knowledge (see §16.4 of Turk et al. in Chapter 16 of this volume) I should make clear that a major motivation for the methods promoted in this handbook is to create accessible records of a language which are typically the ones sought by speakers (and their descendants) when they become aware of the changes occurring in their language.

p. 3 Documentation is most urgent where the language may cease being spoken, but even in a large population of speakers a decline in the variety of speech genres or registers is a motivation for recording as broad a range of language performance as possible. We therefore need to record as diverse a range of people and as diverse a range of topics as we can. If we take the broader project of linguistic fieldwork to be a deeper understanding of human knowledge systems and societies, then it makes sense that we create material from our own research in forms that colleagues from other disciplines can use. As Evans (Chapter 8 below) puts it, 'undocumented languages contain too much information to be wasted on linguists alone'. This suggests that we need assistance with interdisciplinary topics not normally covered in linguistic field guides as they have been constructed up to now. A number of books provide advice on the kind of linguistic structures that can be expected based on typological surveys (e.g. Comrie and Smith 1977; Payne 1997; Shopen 2007). Most such guides offer sample wordlists and sentences for elicitation (e.g. Bouquiaux and Thomas 1976; 1992; Samarin 1967). Some go further and briefly discuss issues around preparation for fieldwork (e.g. Abbi 2001; Bowern 2008; Chelliah and de Reuse 2010; Crowley 2007; Vaux and Cooper 1999). Some are quite brief (e.g. Bartis 2002), some bound in a theory that makes them unusable (e.g. the tagmemics of Longacre 1964), and some are so detailed that it is difficult to find relevant information (e.g. Bouquiaux and Thomas 1976; 1992). Rather than producing yet another guide in the same tradition as those listed here, this handbook takes a different approach.

Linguistic fieldwork can result in more than just a description of the grammar of a language, it can also record cultural information that provides new insights into local knowledge systems. The problem for a linguist is that they cannot possibly be prepared for every topic that could arise in the course of fieldwork. As a result, either opportunities to explore such topics may be lost or the records produced may not be as useful to others as they could be. What would a musicologist like to see included in the recording of a performance? What would a botanist like to know about a plant's use and how it has been identified? Which constellation of stars is it that features in a particular traditional story? Of course, once we start down the road of trying to explain the world we could go in many directions. An early example (but by no means the earliest: see Urry 1972 for a summary of the literature) of just such a guide to anthropological issues—*Notes and Queries* (Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 1951) (produced in six editions between 1839 and 1951)—ran through a vast list of topics under four broad headings (Physical Anthropology; Social Anthropology; Material Culture; Field Antiquities) that could be used by colonial officials to collect primary records. These prompts provided the basis for many of the records produced by early observers, most of whom who were untrained in ethnographic methods.

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1.2 The chapters in this handbook

The twenty chapters in this volume aim to support the creation of better records from fieldwork, both for linguistic research and for other purposes—especially for the use of speakers of the language being studied or their descendants with an interest in the range of topics described here, and for specialists in these areas. In general, chapters in this volume should be seen as a point of entry to the topic under discussion. Authors have often provided a guide to further reading that covers key relevant literature.

While collaborative fieldwork is desirable and productive (see Yamada 2007 and Evans, Chapter 8 below), it can also be logistically tricky to organize. In the absence of specialists, what can a lone researcher do when topics go beyond their expertise? It is clearly impossible in one book to cover all the information that a