

Marked Lexis in Specific Religious Texts

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Abstract

Sermons are characterised by a well-thought-out formal composition and detailed content argumentation. The study aims to interpret linguistic devices from selected rhetorical speeches, which influence the addressee persuasively, didactically as well and aesthetically. Special-occasion rhetorical speeches have a more complex linguistic-compositional structure; a certain degree of subjectivity and expressiveness is applied in these speeches (cf. Aristotle, 1980; Findra, 2004, 2013; Mistrík, 1997; Slančová, 1996). Employing the research method of textual content analysis, we excerpted and subsequently analysed stylistically marked and emotionally expressive lexemes from selected sermon texts delivered during 19th-century weddings, which were used deliberately by the speaker to fulfil communicative, didactic, or aesthetic intentions. With these lexical devices, the speaker influenced the addressees and tried to reinforce as convincingly as possible the desired inciting moral-religious influence on the believers. Special-occasion wedding speeches were rich in figurative metaphorical and metonymic expressions, thus reinforcing the aestheticising intent of the sermon, while at the same time possessing a wide range of different kinds of sermonic expressions to fulfil the communication goals. The didactic dimension of the theme of marital union in marriage speeches is referred to by the analogies of biblical and evangelical scenes.

Keywords: Stylistic Markedness, Special-Occasion Speech, Lexical Stylistic Devices, Emotional-Expressive Phrases, Rhetorical Figures

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Introduction

To identify the stylistically marked lexicon, I have chosen specific confessional texts belonging to speech monologue genres. Since it is a speech delivered on the occasion of a solemn wedding act, wedding speeches are therefore classified as ceremonial public speeches. Ceremonial speech has a more demanding linguistic and compositional structure, it contains a certain degree of subjectivity and expressiveness, but the linguistic expression is less complex compared to a common sermon speech (Findra, 2013). The presence of stylistically marked lexical devices is desirable in this type of genre; a set of thematically related texts with a ceremonial wedding theme was chosen to determine these devices. This is a selection of marriage speeches from the second year of issues 1-2 and IV. volume of the archival homiletic collection *Treasures of Preaching* from 1853 edited by Andrej Radlinský. The selection of original sources intended to expose the multidimensionality of the message or the intention of the speech through the representation of religious, social, didactic and at the same time moral content. Our study aims to interpret the liturgical, linguistic, compositional and rhetorical aspects of the speech, which purposefully strengthen the desirable persuasive moral-religious effect on the addressee. From a methodological point of view, the genre of the solemn wedding speech, as a special type of thematic sermon, provides suitable research material for observing the specific linguistic and compositional structure of the text.

In the middle of the 19th century, A. Radlinský began to use Štúr's codification of the language in his work, which is why the books and magazines published by him maintained a high language standard (Zubko, 2021). The texts are deliberately chosen for the timeless theme of wedding and marriage, as evidenced by this quote: "*Marital status has always represented the moral status of people*" (p. 13), although the origin of the texts comes closer to the end of the 19th century. Sermons and wedding speeches in particular represent a specific means of communication, and since the homily is stylistically close to educational, journalistic or administrative speeches, classical and typically rhetorical figures of speech are deliberately used in the homily; the style of the homily approaches an artistic style (Stanček, 2001). The sermon belongs to the genre "*in which the communicative intention, the preacher's ability to address the listener plays a significant role in composing the text*" (Mihalková, 2019).

Since the Middle Ages, sermons have not only been a means of teaching about the basics of the Christian faith and informing about new knowledge and discoveries in the natural sciences but have also developed the listeners' aesthetic sense (Brťáňová, 2000). This didactic-aestheticising element also dominates in the 19th-century spiritual, thematic wedding speeches through the orator's view of spiritual and worldly problems in contemporary society. The collection of wedding speeches is composed as an epic story that gradually develops and passes through the stages of the marriage union from the preparation for the marriage through stories from the Old Testament, the wedding ceremony using comparisons with the church and the New Testament, to the post-marriage phase, where it refers to the New Testament. The essence and "*core of the sermon is the explication of the biblical text [...]*" and the Bible "*brings forth a living offspring that exceeds the possibilities of a cultural-historical approach to its texts*" (Brťáňová, 2000). Sermons are specific in their implication of both the didactic (educational) and the aestheticising (artistic) purpose, therefore the construction of a sermon involves several diverse building elements necessary to achieve the target content. "*The art of preaching then lies in the fact that the preacher knows how to correctly determine priorities that correspond to the content of the text and the audience. He*

must be able to distinguish the necessary elements based on the goal and what needs to be highlighted by redundancy and examples." (Benka, 2016) As Erika Brtářová (2000) states in connection with the success of the literary-scholar analysis of the sermon, the key to the literary language of the sermon is the rhetoric and thus "the literary historian faces the task of uncovering and deciphering rhetorical devices and showing their underpinnings."

