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Linguistic and Semantic Changes in the Revised Anglican Liturgy¹

D. E. ADAMS SMITH

Applied Linguistics, Volume 10, Issue 3, 1 September 1989, Pages 269–280,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/10.3.269>

Published: 01 September 1989 **Article history** ▼

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Abstract

In a number of countries inclusive language has become a feature of the revised Anglican liturgy. New forms of worship have been devised with the

express intention of encompassing everyone, regardless of sex, race, social class, political persuasion, or level of education. For the most part the linguistic means used to achieve this objective have been lexical, relating to connotation, reference, diction, and image. Even more far-reaching, though unintentional, have been the semantic implications of the syntactic simplification which is a feature of all the new liturgies, even the comparatively conservative form of the Church of England in the Alternative Service Book (1980). The revised form of the Nicene Creed is here considered from the point of view of changes in thematization of information structure, and lexical and semantic changes in the revised New Zealand liturgy are examined.

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Online ISSN 1477-450X

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