



Dominant Languages: Language and Hierarchy in Britain and France

Ralph D. Grillo

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This book takes an interdisciplinary approach to the relations between power and language. Many societies are 'multilingual' throughout their history, but there is often a hierarchical ordering of their languages, dialects and ways of speaking. These are rarely of equal status, power or authority. Through a detailed and systematic comparison of Britain and France, Ralph Grillo examines the concept of language dominance, and the causes and consequences of linguistic hierarchy. In both France and Britain language has been a major political battleground, and the study traces the history of their various conflicts from the late Middle Ages to the present day. By relating these linguistic struggles to the principal social, economic, cultural and political factors at work in society as a whole, the book demonstrates the continuity between small-scale, 'local' even interpersonal relationships and general, large-scale processes. The investigation brings together an unusual and rich combination of material from a wide range of sources and a variety of academic disciplines.

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