

## PECULIAR LANGUAGE

First published in 1988, *Peculiar Language* is now established as a highly important discussion of the language of literature.

This thought-provoking book challenges traditional notions of literary criticism, arguing that all attempts by writers, critics and literary theorists to define the language of literature have involved self-contradiction. Through examination of key moments in literary history, Derek Attridge demonstrates that such contradictions in accounts of literary language are embedded in our cultural concept of 'literature', and asserts that in order to appreciate the forces that determine the limits of literary language we must look beyond the realm of the 'literary' and embrace the wider political and social sphere. While key examples have been drawn from the Renaissance, Romanticism and the work of James Joyce, Attridge's unique application of deconstructive methods has ensured that the influence of this book has been felt across the entire field of literary studies.

Re-issued as a result of sustained critical interest in the volume, this edition includes a new preface by the author. Alongside his related work in *The Singularity of Literature*, *Peculiar Language* confirms Derek Attridge's place at the forefront of contemporary critical theory.

**Derek Attridge** is Professor of English at the University of York, England and Distinguished Visiting Professor at Rutgers University, USA. He is the author and editor of leading texts on fiction, poetry and literary theory. Recent publications include *Meter and Meaning: An Introduction to Rhythm in Poetry* (2003) and *The Singularity of Literature* (2004).