# Contents

Preface ix  
Introduction 1  
1. Some Basic Concepts about Language 3  
2. Signs Have Parts 12  
3. Variation: Basic Concepts 17  
4. Phonological Variation 23  
5. Syntactic Variation 41  
6. Lexical Variation 46  
7. Collecting Variable Data 54  
8. Summary and Conclusions 57  
Notes 59  

Supplementary Readings 61  
The Importance of Variation Research for Deaf Communities 63  
*Ceil Lucas and Robert Bayley*  
Lexical Variation in African American and White Signing 83  
*Ceil Lucas, Robert Bayley, Ruth Reed, and Alyssa Wulf*  
Sociolinguistic Variation 111  
*Ceil Lucas, Robert Bayley, Clayton Valli, Mary Rose, and Alyssa Wulf*  
Index 181