THEOLINGUISTICS AS A NEW SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE

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TEOLINGVISTIKA YANGI ILMIY YO'NALISH SIFATIDA

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ТЕОЛИНГВИСТИКА КАК НОВАЯ НАУЧНАЯ ДИСЦИПЛИНА

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Annotatsiya. Maqolada til va din o'rtasidagi bog'liqliklar, diniy omillarning tilda aks etishi hamda diniy til muammolarini o'rganuvchi tilshunoslikning yangi yo'nalishi teolingvistika fanining nazariy asoslari, tadqiqot obyekti, maqsad va vazifalari o'rganib chiqilgan. Xususan, muallif fan rivojiga katta hissa qo'shgan mashhur olimlarning mazkur fan yuzasidan olib borgan tadqiqotlari natijalarini keltirish orqali fanning paydo bo'lishi bosqichlarini xronologik ketma-ketlikda namoyon etadi. Tadqiqotning dolzarbligi va yangiligi shundan iboratki, muallif masalani atroflicha o'rgangach, soha yuzasidan oldinda tadqiq etilishi lozim bo'lgan ba'zi muammolarni keltirib o'tadi: 1) hozirgi kunga qadar diniy tildan faqat diniy muassasalardagina foydalanilishi o'rganilgan bo'lib, uning diniy bo'lmagan vaziyatlarda ham ishlatilishi holatlari e'tibordan chetda qoldirilgan. Shuning uchun ham muallif diniy sayqallangan til birliklarining diniy bo'lmagan kommunikativ vaziyatlarda qo'llanilishini o'rganishni taklif qiladi; 2) inson ongida diniy dunyoqarashning shakllanishi va uning diniy til orqali tasvirlanishini ham yoritishni taklif qiladi.
Kalit so'zlar: teolingvistika; diniy til; muqaddas til; diniy uslub; diniy dunyoqarash.

Abstract. The article studies theoretical foundation, objects, aims and investigative tasks of theolinguistics, a new linguistic trend that deals with correlative links between language and religion, the representation of religious factors in language. The study attempts to construct the chronological progression of the discipline's emergence by imparting valuable data based on the findings of famous scholars, which have considerably contributed to the development of the discipline. The actuality and novelty of the

research are conditioned by the fact that having scrutinized the matter in question from different angles, the author outnumbers a few research gaps that need to be filled by further comprehensive investigations in the field: 1) religious language has only been explored within religious contexts so far, which has left the usage of religious language in other contexts beyond attention. So, the study proposes to investigate the utilization of religiously marked linguistic units in non-religious communicative situations; 2) the study also suggests shedding light upon the accumulation of religious world picture in the human mind and its representation via religious language.

Keywords: theolinguistics; religious language; sacred language; religious style; religious world picture.

Аннотация. В статье исследуются теоретические основы, объекты, цели и исследовательские задачи теолингвистики — нового лингвистического направления, изучающего коррелятивные связи между языком и религией, репрезентацию религиозных факторов в языке и религиозном языке. В частности, автор стремится построить хронологическую последовательность возникновения дисциплины, сообщая ценные данные, основанные на выводах известных ученых, внесших значительный вклад в развитие дисциплины. Актуальность и новизна исследования обусловлены тем, что, рассмотрев вопрос с разных сторон, автор показывает ряд исследовательских пробелов, которые необходимо заполнить дальнейшими всесторонними исследованиями в данной области: 1) религиозный язык только до сих пор исследовался в религиозном контексте, что оставило без внимания использование религиозного языка в других контекстах. Так, в исследовании предлагается исследовать использование религиозно маркированных языковых единиц в нерелигиозных коммуникативных ситуациях; 2) исследование также предлагает пролить свет на накопление религиозной картины мира в сознании человека и ее репрезентацию через религиозный язык.

Ключевые слова: теолингвистика; религиозный язык; сакральный язык; религиозный стиль; религиозная картина мира.

Introduction. The matter of religion and language, the correlations between these two terms have been in the spotlight of many scientific researches. They all show purposeful endeavours to scrutinize these phenomena via the implementation of various approaches and perspectives. The information that is intended to be foregrounded in this article is among those attempts, however, more emphasis will be placed on science that emerged at the intersection of linguistic and religious interrelations — theolinguistics.

A few remarks on the denotation of the notions of "language" and "religion" would lay a cornerstone for attaining a complete grasp over the matter in question. First and foremost, language is widely seen as a vehicle of communication in the linguo-encyclopedic dictionary: "… language, possessing internal integrity and unity, is a polyfunctional system. Among its functions, the most important ones can be considered those that are associated with the main

operations on information (human knowledge about reality) — the creation, storage and transmission of information" (16, 604).

