

English Abstract

Studying the word

Perspectives on religious language and its uses

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Religious language is a broad concept that has been approached in diverse ways within different academic disciplines. On one hand, it is perceived as symbolic communication attempting to capture and articulate objects that belong to another world. On the other hand, religious language can be seen as one language variety in as much as it is connected to a natural language, which has evolved over time and has its own distinct grammatical system. Within the context of language studies, this article collection aims to shed light on the intrinsic complexity of religious language by studying religious Finnish language as part of different written and spoken contexts. These theoretically and methodologically varied articles investigate the features of Finnish religious language, its development, variation and relation to non-religious language, such as standard language and slang. It also examines language speakers' perceptions of religious language and attitudes towards it, and the tensions triggered by its historical changes, together with various text and interaction types peculiar to current religious language use. The book portrays religious language as a multifaceted phenomenon. It reveals how a previously uniform religious language is nowadays divided into a continuum of different language varieties, which are intertwined with other social and cultural practices.

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