The analysed set of spiritual wedding speeches is classified as special-occasion thematic sermons. *"Even though thematic sermons do not discuss a particular section of St. Scriptures, for them, too, the Bible is a supporting source of knowledge."* (Bieleková, 2012) The subject of thematic sermons is usually one of the articles of faith closely related to the biblical text; the compositional arrangement of the thematic sermon by default adheres to the classic textual triad: introduction, analysis of the text and conclusion (Brtářová, 2018). Spiritual speech usually deals with general problems of morality, helps to solve current problems from the spiritual community's point of view, addresses the listeners directly and incites (Čechová, Krčmová & Minářová, 2008). In spiritual wedding speeches, the motif of the biblical story of the first spouses alternates with the motif of marriage in contemporary society; the common theme is love and sin.

Functional Characteristics of Macroparadigms and Microparadigms of Stylistic Devices

Sermonic speeches are delivered in public, directly to the audience, but they are preceded by detailed written preparation, thought-out formal composition and detailed content argumentation. Lexical means provide the speaker with the richest possibilities for the linguistic rendering of the text, therefore, when preparing a speech, the speaker carefully considers the choice of suitable lexical means that will fulfil his communicative, didactic or aesthetic purpose. Lexical stylistic devices are an inventory for the creation of speeches and with the help of these means, the author regulates and nuances the style of his text (Findra, 2004). Therefore, lexical stylistic devices have a significant impact on the stylistic form of the text, they are characterised as basic indicators of style. Consequently, when creating a text, the systemic value of the word comes to the fore, as well as the influence of the context in the sense of connecting the text with the communication situation and the environment. The author must consider both when producing and rendering the text. While choosing the linguistic means for sermon speeches, the goals of the sermon are also taken into account by the appropriate choice of verbs: distinguish, compare, match, contradict (cognitive goals in the sense of a didactic sermon) or touch, rejoice, calm, shake (emotional goals in the sense of a solemn sermon) and to challenge, beg, warn (inciting objectives in the sense of an ethical sermon, Benka 2016). The creator of the text must reflect the linguistic resources of the national language as well as its rich division and respond sensitively to the language through functional switching of the code depending on the type of genre and potential addressees. What's dominant when it comes to lexical stylistic devices is the stylistic value of a word and its stylistic colouring, as well as the factual meaning of the word or phrases (cf. Findra, 2013). The study presents the opposite paradigmatic pairs of stylistically neutral and stylistically marked expressions and notional and emotional-expressive phrases in selected specific texts and the resulting microparadigm of stylistically marked words. On the surface-level (formal) organisation of the text, what's important when examining the texts are the stated oppositions of the macroparadigms. At the point of their mixing, differentiated stylistic contexts arise, and at the point of their encounter, a contrast arises, called a contrast node, which is the source of an emotional-aesthetic effect (Findra, 2004).

In religious texts, which are typically characterised by stylistically marked lexicon, there is a clear overuse of the microparadigm of biblical words and religious words, but the use of other microparadigms belonging to the macroparadigm of emotional-expressive stylistic devices or to stylistically coloured devices is not excluded due to the epic, didactic or rhetorical nature of the wedding speech. In the subject-compositional plan of an epic text, it applies that thematic contexts or a specific functional purpose can be expressed using colloquial words, professionalisms, slang words, euphemisms and others, or the period colouring can be expressed using outdated words or historicisms (Findra, 2004). It can be assumed that in the selected analysed texts, the lexical stylistically marked devices belong mainly to the microparadigm of the biblical, confessional or religious words and book words.