Noteworthy, beyond its communicative, cognitive and metalinguistic functions language transmits socio-cultural information, as it conveys and preserves the identity of a particular ethnic community. Specifically, language enables its users to decode and interpret cultural information via culturally marked linguistic units (15, 20). In addition, language conveys religion-related messages peculiar to a community and unambiguous to another group of people (15, 24). The matter of religious language and its representation will be paid particular attention in the main part of the article below.

Main part. Religion is an indivisibly profound part of humanity. Being allocated in hearts and minds of individuals, its immense role in society can be evidenced by its presence in every sphere of life. Religion directly impacts the perception, procession, evaluation and transmission of the realities surrounding an individual. According to M. Müller, religion is universal and is the belief in a divine being (7). Comparatively, a similar idea is pushed forward by E. Tylor, who views religion as "… the belief in Spiritual Beings" (9, 8). É. Durkheim asserts that "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden ..." and adds that religion is "the self-validation of a society through myth and ritual" (4, 47). In the dictionary of foreign words in the modern Russian language, religion is defined as follows: "religion, [polish, religia ⇐ lat. religio conscientiousness] - a form of public consciousness based on belief in higher powers and entities that have supernatural powers and are the object of worship (17). In Collins English Dictionary, religion is specified as "… belief in a god or gods and the activities that are connected with this belief, such as praying or worshipping in a building such as a church or a temple" (18). Among many scholarly definitions provided to the term, religion is most commonly regarded as mutual considerations over sacredness, righteousness, honesty, morality and many other interpretations of goodness shared by people belonging to one community. It entails a vital feature of religious belongingness — religion refers to not only a single individual, but it also embraces all representatives of a group under the same shared beliefs, rituals, prayers and codes of behaviour. Each religion has a particular history and different way of looking at the world (1, 1219). However, the belief that is equally accepted by all religious communities is the existence of external and supernatural power, and such an unconditional reality is entitled differently from religion to religion: the existence of Almighty: Allah, God, Jesus, Brahma, Holy Spirit; sacred places — Mecca and Medina, Jerusalem, Kashi and Oudh and lines of other religious values (1, 1220).

Religion is closely related to culture, and this bilateral bond obligates the study of religion in its connection with culture. That is

to say, research over religion cannot be executed without the intrusion of the matter of culture. In this respect, it is worth noting that disputable assumptions exist regarding religious and cultural conjunction. D. Mulder considers religion a conventional expression of human culture — a cultural identity marker (6, 35). He states that the reciprocal interaction between culture and religion can be explained in the following twofold relation: religion is determined by culture, but religion also influences culture (6, 35). M. Galieva agrees that religion is an indivisible part of culture, but asserts that it is religion that determines culture. In fact, many spheres of culture, namely architecture, art, music, literature, etiquette and other creative activities are affected and enriched by religion (14, 11). Whatever assumptions emerge regarding the matter in question, interweaving relations between religion and culture is inevitable.

In brief, two factors always affect a person's social being and activity — religion and culture. After all, religion and culture serve as a furnace of inspiration for people. The engine that verbalizes these connections is language. It represents, maintains and conveys religious and cultural information verbally and represents religion and culture of a particular ethnic group. Language — religion — culture, and their interrelatedness are deeply rooted and have always been perceived as a simultaneously functioning system. Of these notions, language takes the largest share in dominance, as it bears both religious and cultural information.

The existence of corresponding links between language and religion has already found its reflection in the linguistic sciences. However, it is important to remark that linguo-religious studies were not first authorized to be carried out within a separate scientific field. More specifically, there have existed two contradicting flows of ideas regarding the confession of the emergence of an independent branch of linguistics studying the correlative links between language and religion: one group of linguists claim that linguo-religious affiliations are to be studied in the context of a new scientific trend, theolinguistics, which embraces the disclosure of the interaction and interdependence of language and religion (14, 52); meanwhile, another group of scholars assure that this issue has already found its reflection within traditional trends of linguistics such as functional stylistics, discourse, lexicology, communicative linguistics, cognitive linguistics and linguoculturology (14, 47). Anyhow, despite differing standpoints and approaches to the matter, the scholars admit the existence of religious language, though it is referenced differently: "language of religion", "sacred language", "religious style", and "religious discourse" (14, 45).

