

Rhetorical Text as a Reflection of the Ethnocultural Picture of the World (Based on Russian and Uzbek Languages)

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ABSTRACT

This article is dedicated to the comparative study of rhetorical text as a form of objectification of the ethnocultural worldview in Russian and Uzbek linguocultures. Rhetorical text is considered a speech work whose compositional-stylistic organization reflects the value priorities, norms of speech behavior, and figurative thinking of the people. Based on materials from oratorical prose, public speeches, greeting and congratulatory speeches, as well as the paremiological fund of the two languages, general patterns in constructing persuasive speech (appeal to authority, use of precedent texts, argumentation with an example) and ethno-cultural differences are identified: in the Russian tradition, a logical-argumentative strategy and personal modality prevail, while in the Uzbek tradition, a strategy of hierarchical respect, reliance on collective experience, and paremia as a ready-made form of moral inference prevail. It is concluded that the comparative analysis of rhetorical text represents a productive way of studying the linguistic picture of the world and is of practical importance for teaching Russian to Uzbek audiences and in the practice of intercultural communication.

Keywords: Rhetorical text, ethnocultural worldview, linguoculturology, paremiology, speech etiquette, Russian language, Uzbek language

INTRODUCTION

The turn of modern linguistics toward the anthropocentric paradigm has made language not only a means of describing reality but also an object of study as a form of existence for culture and national consciousness [7: 15]. In this context, rhetorical text is of particular interest – a work organized according to the laws of persuasive speech, focused on influencing the addressee and built taking into account the norms, values, and stereotypes of speech behavior accepted in a specific linguocultural community. Since rhetoric is, by its nature, dialogical and social, it is precisely in the rhetorical text that the concepts of what is necessary, just, respectful, and worthy, which constitute the core of the people's ethno-cultural worldview, are most fully manifested [2: 88].

The relevance of addressing the comparative study of Russian and Uzbek rhetorical texts is determined by several factors. First, active integration processes, the development of intercultural communication, and bilingual education in Uzbekistan require an understanding of not only lexicogrammatical but also discursive-rhetorical differences between languages [10: 78]. Secondly, despite the development of a general theory of rhetoric (Aristotle [1: 23]; Yu. V. Rozhdestvensky [8: 98]; A. K. Mikhalskaya [6: 67]) and linguoculturology (Yu. S. Stepanov [9: 340]; V. A. Maslova [5: 45]; A. Vezhbitskaya [2: 210]), the comparative analysis of rhetorical text based on materials from languages with different structures – Slavic (Russian) and Turkic (Uzbek) – remains insufficiently studied, which determines the scientific novelty of this work. Thirdly, the practical need to optimize the teaching of Russian as a non-native language in Uzbek audiences necessitates considering ethnorhetorical differences when teaching the construction of oral and written statements of a persuasive nature [3: 120].

It should be noted that rhetorical text occupies a special place among the objects of linguoculturological description, since, unlike lexical or phraseological units, it is a complete communicative event: it has an author, an addressee, a situation

of utterance, and an intended perlocutionary effect. This makes it possible to observe the ethno-cultural picture of the world not as a static inventory of “concepts” but as a dynamic strategy of persuasion realized in real conditions of interaction between speaker and audience [9: 340].

The aim of the study is to identify and systematically describe the ethnoculturally conditioned features of the compositional-stylistic and figurative organization of rhetorical text in Russian and Uzbek linguocultures. To achieve the set goal, the following tasks were addressed: 1) to clarify the content of the concept of “rhetorical text” in relation to the tasks of linguocultural analysis; 2) to characterize the components of the ethno-cultural worldview that regularly find expression in rhetorical texts (value hierarchy, the image of the addressee, the category of politeness); 3) to compare compositional strategies for constructing persuasive speech in Russian and Uzbek traditions; 4) to describe the role of the paremiological fund as a source of rhetorical argument; 5) to identify the common and specific features of the figurative-metaphorical system of the rhetorical text in the two languages.

