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MUSLIM SERMONS IN RUSSIAN: COMMUNICATIVE AND PRAGMATIC ASPECT

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Abstract

Most Russian studies in the field of religious communication are devoted to Christianity. The research object is the genre of Islamic sermon. In Islam, sermon is understood as the solemn moralizing speech of the imam khatib dedicated to a religious or moral-ethical issue. The addresser of Muslim sermon is the imam khatib, who must have a basic knowledge of Islam, be comprehensively educated, and know the prototext of the Quran well. The preacher also addresses contemporary material, includes instructive life stories in a sermon, and deals with current social problems. The addressee of Muslim sermon has a number of distinctive features: the sermon is pronounced in the mosque, intended for believing men. A woman has a special position in Islam, she is not forbidden to attend a mosque, but is recommended to pray at home. So-called sermon at home exists in Islam, which is delivered for women both by the imam khatib and the religiously educated woman. The novelty of the research is in the description of the genre of Muslim sermon, which functions in Russian. A special contribution of the authors is the use of a communicative-pragmatic approach, which allows describing genre-forming features, revealing common in the structural elements of a communicative act, and distinctive features (for instance, peculiarities of the addressee in Islam, distinctive features of space-time organization of the sermon), peculiar to the sermon genre in a particular confession. The study of features of compositional thematic structuring of Islamic sermon is the prospect of further research.

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Keywords: Religious functional style, Islam, sermon, addresser, addressee.



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1. Introduction

Religious style, which isolation and functioning is due to such extralinguistic factors as specific forms of social consciousness (religion) and human activity, is an object of modern linguistics study. There is a description of individual genres: confession, prayer, akathist, sermon, life (Voitak, 2003; Prokhvatilova, 1999; Liudogovskii, 2015).

The description of religious style occurs on the material of Christian texts. At the same time, other traditional confessions operate in Russia, which communication takes place in Russian. Islam in Russia is the second largest confession after Christianity. In Islam, religious texts function not only in the traditional Arabic language for this confession, but also in Russian. The study of religious communication by scholars in Islam is just beginning (Bobyreva, 2016; Bugaeva, 2016; Kemper, 2015; Bustanov & Kemper, 2013).

2. Problem Statement

Religious style is represented by a set of genres-texttypes having a functional community and, at the same time, differing on the purpose of communication and peculiarities of the communicative situation. In the genre series of religious style, the sermon is one of the most prominent representative genres, the study of which is relevant in linguistics (Prokhvatilova, 1999; Salimovskii, 2005).

Refer to the existing genre definitions. In general terms, a sermon is defined as

the genre of confessional communication. Religious edification or instruction, as a rule, is of a moral and ethical nature, pronounced or written by an authoritative person - a representative of any dogma before an audience of followers of this dogma. ... In Christianity, a sermon is called an instructional speech addressed to parishioners, which the priest gives in church after the liturgy. The task of the sermon is to communicate and explain one or another position of Christian dogma to the listeners. (Ivanov, 2003, p. 421)

The following definition is closer to the rhetorical point of view: a church sermon is “a religious and edifying speech, which a clergyman addresses to believers during a liturgy” (Prokhvatilova, 1999, p. 54). The sermon is “the main genre of church eloquence: the convincing instructive word of the clergyman, pronounced from the church Ambon (place in front of the altar) and addressed to the flock - people who came to church to pray and perceive the Word of God” (Matveeva, 2003, p. 170). Let us pay attention to the fact that the religious sphere of consciousness is noted in various definitions, in which the sermon, the real place where the sermon is delivered, as well as the instructive, moral and ethical character of this genre are realized.

The purpose of the sermon as a genre of religious communication is to convey the divine meaning to the minds of people. Adaptation of the primary divine meaning to capabilities of the human mind can consist either in the primary text expanding to which the interpretations, repetitions of key meanings and adding new persuasive information to the text lead, and in compression, when only the main meanings are left in the secondary text.

The following elements of communicative situation typical of the sermon genre are distinguished in the analyzed definitions: the addresser is a priest, the addressee is a parishioner, believing man, the chronotope is divine worship in the church, and the purpose of the sermon is edification of the flock.

3. Research Questions

The sphere of religious communication is characterized by the use of bilingualism: sacred and trivial languages, at different times dividing spheres and functions in various ways, get on with religious communication (Unbegaun, 1971; Uspenskii, 1994). In Orthodoxy, Church Slavonic is traditionally used as a sacred, liturgical language, Arabic - in Islam, Hebrew - in Judaism. Along with sacred languages, a second, national language is actively functioning in each of the traditional religions. Sacred language initially performs a liturgical function; sacred texts are written on it prayers are read in the church. The national language fulfills the missionary function, and sermons are pronounced on it. It is used in the situation of informal religious communication: personal prayers of believers are built on it.

Four traditional confessions are officially approved in Russia today: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism. In each of these religions, a sacred language functions, the use of which is historically and traditionally conditioned. At the same time, we can note a significant role of the Russian language in religious communication, which, for historical reasons, is spoken by Russians and many of them consider it to be native, regardless of nationality.