Generalizing the existing inclinations in the study of religious language, I.V. Bugaeva worked out the classification of the main approaches utilized in the field: 1) stylistic approach; 2) generic approach; 3) discursive approach; 4) communicative approach; 5) theolinguistic approach (11, 48). A brief outcome of each method is intended to be presented below to get introduced to the main

tendencies that the field has obtained so far. I.V. Bugaeva points out the names of such scholars L.P. Krysin, O.A. Prokhvatilova, I.M. Golberg, S.A. Gosteeva and O.A. Krilova as the supporters and appliers of the stylistic approach towards linguo-religious relations. Following the stylistic and generic approaches, which overlap due to familiar grounds, religious-preaching style is studied rather than the religious language (5, 85). However, M. Galieva asserts that stylistic and generic approaches are limited and are not sufficiently applicable for studying language and religion in relation. She believes it is much more reasonable to address to functional-stylistic approach for help as it embraces the differentiation of all basic styles, substyles and genres rather than only religious style (14, 35). Communicative and discursive approaches share almost the same interests as both of them put religious communication at the target of linguo-religious studies. However, each of them has set specific objectives that make them differ in certain aspects: discursive approach investigates only intra-church communication based on different text types, including liturgical discourse, prayer discourse, confessional discourse and others; meanwhile, communicative approach deals with religious communication outside the church (14, 36). The more comprehensive approach is formed coming out of the findings of A.K. Gadomskiy, Y.P. van Noppen and A. Wagner. They assure that the theolinguistic approach best suits the study of religious language. Accordingly, the idea that is strived to be revealed is how language functions within religious situations. This very approach gave rise to the emergence of theolinguistics, as a new scientific discipline studying the representation and verbalization of religious language in its full extent. The analysis of the data given in the works of A. K. Gadomskiy (13), D. Crystal (2), M. R. Galieva (14) gave us the opportunity of constructing the historical evolution of theolinguistics.

So, the history of explorations in an endeavour to unpack the interrelations between language and religion backdate to the findings of European and Russian scholars.

It is reasonable first to reflect upon the assertions pushed forward by the European scholar Jean-Pierre van Noppen. He coined the term "theolinguistics" in 1981 to mean "how human language can be used to appeal to God and how language functions in religious situations" (8). While introducing the new term, van Noppen highlights that it encompasses two crucial areas of exploring the religious language: first, theolinguistics is the science about a man's religious world picture and its articulation via language, which is constantly affected by man's understandings, beliefs and thoughts about divine; second, van Noppen asks not to disregard the fact that theolinguistics is a "multidisciplinary field of investigation", and the scientist backs up his idea by urging that it has grown out of other disciplines thus has close links with semiotics, philosophy, theology, linguistics, stylistics, literary studies and psychology (8, 2).

A German scholar, A. Wagner, in his articles, aimed at finding responses mainly to two questions: 1.What is to be understood under the term "theo"? 2. What is the subject matter and tasks designating theolinguistics as a science? (10, 507–512). To find answers to the above-stated questions, Wagner compares the term theolinguistics with the sciences of sociolinguistics and neurolinguistics.Wagner remarks limitedness and specificity of the term "theolinguistics": both of the former disciplines are of universal character, as all people are the cells of social interactions. They all go through neurological processes due to language usage in communicative situations, while theolinguistics cannot be applied to all people due to the absence of certain religious underpinnings. Non-universality of the concept of "theo" may be explained by the fact that it is not adherent in all religions: according to Greek etymology, "theos" denotes God - the Creator, and such an understanding does not exist in all religions. The term theolinguistics is limited, specific and suitable, for example, for Christians and Muslims. A. Wagner failed in finding a universal name for a new discipline even after juggling with the words like Religion — Religiolinguistik and Glaube — Glaubens (sprache) — linguistik. As a result, he stops at the term "Theolinguistik" for the linguo-religiiy investigations. According to the scientist, no term can vividly depict the twofold associations between language and religion, but "theolinguistics". Within the framework of theolinguistics, A. Wagner suggests defining the following problems: the problem of religious language; religious language behaviour — religious forms of communication; spheres of religious language use (10, 509).

