## **Social Meaning and Linguistic Variation**

The 'third wave' of variation study, spearheaded by the sociolinguist Penelope Eckert, places its focus on social meaning, or the inferences that can be drawn about speakers based on how they talk. While social meaning has always been a concern of modern sociolinguistics, its aims and assumptions have not been explicitly spelled out until now. This pioneering book provides a comprehensive overview of the central tenets of variation study, examining several components of dialects, and considering language use in a wide variety of cultural and linguistic contexts. Each chapter, written by a leader in the field, posits a unique theoretical claim about social meaning and presents new empirical data to shed light on the topic at hand. The volume makes a case for why attending to social meaning is vital to the study of variation while also providing a foundation from which variationists can productively engage with social meaning.

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Theorizing the Third Wave

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**130,20 €** 121,68 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

**ArtikeInummer:** 9781108471626

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-1-108-47162-6

**Verlag:** Cambridge University Press **Erscheinungstermin:** 12.08.2021

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2021 Produktform: Gebunden

Gewicht: 738 g

Seiten: 406

Format (B x H): 157 x 235 mm



