

Hate speech or not?

Seminar on hate speech

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Hate speech – what is it?

- Discussion of hate speech's effects and debate over the term's meaning.
- In which circumstances can a text be interpreted as *punishable hate speech*?
- What are the linguistic and contextual features that can lead to this interpretation?

- Data:
 - 2 blog texts and 8 messages on a Facebook discussion groups wall;
all writers were charged with *ethnic agitation* and all but two writers were also convicted
 - the judgments
- Method:
 - linguistic reception analysis, where reader's interpretation is the starting point for analysing the text

Punishable hate speech according to law

- There is no definition for “hate speech” (yet) in Finnish criminal code.
 - There is a need to define the line between punishable hate speech and freedom of expression.
 - The Criminal Code of Finland:
 - Ethnic agitation
 - Breach of the sanctity of religion
 - The Constitution of Finland and European Convention on Human Rights:
 - Freedom of expression
- Violating the human dignity is illegal.

- A message that threatens, defames or insults
- a certain group of people
- and is made available for the public
- can be interpreted as punishable hate speech.

- Also requirement of *intent*; the writer must have been *aware of the possibility* that the circumstances mentioned above are true.

- The interpretation of the writer's intention depends on the reader (Rahtu 2006: 19; 2012: 234).

Indicating writer's intent

- Metatext
 - *”Onko tämä väite sopimaton?”* (“*Is this proposition improper?*”); *”Ovatko nämä lauseet laittomia?”* (“*Are these phrases illegal?*”)
 - “throwing baits”
- Typography
- Repetition of insults
- Writer's social role?

Literature

Rahtu, Toini 2006: *Sekä että. Ironia koherenssina ja inkoherenssina*. SKS.

Rahtu, Toini 2012: Lingvistinen reseptioanalyysi tekstilajitutkija palveluksessa. Teoksessa Vesa Heikkinen et al. (toim.) *Genreanalyysi – tekstilajitutkimuksen käsikirja* s. 433–440.

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