

<i>Preface and Acknowledgments</i>	ix
1. Introduction	1
1.1 The Language of the Church and of Its Law	1
The Gospel, Message, and Mission	1
Law in Service of the Gospel Message	2
1.2 Canon Law on Language	4
In Service of the Gospel Mission	4
Ecclesiastical Language Crimes	6
Solicitation and Threat	7
Lying under Oath	8
The Sacramental Seal	10
Defaming Speech	10
Language in Penal Law	12
1.3 Part of the Law and Language Debate	13
Linguistics and Legal Studies	14
Learning from Legal Practice	15
Theology and Canon Law Studies	16
Scope of My Study	19
2. The Function of Language in Law	23
2.1 Purposes of the Law	23
Creating Social Cohesion	23
Influencing Behavior	24
Exchanging Information	26
Concealed Purposes	26
2.2 Law as Communication	27
Sending Legal Messages	29
Receiving Legal Meaning	30
Making Legal Meaning	31
Communal Meaning	32
The Media of the Law	33
The Silence of the Law	34
2.3 The Sacramentality of the Law	35
The Language of Magic	36
Ritual Speech	38
Law as a Matter of Belief	39
Legal Speech Acts	41

vi CONTENTS

Classes of Illocutions	42
Legal Illocutions	44
Status Function Declarations	48
Deontic Powers	50
Sacramental Speech	52
<i>Ex Opere Operato</i>	54
True Communication	55
3. Idiosyncrasies of Legal Language	59
3.1 The Grammar of the Law	59
Gender Issues	60
Passive Constructions	60
Challenging Syntax	61
Expressing Commands	65
3.2 The Terminology of the Law	67
Common Terms as Legal Terms	68
“Lending” and “Loaning”	69
“Possession” and “Property”	70
Changing Meaning	72
Technical Terminology	74
3.3 Legal Terms, Foreign Words	76
Borrowed Terms	76
Canon Law Latin	79
Language Training	81
Canon Law Jargon	82
Neologisms	84
3.4 Indeterminate Terms	86
“Grave Necessity”	86
“Just Cause”	88
4. Comprehension Difficulties	91
4.1 Ambiguity of the Law	92
Lexical Ambiguity	93
“Fideles” as Legal Subjects	94
Syntactic Ambiguity	97
4.2 Transfer Problems	99
“Annulment” Terminology	99
Substance and Accidents	101
A Grin without a Cat	102
4.3 Blending Literary Genres	103
Theological Trimmings	104
A Custom Commercial	106

5. Challenging Legal Incomprehension	109
5.1 Exclusivism and Elitism	109
Language Weapons	111
Linguistic Distinction	113
Preventing Legal Heresy	114
5.2 Endorsing Plain Language	116
Avoiding Useless Precision	116
Simple Structure and Style	118
Modernizing Legal Speech	119
5.3 Plain Canon Law?	120
Simplifying Constructions	121
Replacing Outdated Terms	122
Challenging Law Latin	124
Intelligibility over Distinction	125
Comprehension over Tradition	126
Supporting Equal Comprehension	127
6. A Global Law and Its Language	129
6.1 Linguistic Relativity	130
Perceiving Reality via Language	130
Relativity of Legal Concepts	132
Cultural Conflicts in Global Law	135
6.2 Strong and Weak Language Theories	136
Language and Cultural Borders	137
Reconstructing Meaning	138
6.3 Legislation for Multi-Language Groups	141
Legal and Linguistic Colonialism	141
Structures of Dominance	143
Multi-Language Approaches	145
Creating Multi-Language Law	146
Drafting in Foreign Languages	147
Multi-Language Canon Law	149
Literalistic and Free Translations	151
Intermediate Approaches	153
Achieving Legal Equivalence	155
7. Interpreting the Law	157
7.1 Plain and Proper Meaning	157
No Meaning without Context	158
Challenging “Plain” Meaning	160
Open Texture of the Law	162

viii CONTENTS

7.2 A Matter of Interpretation	163
(Re)constructing Meaning	164
Purposeful Interpretation	165
Textualist Approaches	166
Intentionalist Interpretations	167
Relevance of the Author	168
The Death of the Author	170
Canons of Construction	171
Blending Interpretation Rules	173
Borders of Interpretation	175
Multi-Language Interpretations	176
7.3 Competent Interpreters	177
Binding Interpretations	178
Authentic Interpretations	179
Interpretive Legal Development	181
Controlling Meaning	182
A Neoconservative Agenda	183
8. The Language of Legal Action	185
8.1 Hearings and Testimonies	186
Complex Dialogues	187
Fair Questioning	189
The Right to Silence	190
Privileges in Evidence Law	192
Witness Competence Rules	193
Oral Hearings, Written Acts	194
8.2 Adjudication Language	196
Existential Decisiveness	196
Oral Debate, Written Verdict	198
Unassailable Speech	199
The Language of Verdicts	200
9. Conclusion	203
<i>Bibliography</i>	207
<i>Index</i>	225