English Abstract

The mosaic of languages and literatures: Perspectives on power, periphery and daily life

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The edited volume approaches the multilingual and multicultural reality we see in our daily lives from the perspectives of three disciplines: linguistics, literature studies and translation studies. It is bookended by two papers discussing topics related to power: language policies worldwide and definitions of World Literature. A historical view is found in two papers exploring the multilingual and translatorial practices in nineteenth-century Tampere, where questions of power and daily life merge. A similar intersection is found in a paper discussing national language policies at primary and lower secondary schools as well as in an article dealing with the implications of translating textbooks. Related to language policies and language acquisition, the challenges of multilingualism among Finnish-Russian bilingual children in their daily lives are explored in another paper. A chapter dealing with what is Finnish literature, in terms of majority and minority languages, highlights the ways power relations work in assigning central and peripheral positions to authors and their works, and this is exemplified further in another chapter exploring the poetry of one indigenous linguistic and cultural minority, the Sami. Seemingly more peripheral issues, neo-Latin literature and the translation of multilingual texts, illustrate the constant negotiation of centre and periphery, as well as the results of diachronic power shifts, as languages and texts written in them are juggled into the limelight and out of it. The authors of all chapters are leading scholars in their respective fields and this approachable volume aims to allow scholars from a wide variety of disciplines to immerse themselves in the questions of multilingual practices and their impact on society and culture.