The development of theolinguistics took a radical turn due to genuine authentications and endorsements of D. Crystal. He is famous in the field for his considerable contributions to developing particular perspectives of theolinguistics. He was the first to introduce the term "theolinguistics" in the dictionary "Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language" and later in "Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics" in 2008. Accordingly, the notion of "theolinguistics" is defined as "a term which has been used for the study of the relationship between language and religious thought and practice, as illustrated by ritual, sacred texts, preaching, doctrinal statements, and private affirmations of belief" (2, 3). In his book entitled "Religion, language and human mind", D. Crystal touched upon the topics that had not been put a shade on in his book "Linguistics, language and religion" which had been published earlier. D. Crystal used to refer to the new orientation as religious language before, but in the book on focus, he started actively using the term "theolinguistics". D.Crystal supports van Noppen's standpoints about "discourse-minded" theolinguist by agreeing that the discourse approach should be applied to the study of religious language in order to stick to the interdependent meaningful relationship between religious texts and social conditions they have emerged from. Despite his acceptance of the idea that "all language

analysis should be discourse-related", D. Crystal proposes to reconsider the accounts on "non-discourse minded theologist" too, as according to the scientist, it does have a right to be in theolinguistic studies. The scientist assures that there are insufficient empirical studies over religious language in its relation to phonetics, orthography, grammar and vocabulary. Another vivid idea emphasized by D. Crystal is the importance that pragmatics holds within linguo-religious studies. The scientist cites van Noppen's assumption in which two perspectives are elicited: not only the meanings that the words or sentences form (semantics), but also what these very words and sentences carry out pragmatic meanings to be analyzed (2, 10). D. Crystal personally defines pragmatics as the study of linguistic choices, communicative intentions and possible effects of the options, and particularizes the interdisciplinary relations of theolinguistics with pragmatics — religious language and its representation in discourse (2, 11).

The theoretical foundation of studying the correlative links between language and religion can also be found in the researches initiated by Russian scholars such as A.K. Gadomskiy, L.P. Krysin, I.V. Bugaeva, S.N. Bulgakov, V. S. Solovyov, O.A. Prohvatilova and V. I. Postavalova, whose contribution to the illumination of the subject is enormous.

Among other findings of the scholars in the field is the the anthropocosmic paradigm (the trinity of God-man-universe) suggested by V.I. Postovalova (16, 57), the foundation of which is based on the religious and philosophical concepts of the school, developed in the works of P.A. Florensky, S.N. Bulgakov and A.F. Losev (16, 83). According to her approach, language is assumed to have two essences: first, in its broader scope, it is equated to the language of the divine, and in its narrower interpretation, it is regarded as human language. Postovalova's assertions are justified via the following points: 1. A general methodological and theoretical attitude towards integral cognition (the unity of philosophy, theology and science) and the consideration of linguistic realities in the aspect of total unity, that embraces the world and everything, that is beyond and above it, i.e. the Absolute; 2. The consideration of language in the anthropocosmic paradigm; 3. The use of ontological categories in the analysis of linguistic phenomena: All-unity, Sophia, Myth, Number, Name.

Postovalova asserts that linguistics, due to the emergence of the anthropocosmic paradigm of the school of all-unity approached to "the boundaries of cognition", cooperating with the methods of cognition and making an attempt to make such methods of cognition to be scientific, aesthetic, religious and philosophical (16, 62).

V.I. Postovalova imparts a set of valuable ideas in the new field in her articles entitled "Наука о языке в свете идеала цельного знания" and "Теолингвистика в современном гуманитарном познании: истоки, основные идеи и направления". She defines theolinguistics as an epistemological

analysis of the relationship and interaction of language, and religion caused by the intersection of theology, anthropology and linguistics". Following the philosophical doctrine of A.F. Losev, V.I. Postovalova believes that the mainstay of theolinguistics is the biblical understanding of the Absolute, which was given special importance in the writings of A.F. Losev, P. Florensky, S. Bulgakov (16, 82).

In this respect, it is of paramount significance to shed light on the subject matter, tasks, central notions and investigative scope of theolinguistics. These all can be delineated after paying close attention to the components of the term *theology and linguistics*. Theological part presupposes a system of theoretically alongside with practically valuable religious knowledge about the divine, its existence and qualities. The linguistic component stands for the determination of language as a system of signs (semantic approach) and a system of dynamic use (pragmatic approach). In this regard, it is indisputably vital to accentuate A.K. Gadomskiy's affirmations on the issue, which made many existing questions answerable. A.K. Gadomskiy clearly outlines the object, aim and tasks of theolinguistics. According to him, theolinguistics aims to study the manifestation of religion, which is fixed in the language and reflected via language (13, 17). The object of the science is set coming out of its aim: theolinguists aim to investigate language as a religious form, as a means of reflection, preservation and transmission of religious content. According to A. K. Gadomskiy, to reach the aim, the following tasks are to be accomplished by whoever is involved in theolinguistic experiments: 1) appropriate and applicable sources of religious content should be selected; 2) differentiation, systematization and integration of the collected data (12, 164).

