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THE MAIN STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENGLISH RELIGIOUS-POPULAR DISCOURSE

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Статья рассматривает главные характерные особенности английской религиозно-популярной беседы. Автор сосредоточивает внимание на цели, понятиях, участниках и жанрах этого вида беседы. Рассматриваются определенные коммуникативные стратегии и лексические пункты, стилистические приемы и графические выразительные средства.

The article considers the main characteristic peculiarities of the English religious-popular discourse. The author focuses on the aim, the concepts, the participants and the genres of this kind of discourse. Specific communicative strategies and lexical items are viewed, both stylistic devices and graphic expressive means are marked in the article.

Ключевые слова: религиозно-популярный дискурс, концепты, конгломератный речевой жанр, участники, коммуникативные стратегии, лексические единицы, стилистические приемы, графические выразительные средства.

Key words: religious-popular discourse, concepts, conglomerate speech genre, participants, communicative strategies, lexical items, stylistic devices, graphic expressive means.

The religious-popular discourse is one of the types of the religious discourse, which is stated on the point of view of institutionalism (along with the religious discourse and the theological discourse. The English religious-popular discourse is a complex, complicated and multilateral phenomenon. From the point of view of sociolinguistics religious-popular discourse is a status-oriented type of communication. In fact, it is an institutional communication, but with a special type of the institute. That's why we can say, that religious-popular discourse is something in between the religious-popular discourse and the mass-informational discourse. The structure of the religious-popular discourse is variable, but some components are inflexible.

The religious-popular discourse has much in common with the mass communication, but they don't coincide entirely. The religious-popular communication in the English language usually has both a mediated character (by means of a computer, a telephone – genres: "Internet-letter", "religious conversation") and a spontaneous character (that is "face-to-face communication" – genres: "religious conversation", "popular sermon"). Religious-popular communication is a mutually-directed, social process, as its values concern the interests of some English-

speaking religious groups, the aims of which – to extend the amount of their believers.

Among the most important aspects of the English religious-popular discourse we can point out such main concepts as “God”, “faith” and “salvation”, which can be expressed in a different succession and with a different lexical variation in a discourse practice.

Analyzing the genre peculiarities of the English religious-popular discourse we come to the conclusion that the English religious-popular discourse is a conglomerate speech genre, which includes features of the following types of communication: institutional, everyday, mass-communicative, religious and ritual communication and it has a specific compositional structure. Basing on such parameters of a speech genre as: communicative goal, conception of an author, conception of an addressee, subject-matter, factor of a communicative past, factor of a communicative future, parameter of a linguistic realization and a communicative key (зд. тональность), we can point out in the English religious-popular discourse the following genres:

- 1) “religious conversation”;
- 2) “popular sermon”;
- 3) “religious-popular article”, including subgenres: “article in popular editions”, “religious-popular leaflet”, “popular-entertaining materials”;
- 4) “religious-popular letter” and its subgenres: “personal letter” and “Internet-letter”.

Each of the above-mentioned genres has its own distinguishable characteristics, structural peculiarities, intonation and verbal specifications and strategies.

The main participants of the English religious-popular discourse are a missionary (agent), God (superagent) and a potential adherent (client). Thematic relations between the participants in this kind of discourse are organized in the following way: “agent – client”, “agent – potential client”, “agent₁– agent₂”, “agent– superagent”, “client – agent– superagent”.

The peculiarity of this kind of discourse is that superagent is not necessarily God himself, it can be one of the agents. It’s also important, that agents are represented more differentially than clients. An agent in the religious-popular discourse can be *concrete* (genre “religious-popular conversation”, “personal letter”) and *abstract* (genre “religious-popular article”, “Internet-letter”). The peculiarity of a religious-popular discourse, as we see it, is that an agent acts in such a way, so that clients from abstract ones became concrete partners, believers.

In the English religious-popular discourse we can find three main groups of communicative strategies:

- 1) discourse strategies, such as: phatic (зд. контактоустанавливающая) strategy, modeling strategy, appellative strategy;
- 2) religious-discourse strategies: strategy of involvement, ritual strategy, the strategy of support;
- 3) religious-popular-discourse strategies: explanatory strategy and adaptive strategy.

Phatic strategy has its aim to make a contact between the potential participants of the communication and to arouse interest of the participants for the communication. It is made by means of different questions:

- 1) question-problem, for example: (*The Bible: just a good book?*);
- 2) question-statement, for example: (*Life: how did it get here? By evolution or by creation?*);

3) question-order (зд. побуждение), for example: (*Ethnic harmony is it possible?*).

Modeling strategy of the English religious-popular discourse has its aim to model and organize the process of the participants' interaction. This strategy is mainly actualized by means of imperative mood in the form of:

- 1) advice, for example: (*Teach your children to love Jehovah!*);
- 2) appeal, for example: (*Let the Congregation praise Jehovah*).

