

A Linguistic Study of Preaching

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Abstract

Advice-giving is a common activity that occurs between friends, family members, or between professionals and lay people in written or spoken form, in face-to-face situations or in mediated forms of communication. According to Miller (2010: 11), the act of advice-giving in a religious context is called preaching. In spite of the importance of this topic, it has not been given due research attention. Thus, this study sets itself the task of dealing with preaching in religious contexts. Precisely, the study attempts to answer the following questions: (1) How is preaching defined? (2) What are the linguistic realizations of the act of preaching in the analyzed data? (3) What are the felicity conditions of the act of preaching? And (4) Through which strategies is preaching realized in the data under preview? In other words, this study aims at shedding light on the act of preaching through investigating it at three linguistic levels: semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic in some selected speeches by Al-Imam Al-Hasan (peace be upon him). In accordance with these aims, it is hypothesized that (1) Preaching usually takes the form of an imperative, whether positive or negative, (2) Pragmatically, preaching is best issued via direct strategies to urge the targets to consider it seriously. In order to achieve the aims of the study and verify or reject its hypothesis, a model is developed for the analysis of the data under examination. Besides, a statistical means represented by the percentage equation is used to calculate the results.

Keywords: preaching, advice-giving, linguistic realizations, felicity conditions, strategies, direct and indirect.

1. The Meaning of Preaching

Preaching is the communication of truth. It has two essential elements: truth and personality. Preaching has also been described as the outflow of life, the sifting of divine truth through human personality. It consists of a message delivered by a person with a religious status (a Priest or Imam) to a group or congregations to win the lost and to develop spiritual life in believers. Preaching is delivered in speech format- one person talks while the rest listen (Edwards, 2004: 33).

Preaching does not mean the delivery of a learned and edifying or hortatory discourse in a pleasant voice. Rather, it is the declaration of an event. Thus, to preach is to deliver a religious advisory address to an assembled group of people. Moreover, to preach is to say that something is good or necessary. In other words, to preach is to advise or recommend earnestly. The Free Dictionary defines preaching as the act of giving religious or moral instruction (Web source 1). Preaching (also called exhortation) is a form of belief systems, values, recommendations, or guidance about certain situations relayed in some context to another person, group or party offered as a guide to action or conduct (ibid.). Preaching is believed to be helpful. It may pertain to relationships, lifestyle changes, and religious beliefs.

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According to Miller (2010: 12), preaching is defined as the act of advice-giving. Miller's definition of preaching will be adopted throughout the study. Thus, preaching will be taken as an act of advice-giving. Edwards (2004: 33) states that a preacher is a person who gives a religious speech. In a similar vein, Miller (2010:12) argues that preachers tell people what they ought or ought not to do. Audience interest, then, is not the main purpose of preaching. Preaching must be passionate; passion makes preaching seem imperative and urgent.

2. Preaching as an Act of Advice-giving

Searle (1969: 67) defines advice-giving as "telling you what is best for you". According to Searle's classification of speech acts, advice and preaching belong to the directive category of speech acts. As a directive act, the speaker wants his advisee to do something, to behave in a certain way, or to believe in something (ibid.). In this case, advice-giving is somehow related to a request with the difference that advice is beneficial to its recipient.

Searle (1969: 67) relates the speech act of advice to the group of advisories, which include suggestions and recommendations as well, and notes that advice is considered to be of benefit to the hearer rather than the speaker and that it tells what is best for the hearer. The speaker may hope for a future act whose fulfillment on the part of the hearer will put him on the safe side.

Cultural expectations are an important negotiation of advice in the sense of a broad-overarching construct consisting of shared beliefs, values, and attributes (Limberg and Locher, 2012: 1). Crucially, it is not just the content of the advice that may influence people's perception of its force and appropriateness, but also the manner in which it is communicated and the status of the person delivering it. The surrounding text further supports the interpretation of the advisory act.

The offering of advice does not look linguistically the same each time it occurs; instead, it varies with the extent to which the speaker considers it important to preserve the advisee's freedom not to accept the act upon the advice or to ignore this matter completely. Consequently, the act of preaching as advice-giving entails the constant negotiation of the relation between the linguistic forms that advice takes and the meaning that arises in a highly specific context of the utterance (Fitzmaurice, 2002: 93).