Brief glance at the history of theolinguistic scrutinies suffices to reveal that the importance of religion as a factor of relevance to the study of language usage, variation, modification, transference, preservation already got its reflection in the works of many scholars who are reasonably regarded as the founders of this branch of linguistics. Nevertheless, despite the paradigm forming works of the above-cited scientists, theolinguistics cannot be considered a fully grounded science due to insufficiencies that still remain in the field. As a matter of fact, considering that science has not undergone centuries of development yet, the anticipation of research gaps is absolutely expectable. Still, at the same time, these deficiencies are remediable too. To detect research gaps and mismatches in the field and instigate alternative frameworks to fill those gaps, theoretical frameworks that circulated the systematic development of this field of study should be briefly recollected. One of such significant frameworks was elaborated in the "Concise encyclopedia of language and religion" edited by John F. Swayer and J.M.Y. Simpson. Being comprised of seven sections, the work encompasses a series of studies on the following points: the role of language in the

context of particular religions; sacred texts (the Quran, the Bible, the Talmud and some others) and highly valued translations of religious sources; the emergence of language varieties affected and augmented by religions; the purposeful usage of language in religious contexts and theological discourses such as worshipping, pleading, praying all of which accumulate spiritual experiences; philosophical discussions over religious language; biographies highlighting the contribution of theologians, philosophers and linguists to the history and the study of language and religion (3, 3). Some other important dimensions of linguo-religious studies unconsidered in the previous research were well grounded within another framework developed by Spolsky in 2006. Spolsky's schemata encompass such a range of topics as effects of religion on linguistic choices, multilingualism and religious pluralism, construction of religious community under the impact of language and linguo-religious literacy. Spolsky does not appear to be satisfied with the validity of his classification, as he repeatedly refers to it, as being "parsimonious" and "not terribly revealing" (3, 4). However, his immense contribution to the field was outlining two related perspectives in the research on the relationship between religion and language policy: one focusing on the impact of religion on language policy, the other on religious literacy policy. The first line of research includes a discussion of the diffusion as well as absorption of religions on local languages or the language policy of certain religions and religious institutions. Meanwhile, the second line of research strives to vivify "the status of sacred religious texts as 'translatable' or not and the effects of language policy" (3, 4).

The above enlisted frameworks, by all means, serve as the cornerstone for studies delineating religious language, its characteristic features and verbalization. Nonetheless, as mentioned above, existing lines of research seem not to be sufficient in displaying the whole spectrum of theolinguistic issues on a large scale. The detected mismatches propose to look at the matter in question from other angles and widen the scope of theolinguistic investigations: to study how religious language is used outside the religious discourse community and can be utilized in other non-religious contexts to refer to non-religious issues. To justify the research object, it should be restated that, in its narrow sense, 'religious language' has always been accounted to be a language that is "consistently used with religion" or within a religious domain of language use (3, 6). In other words, 'religious language' has been seen as a kind of language "especially reserved for religious activities and used for very little else, except perhaps as school subjects or literary and scholarly languages" (3, 6). Consequently, religious language users are stereotypically thought to be participants of a religious custom (19). As part of our agreement to all scholarly accounts on the matter, we dare to claim that theolinguistics should not limit its investigative scope with the explication of religious language within religious contexts only:

hence it makes the field one-sided and biased. In fact, religious language is actively used in non-religious contexts — daily spoken and written discourse too (14, 62), as people either consciously or subconsciously use religiously marked linguistic units throughout their interaction with one another. Furthermore, according to M. Galieva's assertion, religious consciousness and religious world picture, which are verbalized via religiously marked linguistic units and form a religious - linguistic worldview, should also be seen as one of the considerations of theolinguistics (14, 63).

Conclusion. Theolinguistics is the new direction that emerged due to the inevitable partnership between language and religion (theology and linguistics). The evolution of theolinguistics as the study of religious language and as an independent discipline was loomed deep and large by different researchers. Though their approaches differ, the same purpose unites them all: to maintain the role and place of theolinguistics among other branches of linguistic studies, and this act is gaining more and more fame and appraisal these days.

Summing up, we intend to briefly refer back and restate the main inferences presented in the article:

• First and foremost, the study of language cannot go without its interrelation with culture and religion, as it is considered to be the main tool of religious and cultural information transference;

• Though the matter of religion and language is not new and has long been at the centre of attention of theologists and linguistics, the need to assemble linguo-religious studies within one discipline initiated the emergence of theolinguistics — the science about religious language;

• Having got closely acquainted with the theoretical foundation of theolinguistics, it is suggested to expand the investigative scope of the field: first, it is of tremendous importance to explicate the representation and verbalization of religious world picture; second, theolinguistic studies should encompass the study of religious language usage in other discourses that are beyond religious activities.

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