Appellative strategy is realized by means of direct addressing to the God, by the function of speech acts:

- 1) pray to the God, for example: (*God (heaven) forbid; for God's sake!; May God give everybody as good*);
- 2) showing of believers their emotions by means of spontaneous exclamations of an interjection character, for example: (*Great God (Lord)! Oh, God! My Goodness! Almighty God, God's truth!*).

The strategy of involvement of the English religious-popular discourse has its aim to attract attention of as much clients to a religious doctrine as possible. This strategy is realized by means of:

- 1) hyperbole, for example: (*Death a dreadful reality!.. Is there a remedy for death? The following article provides Scriptural answers to these questions...*);
- 2) humor, or even sarcasm, for example: (*One man says to the other: "You know, I've read the book in which a Jew was the main hero." "Well – says the other –I've read it already, it's a Bible!"*).

Ritual strategy is verbally realized by means of appeal to the God (as an illocutionary force).

The strategy of support has its aim to help client, to instruct him within the bounds of this discursive model. This strategy is realized mainly by means of persuading and affirming replies, for example: (*How precious to Jehovah are all those who are faithful!*).

Explanatory strategy of the English religious-popular discourse has its aim to explain and interpret the main principles of some religious teaching to the client. This strategy is realized mainly in the form of:

- 1) a story-telling or a narration of some truth (зд. истина);
- 2) contrastive speech and exposing causal links, which show the client, that he's chosen the so-called "right" religious teaching, for example: (*"In my opinion, if we have not achieved peace, it's because people forget its most fundamental aspect. Before we talk about peace among nations, we must settle our peace with God"- Reverend Sun Myung Moon*).

Adaptive strategy has its aim to simplify the content and the form of religious Holy Scriptures, by means of different examples of a modern life.

The English religious-popular discourse is a multigenre variety of a monologic and dialogical speech, which is characterized by a number of specific means. So, in this connection, peculiarity of a conversation of that type of the discourse is based on the use of lexical items, which belong to different styles in accordance with the pragmatic goals and aims of such type of communication. Most frequently in analyzing texts we can find out:

- 1) poetisms, for example: (*"If you are married, your closest neighbor is your spouse, so be honest and specific about feelings when talking to your mate. /spouse – супруг, супруга/*);
- 2) bookish words, for example: (*"As demonstrated in the altercation quoted earlier, some problems may evoke strong emotions". /altercation – ссора/*);
- 3) biblical expressions, sometimes even word combinations, which are nowadays phrasemes, fixed expressions, phraseological units and proverbs, for example: (*safe and sound; to be in a melting pot; seeing is believing; not for the love of money*).

Means of expression and stylistic devices of syntax in the texts of English religious-popular discourse play a very important role not only in the technique of depicting, but they also help in exposing of such factor of style as interaction of a reflecting reality and of such qualities of an individual as his way of thinking, his character and peculiarities of speech perception of an addressee. In the result of the analysis of syntactical peculiarities of the English religious-popular discourse, we come to conclusion, that more frequently in the texts of such type of communication we can find such expressive means of the language as:

- 1) inversion, for example: (*Often, blatant dishonesty is involved*);
- 2) rhetorical question, for example: (*What makes people act cruelly? Will cruelty ever end? And if so, how and when?*);
- 3) parallel constructions, for example: (*Try to choose the right time, the right setting, the right words to state your concerns*);
- 4) nominative mononuclear sentences, for example: (*Deliverance. Liberation. Salvation. For centuries, people have longed for relief from burdens and cares*);
- 5) asyndeton, for example: (*Biblical and secular history contain many examples of people who stole, perverted justice, prostituted themselves, committed murder, betrayed others, lied – all for money*);
- 6) inserted constructions of different types, for example: (*Claudius, another one of Jehovah's Witnesses, left his office earlier than usual*).

It is found out, that the main aim of using such means of expression is to make the speech expressive, emotional and bright, so as to shorten the distance between the participants of the communication in some genres of the discourse.

Besides, within the boundaries of the English religious-popular discourse different graphic expressive means are used. Among such means we can point out:

- 1) using of different kinds of brackets, for example: (*“And all the nations will be gathered before the Son of man [Jesus], and he will separate people one from another... And these [wicked ones] will depart into everlasting cutting-off, but the righteous ones into everlasting life.”*);
- 2) accentuation of some words with the capital letters, for example: (*God's Kingdom, Paradise, Ruler, the Source of Love, The Word of the Creator, Hell, Satan the Devil*);
- 3) cursive writing of some sentences, so as to reflect their intonation, for example: (*What is God's Kingdom? What does the Bible really teach?*).

Further more, it is found out, that religious-popular texts are composed according to the special structural type and they consist of three parts: the title, the body and the closing phrase. Each of them is usually marked graphically. All these graphic expressive means are a special system of signs and rules of their using and they fulfill expressive-emotional function in the texts of the English religious-popular discourse.

Upon the whole, we can say, that the English religious-popular discourse is a complicated, complex and multilateral phenomenon. And it has the following constitutive features: adaptation of some religious ideas and thoughts, presentation of a creed or a doctrine by means of rituals.

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