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| Titolo                  | Merchants of innovation : the languages of traders. // edited by Esther-Miriam Wagner, Bettina Beinhoff, Ben Outhwaite                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Soggetti                | Language and languages - Study and teaching<br>Multicultural education<br>Multilingualism - Social aspects                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Nota di contenuto       | Frontmatter -- Acknowledgements -- Contents -- 1. Merchants of Innovation: the languages of traders -- 2. Like the coins when currencies are combined: contextualizing the written language of fifteenth-century English merchants -- 3. Bridges of innovation and change: the English language around the networks of the Mercery of London -- 4. The socio-linguistics of Judaeo-Arabic mercantile writing -- 5. Business writing in early sixteenth-century Norway -- 6. Kiss Me Quick: on the naming of commodities in Britain, 1650 to the First World War -- 7. The early English East India Company as a community of practice: evidence of multilingualism -- 8. Language choice in forming an identity: linguistic innovations by German traders in Bergen -- 9. From the synagogue to the market square: cardinal numbers in Older Yiddish -- 10. Early Anglo-Italian contact: new loanword evidence from two mercantile sources, 1440–1451 -- 11. Multilingual merchants: the trade network of the 14th century Tuscan merchant Francesco di Marco Datini -- 12. On a famous lacuna: Lingua Franca the Mediterranean trade pidgin? -- Index |

Traders around the world use particular spoken argots, to guard commercial secrets or to cement their identity as members of a certain group. The written registers of traders, too, in correspondence and other commercial texts show significant differences from the language used in official, legal or private writing. This volume suggests a clear cross-linguistic tendency that mercantile writing displays a greater degree of language mixing, code-switching and linguistic innovations, and, by setting precedents, promote language change. This interdisciplinary volume aims to place the traders' languages within a wider sociolinguistic context. Questions addressed include: What differences can be observed between mercantile registers and those of court or legal scribes? Do the traders' texts show the early emergence of features that take longer to permeate into the 'higher' varieties of the same language? Do they anticipate language change in the standard register or influence it by setting linguistic precedents? What sets traders' letters apart from private correspondence and other 'low' registers? The book will also examine bilingualism, semi-bilingualism, reasons for code-switching and the choice of particular languages over others in commercial correspondence.

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