METHODS

The research material consists of oratorical prose texts, public and jubilee speeches, greetings and congratulatory addresses, well-wishes texts (Russian: *поздравление*, Uzbek: *oyo, oqyo'l*), as well as units of the paremiological fund of the Russian and Uzbek languages (proverbs, sayings, aphorisms) selected from collections of rhetorical examples, textbooks on oratory, periodical press materials, and the author's card index formed during teaching and research activities at the Department of Russian Philology of Fergana State University. The total volume of the analyzed material consisted of approximately 260 text fragments and over 300 paremiological units from each language.

The selection of material was governed by three criteria: genre affiliation with persuasive, ceremonial, or hortatory speech rather than neutral narration or description; the presence of an explicit addressee and a discernible communicative goal (to

convince, to congratulate, to admonish, to unite); and accessibility of the text for repeated contextual analysis, which excluded fragmentary or corrupted sources [4: 145].

The study employed the comparative-typological method [4: 145], the linguoculturological analysis method, which allows for the correlation of linguistic facts with cultural facts [5: 12], the contextual and component analysis method, as well as quantitative calculation techniques to identify the frequency of individual rhetorical strategies and speech etiquette formulas.

RESULTS

Rhetorical text in this work refers to a coherent speech work (oral or written) constructed by the author with a conscious intent to persuade, influence, or gain the consent of the addressee, and organized according to the canons of the rhetorical canon – invention (finding content), disposition (placement of parts), and elocution (verbal formulation) [1: 23; 8: 98]. Unlike a neutral informative text, a rhetorical text is always socially and axiologically marked: it relies on a system of values shared by the author and the addressee, and therefore inevitably carries the imprint of the ethno-cultural picture of the world – a historically formed, language-bound set of people's perceptions of the world, man, society, and norms of behavior [7: 15]. That is why it is legitimate to view the rhetorical text not only as an object of stylistics but also as a source of linguoculturological reconstruction.

Following Yu.S. Stepanov [9: 340] and V. A. Maslova [5: 45], the ethno-cultural picture of the world is understood as a system of value orientations and representations fixed in the language of an ethnos that determine its characteristic models of speech and non-speech behavior. In a rhetorical text, this system manifests primarily through three channels: 1) choice and hierarchy of arguments (what the speaker is appealing to – logic, authority, feeling, tradition); 2) speech etiquette formulas that formalize address to the addressee and indicate the social distance perceived by the speaker; 3) figurative-metaphorical structure of speech, reflecting the sources of metaphorization

characteristic of this culture (nature, everyday life, religious, family images) [2: 210].

The Russian rhetorical tradition, dating back to M. V. Lomonosov's "Rhetoric" and developed in the works of Yu. V. Rozhdestvensky [8: 203] and A. K. Mikhalskaya [6: 67], tends toward the logical-argumentative construction of speech: thesis – argument – conclusion. Russian public speech is characterized by a relatively high degree of personal modality ("I am convinced," "it seems to me," "I will allow myself to notice"), which allows for the open expression of the author's position and a polemical beginning. The formulas of address ("dear colleagues," "dear friends," "ladies and gentlemen") demonstrate the establishment of equality in the status of communication participants even in the presence of a real hierarchy, which reflects the trend of democratization of speech etiquette of the XX-XXI centuries, characteristic of Russian public communication ethics. At the same time, an archaic layer is preserved – an appeal to the community, to a common destiny ("we are with you," "our common duty"), dating back to the tradition of preaching and journalistic speech.

The Uzbek rhetorical tradition was formed in close connection with Eastern literary ethics and oral poetic heritage (speech art, speech culture) [11: 54] and is characterized by a pronounced strategy of hierarchical respect. A mandatory compositional element of public speech is a polite introduction with mention of elders in age and status ("respected elders," "dear guests," "dear teachers"), which signifies a commitment not to equality, but to recognizing the social and age status of the addressee as a condition for successful communication [12: 29]. Argumentation is more often built on an inductive-illustrative model rather than a deductive one: the general thesis is reinforced by an example from the lives of elders, a parable, or a proverb that serves as a ready-made moral conclusion that the speaker shares with the audience rather than imposing on them. Personal modality is more restrained: the pronoun "men" (я) is used less frequently in evaluative contexts than in Russian speech, giving way to impersonal and collective forms.