Preaching as advice-giving incorporates conflictive concerns: on the one hand, the advice-giver is showing interest in his partner's affairs (i.e., advice with positive implications), and on the other hand, he is telling the other person what to do (i.e., advice with negative implications). Frequently, advice-givers resort to measures such as telling a story with reference to similar situations, using softeners, downgraders, mitigation and hedges (Bayraktaroglu and Sifianou, 2001: 182). In a religious context, the preacher or advice-giver may resort to citations from the Glorious Quran, or he may remind the hearers of the drawbacks of not following the given advice.

Preaching as advice-giving is a complex speech act that must be performed with caution when the speaker is reasonably certain that the hearer is likely to do what is being advised, that all advice must be hedged and softened and never given explicitly to avoid offending the hearer, and that the speaker is presupposed to have the right or the authority to give advice (Hinkel, 1994: 5). Yet, in Arabic, particularly in religious speeches, preaching as advice-giving is best given using a direct act to urge the hearers to consider the advice seriously since the preacher is providing knowledge he has but the hearers do not have.

2.1. The Felicity Conditions of Preaching

According to Austin (1962: 14), felicity conditions are rules which are necessary for the performance of speech acts, that is, speech acts are appropriately performed if these conditions are satisfied. Searle (1969:67) presents a set of felicity conditions for the speech act of advice which could be applicable to preaching since preaching is defined as an act of advice-giving. Searle's felicity conditions of the speech act of advice will be adopted with the following modifications to suit the act of preaching:

1. The Propositional Content Condition (PCC): The speaker *earnestly* advises the hearers and expects a future act to be carried out by them.
2. The Preparatory Condition (PC):
 - A. The speaker believes that the act of preaching will benefit the hearers.
 - B. It is not obvious to the speaker that the hearers will accept what he says in the normal course of events.
3. The Sincerity Condition (SC): The speaker is *sure* that the act will *benefit the hearers so the speaker sincerely wants the hearers to follow that act*.

4. The Essential Condition (EC): The speaker intends his utterance to count as *preaching* (i.e., an advice or recommendation intended to develop spiritual life in believers) which is in the best interest of the hearers.

2.2. Pragmatic Strategies of Preaching

Two types of strategies are used to indicate preaching in Arabic. These are direct and indirect strategies.

Direct advice-giving is a pragmatically transparent expression which is classified into three different realizations:

1. Imperatives as in "أدرس بجد أكثر" (Study harder).
2. Negative imperatives "لا تخرج اليوم" (Don't go out today).
3. Declarative sentences with performative verbs as in "أنصحك بزيارة الطبيب" (I advise you to see a doctor). In this case, the verb "أنصحك" and "أنصحكم" (advise you) and the noun "نصيحتي" (My advice) are used (صحراوي, 2005: 63,110).

The second type of strategies, that is indirect strategies, includes two linguistic realizations:

1. Conditional as in "لو كنت مكانك لدرست" (If I were you, I would have studied).
2. Probability "من الأفضل لك ان تدرس جيدا" (It might be better for you to study hard) (Martinez-Flor, 2003: 144).

Matsumura (2001: 677) mentions that the difference between direct and indirect advice-giving depends on the strength of the forms used to express advice. For example, imperatives would be categorized as direct advice. Other forms such as "You can/could", "You might want to" and "It may/would be a good idea to" could be categorized as indirect advice. Nakagawa and Nishimura (1998: 48) present certain key expressions to indicate advice. These expressions include the following: "You'd better.., How about..?, Maybe you should..?, I think you should..?, If you ask me, I would.., If I were in your position, I would.., It might be a good idea to.., and My advice would be..".

According to Aziz and Lataiwish (2000: 44, 71), languages differ in the way they use direct or indirect strategies. Most European languages, including English, tend to use greater degree of indirectness realized by grammatical devices. Semitic languages, including Arabic, often use grammatical devices to achieve directness. Accordingly, Arabic prefers the use of direct strategies, represented by the use of positive and negative imperative sentences, to issue the act of preaching. The use of direct strategies, namely, positive and negative imperative reveals the importance, seriousness, grandeur, spirituality, and oughtness or obligatoriness of the advised acts.