The religious or liturgical style dominates the spiritual texts of sermon writings. The liturgical style represents a summary of texts at the level of complex styles, therefore it is also referred to as a primary, functional style; its goal is to portray monumentality, grandeur, dignity and seriousness (Mistrík, 1997). In the analysed speeches, only the linguistic side of the text can be noticed, because the selected speeches no longer have a visual and acoustic component, even though they were originally primarily intended for public ceremonial performances in front of an audience. *"The linguistic structure of the religious style is manifested in religious texts primarily on the thematic level, which has a direct reflection even on the elementary lexical level"* (Pavlovič, 2011). Religious texts frequently contain biblical words, archaisms, expressive and emotional words, euphemisms, hyperboles and personifications, poetic words, metaphors, allegories, repetitive figures, elatives, imperatives, colourful modal constructions, questions and exclamations (Mistrík et al., 1993). Specific linguistic means indicating the doxological dimension of thinking about God are represented by those expressions that draw attention to God and His rule (Žeňuch & Šašerina, 2021). Biblical words have their origin in biblical texts and are often part of phraseological units in explanatory dictionaries. Biblical words and confessionalisms (religious words) or church words in general are stylistically indicative words that are close to archaisms, both because of their occurrence in older texts (such as sermons of the time), and as a means of characterising the time in rhetorical texts. These lexemes were initially, and are still, used in religious texts such as sermons, spiritual speeches, religious literature and religious songs. The analysed genre of texts - spiritual speech - presupposes frequent occurrence of biblical words (in Slovak explanatory dictionaries, these words are indicated by a stylistic qualifier written in italics "*bibl.*") such as *Lord Christ/Lord Jesus Christ, behold* (an expression emphasising or questioning the essence of humanity), *the new testament, the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise, the heavenly paradise, the people of Israel, the old testament, the apostle, the Cana of Galilee wedding and blessed*, religious terms or Christian religious words (in Slovak explanatory dictionaries, these words are indicated by a stylistic qualifier written in italics "*náb.*") such as *holy, Holy Spirit, holy scripture, Lamb of God, revelation, God Almighty, Creator, Founder/Saviour, law of God, commandments of God, prophet, sacrifice, pray, amen, angel, divine grace, sin, word of God, holy grace, God the heavenly Father/Father, sacrament, Only Begotten Son, salvation, altar sacrament, soul, mercy and heavens* and ecclesiastical words such as *bless, mass, faith, gospel, consecration, baptism*, often in different variants or synonymous forms.

Other frequent lexical devices used in religious texts are book words, the function of which is to contribute to the uncommonness, exceptionality and exclusivity of the expression, to a "higher" way of expressing oneself, be it in the sense of intellectuality, solemnity or aesthetics (Orgoňová & Bohunická, 2011) since these units move the speech into more poetic positions. Literary style is associated with a higher level of expression, and book words are

seen as opposites to ordinary colloquial words. "*The use of book words can't be limited to a single functional and style area*" (Čechová, Krčmová & Minářová, 2008). Book words frequently occur in written texts as standard words that are, however, more passionate and exaggerated in style. These verbal means of expressing an attitude towards a socially significant event functionally highlight the importance of the situation. Book words can bear the mark of obsolescence or novelty; in the analysed texts of older date, it is more probable to expect a patina of archaism (Mistrík, 1997). The uncommonness of the festive event conveyed in special-occasion speeches or wedding sermons contributes to the high manner of the authors style of expression, which brings pathos and nobility to the speech. In festive wedding speeches, book words (in Slovak explanatory dictionaries, these words are indicated by a stylistic qualifier written in italics "*kniž.*") contribute to the atmosphere of solemnity. These are, for example, *počiatok* (commencement), *tesklivosť* (melancholy), *riečť* (sound out), *učiniť* (bring on), *zvelebovať* (glorify), *ortiel'* (condemning sentence), *vyjaviť* (bring to light), *nepoškvrnený* (blameless). Another category of words that may be considered bookish are unusual compounds (unusual in terms of form or meaning), but also many compound words with the secondary sign of bookishness, since many book words have a metaphorical origin: establishment of marital status (conclusion of marriage), to go in ones mind (to think), divine book/book of wisdom (Bible), virginal status (moral purity), divine appointment (God's decision), life appointment (birth), robe of innocence (purity).

