

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910780093103321
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Titolo	Variation and change in Spanish / / Ralph Penny
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2000
ISBN	1-107-12010-1 0-521-60450-8 0-511-32537-1 0-511-17567-1 0-511-05010-0 0-511-15617-0 1-280-42967-4 1-139-16456-2
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (x, 284 pages) : illustrations; digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	467/009
Soggetti	Spanish language - Variation Spanish language - History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [240]-259) and indexes.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction: language variation -- Dialect, language, variety: definitions and relationships -- Mechanisms of change -- Variation in Spain -- VAriation in Spanish America -- Variation in Judeo-Spanish -- Standardization.
Sommario/riassunto	This book applies recent theoretical insights to trace the development of Castilian and Latin American Spanish from the Middle Ages onwards, through processes of repeated dialect mixing both within the Iberian Peninsula and in the New World. The author contends that it was this frequent mixing which caused Castilian to evolve more rapidly than other varieties of Hispano-Romance, and which rendered Spanish particularly subject to levelling of its linguistic irregularities and to simplification of its structures. These two processes continued as the language extended into and across the Americas. These processes are viewed in the context of the Hispano-Romance dialect continuum, which includes Galician, Portuguese and Catalan, as well as New World

varieties. The book emphasises the subtlety and seamlessness of language variation, both geographical and social, and the impossibility of defining strict boundaries between varieties. Its conclusions will be relevant both to Hispanists and to historical sociolinguists more generally.
