

Teaching Oregon Native Languages

EDITED BY JOAN GROSS

In a world where over half of the remaining six thousand languages will most likely disappear by the end of the century, attention has finally begun to focus on the struggles of indigenous people to save their languages.


Lack of knowledge concerning the vast linguistic diversity of Oregon's languages has been a major obstacle to language revitalization in this state. Native peoples were subjected to disease, displacement, and forced linguistic assimilation, leaving many languages with only a few speakers. Some languages died out, but others prevailed in the privacy of homes and longhouses.

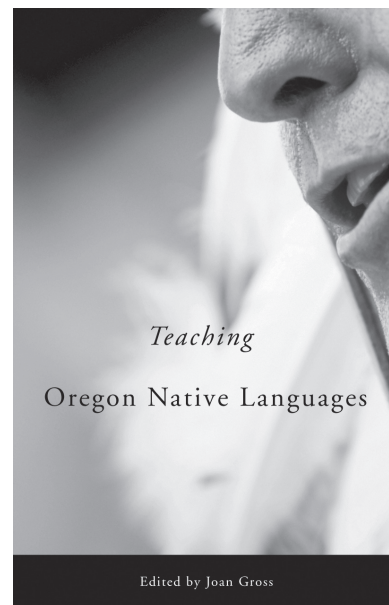
This book tells the story of perseverance and survival against unbelievable odds, using the words of today's speakers and learners of Oregon's languages. Interviews with fifty-two native speakers provide valuable insights into how languages are lost and how a linguistic heritage can be brought to life.

Teaching Oregon Native Languages discusses the role of state and federal language policies, explores how archival collections can be used in language revitalization, and describes strategies for creating a successful teaching environment. A timely and necessary resource, it will educate all readers about the important efforts underway to revitalize Oregon's first languages.

Contributors: Joan Gross, Erin Haynes, Deanna Kingston, David Lewis, and Juan Trujillo

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About the editor

Joan Gross is professor of anthropology at Oregon State University. A linguistic anthropologist, she has conducted research on minority languages and verbal art and taught classes on language and culture at OSU since 1989. She is the author of Speaking in Other Voices: An Ethnography of Walloon Puppet Theaters.

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