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Titolo	The doubter's dilemma : exploring student retention and attrition in language & culture programs // Mario Daniel Martin, Louise Jansen, Elizabeth A. Beckmann
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Nota di contenuto	1. Understanding the problem : student attrition and retention in university language & culture programs in Australia -- 2. Accounting for the missing students : calculating retention rates in language & culture programs -- 3. Splitting the masses : methodology and data analysis -- 4. Some detective work : comparing committed students, quitters and doubters -- 5. The road to language capital : interpreting the findings -- 6. Where to from here? conclusions and suggestions -- Appendix 1: Questionnaire 1. Language retention study : first year students 2009 -- Appendix 2: Questionnaire: continuing intermediate and advanced level students 2009 -- Appendix 3: Questionnaire: Discontinuing students 2009.
Sommario/riassunto	This book explores the extent and causes of attrition and retention in university Language & Culture (L&C) programs through a detailed analysis of an institutional case study at The Australian National University (ANU). Using extensive data collected through student surveys, coupled with data mining of university-wide enrollment data, the authors explore the enrollment and progress of students in all ANU L&C programs. Through their detailed statistical analysis of attrition

and retention outcomes, the authors reveal serious inadequacies in the traditional, and common, methodology for determining the extent of student attrition and retention in tertiary L&C programs. Readers are shown why a year-to-year comparison of students who continue or discontinue language studies using traditional statistical methodology cannot provide data that is sufficiently meaningful to allow for sound policy- and decision-making. The authors instead suggest a more valid, replicable methodology that provides a new approach potentially applicable to all disciplines and all student retention measures. The authors also demonstrate that the empirical data supports a new hypothesis for the reasons for attrition, based on students' relative belief or doubt in their capacity to complete their studies successfully. By highlighting the importance of language capital as a factor in students' concerns about their capacity for success, and hence in their decisions to stay in, or leave, a university language program, the authors show the importance of the 'doubters' dilemma'. By taking a rigorous approach to hypothesis building and testing around enrollment and attrition data, the authors provide valuable insights into attrition issues, and potential retention strategies, in L&C programs, which will be relevant to institutions, policy-makers and teaching academics.
