

Contents

Preface *page ix*

Part 1 Preliminaries

- | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | The ever-whirling wheel | 3 |
| | The inevitability of change | |
| 2 | Collecting up clues | 18 |
| | How linguists piece together the evidence | |
| 3 | Charting the changes | 32 |
| | How linguists study changes in progress | |

Part 2 Transition

- | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 4 | Spreading the word | 49 |
| | How changes spread from person to person | |
| 5 | Conflicting loyalties | 62 |
| | Opposing social pressures within a change | |
| 6 | Catching on and taking off | 76 |
| | How sound changes spread through a language | |
| 7 | Caught in the web | 89 |
| | How syntactic changes work through a language | |

Part 3 Causation

- | | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 8 | The reason why
Sociolinguistic causes of change | 105 |
| 9 | Doing what comes naturally
Inherent causes of language change | 124 |
| 10 | Repairing the patterns
Therapeutic changes | 138 |
| 11 | The Mad Hatter's tea-party
Chain reaction changes | 151 |

Part 4 Beginnings and endings

- | | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 12 | Development and breakdown
Child language and language disorders | 165 |
| 13 | Language birth
✂ How languages begin | 180 |
| 14 | Language death
How languages end | 197 |
| 15 | Progress or decay?
Assessing the situation | 210 |
| | <i>Symbols and technical terms</i> | 222 |
| | Notes and suggestions for further reading | 224 |
| | References | 237 |
| | Acknowledgements | 252 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 253 |