When it comes to genre construction, sermon texts are built primarily on the principle of expository essays, which are a part of the explanatory content model. In the text itself, this model is clearly projected into the tension between objectivity and subjectivity. This tension is reflected in the differentiated use of linguistic notional means, which form a neutral textual plane, and this stylistically unmarked background is modulated by lexemes of stylistically marked macroparadigms, which are linked to the macroparadigm of notional and emotional-expressive phrases (Findra, 2004). Emotional-expressive means are used wherever the experiential nature of the text is to be emphasised, but the degree of their use must be kept in mind, because excessive expressiveness, emotionality, even sentimentality of the text can result in the emergence of a communication barrier (Slančová, 1996, Findra, 1989). They are represented mostly through various kinds of figurative expressions, they are a means of pathos and a solemn moment; they give the listener a time to rest because the flow of information slows down in figuratively tuned places - smaller content is spread over a larger area (Findra, 2013). The gloomy and joyful attributes of marriage are captured through subjective emotional-expressive linguistic means. During the analysis of marriage speeches, the microparadigm of emotional-expressive words with a negative and positive tone was rarely observed because, for example, the occurrence of inherent expressive phrases with a negative charge was, due to the type of genre, attenuated by euphemisms and their multi-word versions - periphrases. Expressive phrases with a negative charge were reflected, for example, by lexemes such as malediction, malevolence (curse) and abomination (repulsion), which were supposed to increase the effects of warning the speaker against moral decline in marriage. The microparadigm of euphemisms can be seen in the form of one-word expressions: indecent (obscene, immoral), disgrace (dishonour, stain), and in the form of multi-word expressions, the so-called periphrases, such as: in the other world (after death), transgression of God's law (sin), infect the moral path (defile), no evil hatred (enmity), harass with obscenities (morally taint). The analysed texts contained a specific class of expressive, personal words - particles (perhaps, especially, however, surely, so, yes, as, still, please); and rare expressive phraseological units such as *klásť na srdce* (to urge) and *mávať niekoho pred očami* (look after), which belong to the macroparadigm of emotional-expressive stylistic devices.

In the analysed spiritual speeches, authors continuously referred to biblical texts, through which they fulfilled the intertextual role of texts and which the addressee perceives as intertextual contexts. For the receivers, however, this can result in problems with understanding the text, which becomes more difficult to recognise and decipher if the listener is not familiar with the interpretation of the biblical text. On the other hand, the introduction of passages from the Bible made the texts more believable and argumentatively saturated, and the psalms also added the necessary pathos and seriousness to the speeches and made them multidimensional in their structure. The speeches are filled with names of biblical figures Noah, Lamech, Cain, Moses, Jesus Christ, Sarah, Hagar, Jacob, Rachel and others or the names of religious realities such as the flood of the world and expulsion from Paradise.

The author's unique linguistic and rhetorical style can further impede the texts understanding, as it uses rich figurative language, especially in the first part of the collection of speeches. *Homily has always been metonymically considered to be oratorical par excellence. Homily belongs among solemn speeches, for which the abundant use of figures of speech is typical.*" (Stanček, 2001) In addition to the author's own metaphors and metonymies, the text also contains established figurative phrases that the listener neither pays close attention to nor does it burden his or her perception. On the contrary, the author's own figurative phrases can impede the listener's understanding and cause difficulties at the level of perception. Therefore, these places require the listener's increased attention and concentration. Figurative language is the bearer of an aesthetic function in the rhetorical style and belongs among the basic means of decoration, pathos and solemnity of the moment (Findra, 1989).

The selected linguistic means of wedding speeches reflect the pragmatic focus of the statement or context, and therefore, we feel a tension between the word and the context when using figurative language, which brings suggestiveness, decorativeness and subjectivity to the speech (Findra, 2004). Based on the public nature of his speech and the specific audience, the speaker-preacher must, in addition to the basic oratorical linguistic means, also use specific figures of speech if he wants his speeches to be suggestive, illustrative, excited, aesthetic and, if necessary, also dramatic (Stanček, 2001).