Russian specificity is that today the Russian language has become a means of religious communication not only in Orthodoxy, but also in other religions. It is used in previously uncharacteristic religious confessions: Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, as evidenced by the Internet. For example: "Islamic portal" is a unique resource where every faithful Muslim can read Islamic sermons of respected imams in Russian and Tatar languages".

In today's Russia, we are able to speak not only about bilingualism, but also about multilingualism within the framework of each religious confession. Sacred language as a language of worship retains its position, the profane functions in two varieties: national and Russian languages. So, Arabic, Tatar and Russian are used in Islam in the territory of Russia; Hebrew, Yiddish and Russian - in Judaism; Sanskrit, Buryat and Russian - in Buddhism. Thus, the Russian language has become not only a means of interethnic, interreligious, but intrareligious communication in various confessional spheres.

A sign of the current situation in Russian religious communication is multilingualism, wherein the Russian language is used as a means of informal communication in a non-liturgical situation in Russian Orthodox Church, as well as in other traditional confessions; partially fulfills the function of a liturgical language, and also acts as a means of interconfessional communication.

4. Purpose of the Study

The sermon as a genre of religious style functions not only in Christianity, the analysis shows the presence of the genre of sermon in other confessions, particularly, in Islam. At the same time, the linguistics study of the sermon genre in other confessions has not been carried out yet. The purpose of this study is the description based on communicative and pragmatic grounds of the sermon genre functioning in Islam.

5. Research Methods

The communicative-pragmatic approach used in this study makes it possible to identify the genre-forming features of religious texts in Russian existing in various confessions. The communicative-pragmatic approach is directly related to the text, since the analysis of various conditions of communication, conditions of generating statements in a certain way is associated with the nature of the generated text, its language features and genre. "The text cannot but be pragmatically defined ... Therefore, when examining a text, there is no such area that could not be considered pragmatically in one sense or another" (Mednikova, 1974, p. 193). This approach involves a comprehensive analysis of the text, the purpose of which is to identify different aspects of the text, the tasks, respectively, are to identify and describe the compositional, semantic and pragmatic properties of the text and ways of its design (Komarova, 2012) in accordance with the functional style.

6. Findings

Let us turn to the functioning of the sermon genre in Islam, consider its communicative and pragmatic features. Both in Islam and Christianity, the solemn moralizing speech by imam khatib is understood under the sermon, dedicated, as a rule, to any Islamic religious or moral and ethical problems.

We characterize the main elements of the communicative act in the projection on Muslim sermon. The addresser of Muslim sermon is imam khatib. Note that imam khatib in Islam is not a priest, as it is understood in Christianity. Imam khatib is "the person who is ahead. This is the name of a person who delivers a collective prayer - namaz, a major Muslim scholar, and a caliph - the head of the Muslim state" (Ali-zade, 2007, p. 219).

Muslim theologians highlight the common qualities inherent in the imam khatib in general, and the particular qualities that distinguish it in the course of a sermon (Beiusov, 2011). Consider the above in more detail.

Imam khatib should be different in following qualities of a more general nature: first, possess innate inclinations to carry out his duties with pleasure. Further, it is necessary to have special knowledge, to be comprehensively educated, well-read person. A preacher in Islam, referring to the prototext (Itskovich, 2018) of the Quran, quotes it by heart:

some imam khatibs, who have melodious voice, beautiful diction often cite surahs and ayahs (miracle Quranic poems) of the Quran, quotations from Hadith. The level of their education and the degree of possession of the Quran reading and commentary, as well as the skillful use of Hadith in sermons (tradition of the words and actions of Prophet Muhammad), gives the listeners full confidence in words of the preacher. (Karimov, 1991, p. 140)

In addition to the Quran, the preacher turns to modern material, includes instructive life stories in the sermon, deals with current social problems, teaches the audience what a modern Muslim should be.

The imam khatib must be distinguished by his willpower, charisma and moral behaviour in order to serve as a model for the audience: "Oh you who have believed! Why do you say what you do not do and

do not fulfill your promises?” (Surah “Rows”, 2 ayah). Words and deeds should match each other. The preacher must also be sincere, which allows him to get closer to God: “But they were only told to worship Allah, serving him sincerely as monotheists” (Surah “Clear Sign”, 4 ayah). The preacher must also have eloquence following the image of Rasul Allah who briefly and clearly expressed himself “dzhavamig-al-Kaliam” (Beiusov, 2011).

Personal qualities of the preacher, contributing to the successful pronouncing of a specific sermon, belong to the sphere of practical rhetoric. Proficiency in speech technique is important: a strong, beautiful, sonorous voice; expressiveness of speech, placement of pauses, allocation of significant places using intonation; respect for the culture of speech; moderate gesticulation. Particular attention is paid to the appearance of the preacher, who must be appropriately dressed and look neat. The model is Prophet Muhammad, who gave direct instructions regarding the appearance: “Oh, sons of Adam! Put on your jewelry at every mosque” (Surah “Hedges”, 31 ayah).