Comparative analysis showed that the paremiological unit performs the function of an argument to tradition in the rhetorical text of both cultures, but the frequency and position of the paremia in the text are different. In Uzbek rhetorical texts, a proverb regularly occupies a strong position – the beginning or end of speech – performing the role of an epigraph-summary and serving as a kind of sanction for collective experience (*Oqsokolso'zi-tarozidek* – “an elder's word is like a scale”) [11: 54]. In Russian rhetorical texts, the proverb is often used in the middle part as an illustration of an already advanced thesis and is often accompanied by ironic or polemical reinterpretation (“as they say, measure seven times – but sometimes it's worth taking a risk”), reflecting a more critical, less ritualistic attitude toward traditional knowledge. Common to both traditions remains the function of the proverb as a means of compressing arguments and appealing to folk wisdom, which confirms the universal nature of the paremia as a rhetorical topos in the context of the ethnocultural specificity of its textual implementation [2: 88].

The analysis of the metaphorical structure of rhetorical texts revealed differences in the dominant sources of imagery. In the Russian tradition, metaphors of path and road (“to go forward,” “on the threshold of change”), military and agonal metaphors (“struggle for quality,” “work front”), as well as images related to the concept of “soul” as the focus of a person's inner life, are productive. In the Uzbek tradition, metaphors of home and hearth (*uy-joy*, *ostona* – threshold as a symbol of beginning), agricultural images (*mevabermoq* – to bear fruit, about the results of labor), as well as images related to the concept of *kōngil* – heart/soul as a focus not so much of individual experience as of interpersonal harmony and hospitality, predominate [2: 210]. The difference in the sources of metaphorization aligns with the general conclusions of linguoculturology regarding the more pronounced orientation of the Russian worldview toward the individual-psychological sphere and the Uzbek one toward the sphere of family-relative and communal relations [9: 340].

DISCUSSION

Summarizing the results of the comparison, it can be argued that the rhetorical text in both linguocultures performs a universal function of persuasion and relies on a common rhetorical canon (invention – disposition – elocution) [1: 23], but the specific content of each stage of the canon is ethno-culturally determined. Common features include: the mandatory nature of the text's etiquette framework, the use of paremia as an argument for tradition, and the orientation toward precedent texts and authoritative sources. Specific features include the ratio of personal and collective modality, the position and function of the proverb within the text composition, the dominant sources of metaphorization, and the degree of explicitness of age and status hierarchies in the formulas of address.

These data confirm the thesis that rhetorical text is not only a form of speech impact but also a kind of “mirror” of the ethnocultural worldview, suitable for its reconstruction alongside data from paremiology and phraseology [5: 12; 9: 340]. The obtained results correlate with the earlier observations on the discursive-rhetorical asymmetry between Slavic and Turkic linguocultures [10: 78] and extend them by proposing a channel-based model (argument, etiquette, imagery) for describing ethnocultural specificity in rhetorical text.

At the same time, it should be noted that the corpus is skewed toward formal and semi-formal genres and may underrepresent more spontaneous, colloquial forms of persuasive speech, so the tendencies reported above should be read as indicative rather than exhaustive.

The conducted research demonstrated that the rhetorical text represents a productive object of linguocultural analysis, allowing for the identification of ethno-culturally conditioned patterns of speech behavior. A comparison of Russian and Uzbek material revealed both general patterns in constructing persuasive speech, which are apparently characteristic of rhetoric as a whole, and deep differences conditioned by different value systems: the individual-personal orientation of Russian speech

culture and the hierarchical-collectivist orientation of Uzbek speech culture [9: 340; 11: 54].

The obtained results are of not only theoretical but also applied importance: their consideration is appropriate when developing training courses on rhetoric and speech culture for bilingual audiences, when preparing manuals on Russian as a non-native language [3: 120], as well as in the practice of business and diplomatic intercultural communication, where discrepancies in rhetorical strategies often become a source of communication failures [10: 78].

A promising direction for further research is the expansion of material through modern media and advertising rhetorical texts, as well as the involvement of corpus linguistics methods to verify quantitative data on the frequency of the considered rhetorical strategies, and an extension of the comparison to a third, typologically distinct linguoculture.

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