The emotional-aesthetic experience and cognitive value of a metaphor lies in the mirroring of meaning, which occurs when the meanings of two expressions are transferred and confronted, and subsequently, there comes an updated disclosure (intensification) of a certain property of one of the objects (Findra, 2013). According to Herbert L. Colston and Raymond W. Gibbs (2021), figurative language works effectively and is most of the times understood by many addressees without much effort because it demonstrates precisely what we mean, thus making figurative language used in metaphors, metonymies, personifications, and idioms an ideal means of capturing our complex figurative thoughts and allowing others to experience what we think and feel. This refutes the traditional notion that direct language can best express the content and intent of communication. The analysed texts are mainly rich in common metaphors, in which certain clichés can be felt, because these are already firmly attached to the signified notion and their secondary nature is no longer felt: loss of grief, shed tears, bitter marital status, inner decoration (inner beauty), put down words, turn the eyes toward, averting sorrow and grief, entering into marriage, the first spouses (union of Adam and Eve), visible from someone's words, anxiety/hardness of heart, breaking off the marriage. Wedding speeches contain metaphors with both positive and negative connotations and often with a reference to faith and Christianity: turn to the city of paradise (turn towards paradise), let go of a hard dream, the robe of innocence, divine gifts poured on her, beautify the soul (purify the soul), a vessel of body torment/debauchery/indecency, touched by the inner heartache,

offspring of Adam (mankind), hell serpent (devil). These are mainly original metaphors based on simple similarity, therefore this type of metaphor does not require much semantic effort to understand. *"Although the text is saturated with metaphors, it is easy to read"* (Mistrík, 1997). A special kind of metaphor is personification, in which the properties and abilities of people are attributed to inanimate objects; it is a connection of an inanimate agent of the action with an activity characteristic of a person (Čechová, Krčmová & Minářová, 2008). In marriage speeches, many images were created through this type of transmission, as a reference to faith and Christianity: sin came, death came, righteousness revives faith, dead faith, the law reigns/ rules, and divine benevolence will come forth.

Another figurative device represented in this speech is metonymy, which is based on the internal relationship between two objects or phenomena based on a logical connection. Metonymic expressions in the form of synecdoche based on the quantitative relationship between the denotator and the designator were present in special-occasion speeches. The above-mentioned internal relationships can be traced to a synecdochic switch based on referring to the whole by its part, e.g. the work of one's hands (instead of the work of the person as a whole), to bless the name (instead of blessing the Divine Person), by the power of the hands of God (instead of the power of God). There were also synecdochic phrases created on the basis of replacing the plural with the singular: the word speaks about it, the testimony of the living word (instead of the plural words).

Conclusions

At such an extraordinary social event as a wedding, the form of the spiritual wedding speech became a very important subject of the speaker's interest. The choice of appropriate language devices to portray the religious, didactic, moral or social content and at the same time to evoke the desired pathos of the speech required not only good liturgical knowledge but also linguistic, compositional and rhetorical skills in order to achieve the inciting moral-religious effect on the addressee. Education about marriage in selected spiritual texts from the end of the 19th century was based on the pillars of biblical stories and framed with functional quotations from the Old and New Testaments, which are timeless and inspiring in terms of their content but also form. The sermon was dominated by the so-called regulative words, which belong to one of the four categories of speech acts and indicate the relationship of the speaker and the listener to the rules they may obey or violate. Such statements are represented, for example, by verbs such as order, beg, admonish, advise, excuse or forgive (Benka, 2016). Through the dominance of regulative expressions, spiritual solemn speech becomes a dialogue, and thus more personal and compelling. In this type of sermon, the preacher has the option to be more emotional than cognitive; the preacher's personality can be reflected in the sermon. The authors' intention, clearly and concretely defined in this way, was conveyed by an adequate and rich selection of linguistic means. The analysis of the selected texts revealed a stylistically marked lexicon and stylistic markedness in the emotional-expressive macroparadigm. The texts accumulated lexical and stylistically marked devices mainly in the microparadigm of biblical and confessional words and also in the microparadigm of book words, the primary function of which was to bring a sense of pathos or grandeur and to strengthen the atmosphere of uncommonness and exceptionality. The focus on detecting the presence of stylistically marked devices in a set of thematically homogeneous texts with a festive wedding theme, which are desirable in this type of genre, pointed to the abundant occurrence of lexicalised figurative expressions with the aim of emotionally affecting the listener, the occurrence of repetitive figures of speech as well as various addresses, through which the author turns to the listeners and establishes contact with

them, creates a dialogue, urges them and thus makes his speech more subjective and evocative. By applying a wide range of diverse metaphorical means, the speech evokes in the addressee an aesthetic, didactic and at the same time artistic experience, which a spiritual wedding speech should possess.

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