Thus, imam khatib should have certain spiritual qualities, be literate, sociable, active, and be comprehensively educated man, master the techniques of eloquence.

The addressee of Muslim sermon has a number of distinctive features. Muslim sermon is pronounced in a mosque and is intended for believing men, it is an essential element of religious life for them: praying Friday namaz in Jamaat (collective prayer) is the duty of every Muslim. Only “slaves, women, children and the sick” are considered to be free from attending Friday sermons (Ali-zade, 2007).

The audience of the sermon in the mosque is usually male. A woman has a special position in Islam, she is not forbidden to attend a mosque, but is recommended to pray at home. So-called sermon at home exists in Islam, which is delivered both by the imam khatib and the religiously educated person in Islam, including for the female audience — the woman.

Time and space. Muslim sermon is usually pronounced from the minbar (Minbar is a slight elevation in the mosque to which the imam rises up to conduct the khutbah (sermon). After the imam rises up to the minbar, all conversations stop in the mosque and all the attention of believers is concentrated on the imam’s sermon (Ali-zade, 2007).

The sermon is pronounced by the imam khatib in the mosque during Friday and festive namaz. If in Orthodox worship a sermon is usually pronounced either during the worship immediately after reading the Gospel, or immediately after the worship, then the Muslim Friday sermon is pronounced before the worship (namaz-prayer, performed five times a day), “the sermon read only from the minbars of the mosque by imam khatibs before the beginning of Friday and festive sermon” (Karimov, 1991, p. 142).

Let us clarify that Friday is a special holiday for Muslims, such as Sunday for Christians and Saturday for Jews. Friday sermons and Friday namaz is a duty for every believer, which is approved by the Holy Quran.

Time and order of the Friday sermon are strictly defined: it is pronounced immediately before the namaz.

The sequence of the preacher actions is determined by the canon, which is mandatory. The imam khatib rises up to the minbar and turns face to the people. At this time, with full silence of the audience and preacher, the muezzin reads the call to prayer. Next, the imam khatib reads both parts of the sermon standing up, in a break he sits down.

Requirements for the addressee – those present Muslims for prayer – to listen to the sermon in complete silence, without being distracted. It is also undesirable to perform namaz during a sermon.

Festive namaz is performed in the morning, after sunrise, and is held in mosques with a large gathering of people. They consist of two rakats. After the namaz, a festive sermon is read. In contrast to the Friday sermon, the festive is read not before, but after the namaz. Presence is not obligatory, but desirable.

The purpose of the preacher is the spread of Islam, interpretation of divine truths, edification of parishioners in accordance with dogmas. Muslim sermons are often devoted to practical issues that are important to a person in everyday life. A preacher in Islam touches upon a wide range of issues, often of an individual nature: “In a number of mosques, the imam khatib pay more attention to clarifying the cult side of religion; in others – to explaining the history and place of ayahs and surahs in the life of believers (chapters of the Quran), their Quran or Hadiths” (Karimov, 1991, p. 132).

As noted above, Muslims have the custom of inviting imams to their home and other places to participate in certain life events. Usually, imams are invited to their homes if there is no opportunity to come to the mosque, or you need to read a prayer among the invited guests. Prayers and sermons can be read for various life events: marriage anniversary, child birth, naming of a child, a name change for a Muslim, diseases, burial rite, events and holidays.

During a sermon delivered to a female audience, the imam khatib considers the following topics: the role of a woman in Islam, the role features of being a wife, advice to modern wives, also helps to find the right solution to vital issues with the help of Islam, to resolve disputes and disagreements within the family. Furthermore, Islamic women organization exists for women in Islam; its main goal is the promotion of Islam, training of women, protection of rights in the family and society.

In Islam, the sermon should consist of two parts, the first of which is instructive and educational in nature, and the second includes an appeal to God, a prayer for all Muslims. Both parts necessarily contain canonical testimonies of the unity of God and the messenger mission of Muhammad, as well as greetings to the Prophet. As noted, a new element was introduced into the sermon in the Middle Ages: the mention of names of the ruling caliphs. This element was an expression of the political trustworthiness of imams and believers.

The Muslim sermon was traditionally pronounced in the sacred language: “strictly dogmatic elements of the sermon continued to be read in Arabic, because the “khutbah” (sermon) was a part of the ritual complex of worship (it was impossible to talk about everything in it, the issues were strictly regulated)” (Karimov, 1991, p. 108). Today, Muslim sermon can be pronounced both in the national language (Kyrgyz, Tatar, Uzbek, Kazakh, etc.) and in Russian, particularly in the regions where the majority of Russian-speaking population lives.

7. Conclusion

The study of the sermon genre, functioning in Russian language in various traditional confessions, is the current direction of modern linguistic research. The communicative-pragmatic approach used in the analysis of texts allows describing genre-forming features, revealing both common in the structural elements of a communicative act (for instance, characteristics of the addresser, communicative requirements imposed on him; goal-setting is edification and explanation), and distinctive features (for

instance, peculiarities of the addressee in Islam, distinctive features of the space-time organization of the sermon), peculiar to the sermon genre in a particular confession.

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