, sets the tone for the entire volume by highlighting the surprising resilience of endangered Australian languages. The author, Michael Walsh, challenges the notion of their inevitable demise by showcasing creative ventures and the availability of post-secondary education in these languages. Through case studies, Walsh demonstrates the dissonance between predictions of language loss and the reality on the ground, offering hope for the future of Australian languages.

Chapter 2, discusses the establishment of an organization dedicated to language preservation. The chapter focuses on Nicholas Ostler's vision and perseverance, which led to the formation of this organization. It highlights the enthusiastic

response to Ostler's proposal and the subsequent establishment of the organization, emphasizing the need for such initiatives to counter the neglect of endangered languages.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the current state of endangered languages in various regions of the world. It acknowledges the unprecedented threat of language loss but focuses on the efforts being made to revive and maintain disadvantaged indigenous languages. The chapter explores the methods and practices that have emerged in these revitalization efforts, shedding light on the challenges faced by language preservation initiatives.

Chapter 4 delves into unexplored geographical areas where linguistic endangerment has rarely been comprehensively studied. It presents new comparative narratives that shed light on the endangered languages in these regions. By examining the historical background and current status of these languages, the chapter contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities for language resilience in these areas.

Chapter 5 emphasizes the significance of language preservation efforts in the face of the unprecedented threat of language loss. It highlights the importance of language diversity and its role in shaping cultural identity. The chapter also discusses the challenges faced by language preservation initiatives, including the lack of resources, the need for community involvement, and the importance of political will.

Chapter 6 focuses on empirical studies of sustainable language maintenance and use. It highlights the advances made in overcoming challenges and the best practices that have emerged. The chapter presents case studies that illustrate the success of language revival programs, the challenges of maintaining momentum, and the need for leadership and codification.

Chapter 7 pays tribute to Nicholas Ostler's contributions to the field of language preservation. It highlights his vision, perseverance, and dedication to the cause of language diversity and also explores Ostler's linguistic interests and his role in the development of corpus linguistics. It emphasizes the importance of Ostler's legacy and the need to continue his work.

The book concludes with Chapter 8, summarizing the key themes and contributions of the chapters. It emphasizes the importance of language diversity and the need for sustained efforts to preserve endangered languages. The conclusion also highlights the progress that has been made in language revitalization efforts and the challenges that lie ahead. The chapter offers hope and inspiration for the sustainable progress of endangered languages.

This book offers a comprehensive coverage of the current state of endangered languages, providing readers with a deep understanding of the historical background, revival efforts, and the challenges that lie ahead. The book goes beyond the well-explored regions and delves into unexplored geographical areas, presenting comparative narratives that offer a wide-ranging snapshot of the state of endangered languages in the contemporary world.

One of the strengths of the book is its optimistic and realistic approach to the

issue of language endangerment. While acknowledging the unprecedented threat of language loss, the book primarily focuses on the efforts being made to revive and maintain disadvantaged indigenous languages. It highlights the resilience of communities and their determination to preserve their linguistic heritage. By emphasizing these positive aspects, the book offers hope and inspiration for the sustainable progress of endangered languages.

The contributions in the book come from experts in the field of language preservation, including linguists, anthropologists, and educators. They provide well-researched and valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for language resilience. Their diverse perspectives enrich the book and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of language preservation.

Furthermore, this book emphasizes the importance of community involvement in language preservation efforts. It recognizes that language revitalization is most effective when it is driven by the community itself. The book highlights the need for sustained efforts and the crucial role of political will in supporting language preservation initiatives. It underscores the significance of empowering local communities to take ownership of their languages and cultures.

However, one limitation of the book is its limited geographical coverage. While it provides a comprehensive analysis of the state of endangered languages in regions such as Australia, Central Asia, Northern Africa, and Brazil, it neglects other regions of the world where language endangerment is a significant issue. A broader geographic scope would have made the book more inclusive and representative of the global challenges faced by endangered languages. Another aspect that could be taken into consideration refers to the diversity of perspectives presented in the book. While the contributions come from experts in the field, it would have been beneficial to include perspectives from speakers of endangered languages and community leaders actively involved in language preservation efforts. Their insights would have added a firsthand and culturally nuanced dimension to the book's discourse. Additionally, the book lacks a comprehensive discussion on funding for language preservation efforts. While it acknowledges the need for sustained efforts, it does not delve into the financial resources required to support these initiatives. A more thorough exploration of funding mechanisms and strategies could have provided practical guidance for those involved in language revitalization projects. Lastly, the book could have further explored the role of technology in language preservation efforts. While it recognizes the importance of media and communications networks in enabling communication in the mother tongue, it does not extensively discuss the use of technology, such as digital platforms and language-learning applications, in supporting language revitalization. This aspect could have been expanded upon to showcase innovative approaches in the field.

In conclusion, the book offers a comprehensive overview of the state of endangered languages, shedding light on their challenges and revival efforts. It takes an optimistic and realistic approach, providing valuable insights from experts in the field. It gives an informative and thought-provoking resource for researchers,

activists, and individuals interested in the preservation of endangered languages. This book will be informative for researchers, instructors, and specialists in the field of endangered languages. It can also be useful for university students at the graduate or undergraduate level, as well as language activists. Through its pages, readers can gain an elaborative understanding of the challenges faced by endangered languages in the modern era and the efforts being made to preserve and revitalize them.

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