

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910808561203321
Titolo	Multilingual practices in language history : English and beyond // edited by Paivi Pahta, Janne Skaffari, Laura Wright
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berlin, [Germany] ; ; Boston, [Massachusetts] : , : De Gruyter Mouton, , 2018 ©2018
ISBN	1-5015-0490-8
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (370 pages)
Collana	Language Contact and Bilingualism, , 2190-698X ; ; Volume 15
Classificazione	LAN009000
Disciplina	404.2
Soggetti	Code-switching - History Languages in contact - History Multilingualism - History Multilingualism and literature - History English language - History Historical linguistics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references at the end of each chapters and index.
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Sommario/riassunto

Texts of the past were often not monolingual but were produced by and for people with bi- or multilingual repertoires; the communicative practices witnessed in them therefore reflect ongoing and earlier language contact situations. However, textbooks and earlier research tend to display a monolingual bias. This collected volume on multilingual practices in historical materials, including code-switching, highlights the importance of a multilingual approach. The authors explore multilingualism in hitherto neglected genres, periods and areas, introduce new methods of locating and analysing multiple languages in various sources, and review terminology, theories and tools. The studies also revisit some of the issues already introduced in previous research, such as Latin interacting with European vernaculars and the complex relationship between code-switching and lexical borrowing. Collectively, the contributors show that multilingual practices share many of the same features regardless of time and place, and that one way or the other, all historical texts are multilingual. This book takes the next step in historical multilingualism studies by establishing the relevance of the multilingual approach to understanding language history.
