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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Introduction to Variation and Gradience in Phonetics and Phonology -- Accepting unlawful variation and unnatural classes -- Phonetic variation and gestural specification: Production of Russian consonants -- Variation in the perception of an L2 contrast: A combined phonetic and phonological account -- Prosodic conditioning, vowel dynamics and sound change -- Variable quality of the Czech lateral liquid: A perception experiment with young Czech listeners -- Patterns of lenition in Brazilian Portuguese -- Silent onsets? An optimality-theoretic approach to French h aspiré words -- Gradient dorsal nasal in Northern German -- Lexical exceptionality in Florentine Italian troncamento -- On the distribution of dorsals in complex and simple onsets in child German, Dutch and English -- Phonological knowledge in compensation for native and non-native assimilation -- The erosion of a variable process. The case of n-deletion in Ripuarian and Limburg dialects of Dutch -- Minimal morpheme expression in Dutch dialectology -- Regional variation in intonation: Conversational

instances of the "hat pattern" in Cologne German -- A model for the quantification of pitch accent realisation -- Backmatter

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Sommario/riassunto

This book provides an overview of current issues in variation and gradience in phonetics, phonology and sociolinguistics. It contributes to the growing interest in gradience and variation in theoretical phonology by combining research on the factors underlying variability and systematic quantitative results with theoretical phonological considerations. Variation is inherent to language, and one of the aims of phonological theory is to describe and explain the mechanisms underlying variation at every level of phonological representation. Variation below the segment concerns articulatory, acoustic and perceptual cues that contribute to the formation of natural classes of sounds. At the segmental level there are grammatical differences in the production and perception of contextual variation of segments and in the syntagmatic constraints on the combination of segments. At the suprasegmental level the mapping of tones to grammatical functions and vice versa is discussed. Further aspects addressed in this book are factors outside of language: Variation that arises as a result of a particular dialect or of belonging to a certain age group, or variation that is the consequence of language change. Gradience and variation have always been a central issue in phonetic and sociolinguistic research. Gradience introduces variation in phonology as well. If a phonetic entity can be pronounced in different ways, depending on the environment, prosodic factors or dialectal influences, this 'gradience' may introduce 'variation', which we understand as a stable state of grammar.

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