1. Record Nr. UNINA9910464241003321

Titolo Linguistic purism in the Germanic languages [[electronic resource] /] /

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Pubbl/distr/stampa Berlin; New York, : W. de Gruyter, c2005

ISBN 3-11-090135-8

Descrizione fisica viii, 374 p

Collana Studia linguistica Germanica ; ; 75

Classificazione GB 4055

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Disciplina 430

Soggetti Germanic languages - Standardization - History

Germanic languages - History

Germanic languages - Social aspects

Germanic languages - Dialects

Electronic books.

Lingua di pubblicazione I

Inglese

Formato Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico Monografia

Note generali Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph

Nota di bibliografia Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

Nota di contenuto Front matter -- Acknowledgements / Langer, Nils / Davies, Wini --

Contents -- An Introduction to Linguistic Purism / Langer, Nils / Davies, Winifred -- I. Historical Prescriptivism and Purism -- Language norm and language reality. Effectiveness and limits of prescriptivism in New High German / Elspaß, Stephan -- Taming thistles and weeds amidst the wheat: language gardening in nineteenth-century Flanders / Vandenbussche, Wim / Willemyns, Roland / De Groof, Jetje / Vanhecke, Eline -- Bad language in Germany's past - the birth of linguistic norms in the seventeenth century? / Lange, Maria Barbara -- The revolutionary argumentative pattern in puristic discourse: The Swabian dialect in the debate about the standardization of German in the eighteenth century / Scharloth, Joachim -- A Comparative Study of Linguistic Purism in the History of England and Germany / Geers, Maria -- II. Nationhood and Purism -- Linguistic purism in German-speaking Switzerland and the Deutschschweizerischer Sprachverein 1904-1942 / Rash, Felicity --Language Nationalism in the Schiller Commemoration Addresses of 1859 / Ziegler, Evelyn -- Standard Afrikaans and the different faces of

'Pure Afrikaans' in the twentieth century / van den Berg, Ria --

Reimagining the Nation: Discourses of Language Purism in Luxembourg / Horner, Kristine -- III. Modern Society and Purism -- On the role of language ideologies in linguistic theory and practice: purism and beyond / Stein, Dieter -- Elements of traditional and "reverse" purism in relation to computer-mediated communication / Hohenhaus, Peter -- Once an Ossi, always an Ossi: language ideologies and social division in contemporary Germany / Stevenson, Patrick -- IV. Folk Linguistics and Purism -- "The Grand Daddy of English": US, UK, New Zealand and Australian students' attitudes toward varieties of English / Evans, Betsy -- Linguistic Purism from several perspectives: views from the "secure" and "insecure" / Niedzielski, Nancy -- Dialect and Written Language: Change in Dialect Norms in the History of the German Language / Mattheier, Klaus J. -- Investigating puristic attitudes in France: Folk perceptions of variation in standard French / Boughton, Zoë -- V. Linguists and Purism -- "Vorsicht ist nicht immer der bessere Teil der Tapferkeit" - Purism in the historiography of the German language / Leyhausen, Katja -- Some Effects of Purist Ideologies on Historical Descriptions of English / Milroy, James -- Usefulness and Uselessness of the Term Fremdwort / Reichmann, Oskar -- Index

Sommario/riassunto

Purism is an aspect of linguistic study which appeals not only to the scholar but also to the layperson. Somehow, ordinary speakers with many different mother tongues and with no formal training in linguistics share certain beliefs about what language is, how it develops or should develop, whether it has good or bad qualities, etc. The topic of linguistic purism in its many realisations is the subject of this volume of 19 articles selected from the contributions presented at a conference at the University of Bristol in 2003. In particular, the articles deal with the relationship of purism to historical prescriptivism, e.g. the influence of grammarians in the 17th and 18th centuries, to nationhood, e.g. the instrumentalising of purism in the standardisation of Afrikaans or Luxembourgish, to modern society, e.g. the existence of puristic tendencies in computer chatrooms, to folk linguistics, e.g. lay perceptions of different varieties of English, and to academic linguistics, e.g. the presence of puristic notions in the historiography of German or English.