3. The Linguistic Realizations of Preaching

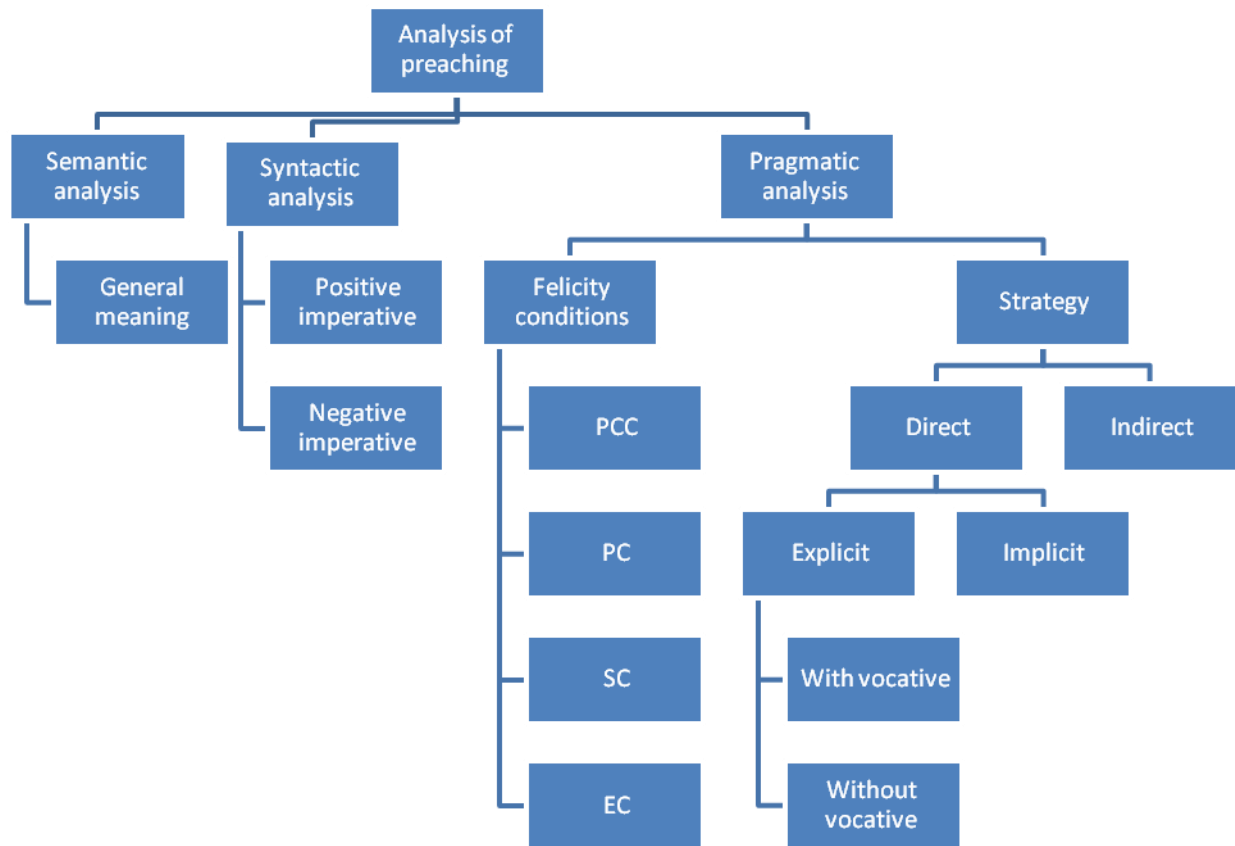
In Arabic, the taxonomy of preaching as advice-giving is either to recommend a particular course of action or to recommend against a particular course of action. In both cases, the imperative is used in different senses. A positive imperative is principally used for advising the listener to do something, while a negative imperative is used to advise the listener not to do something. Imperatives are direct. They express strong meaning (عتيق, 1970: 33). In Arabic, positive and negative imperative sentences may be accompanied by a vocative.

The vocative is a case that indicates that somebody being directly addressed by the speaker. A vocative expression is an expression of direct address where the identity of the party spoken to is set forth expressly within a sentence (القزويني, 1983: 44). Moreover, a vocative is defined as a direct speech used to catch the addressee's attention via the use of certain particles (علاوي, 1982: 32).

4. Model of Analysis

The model of analysis which is intended to be developed by this study is based on what has been discussed in the previous sections. It is basically divided into three basic components: syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic. In this model, preaching as advice-giving will be analyzed on three linguistic levels. The semantic level implies the general meaning of each text; the syntactic level reveals the syntactic devices used to issue the act in question, namely, positive and negative imperative; the pragmatic level shows the strategy used to realize the speech act of preaching, i.e., Is it a direct strategy or an indirect one? If a direct strategy is used, is it explicit or implicit? Is it explicit with or without vocative? A direct explicit strategy is represented by the use of the imperative, whether positive or negative, whereas the direct implicit strategy is represented by the use of an inferred imperative verb. Moreover, the texts under scrutiny will be analyzed according to the modified felicity conditions of the act of preaching.

Accordingly, the following figure is a schematization of the model which is considered the basic pillar for analyzing the data of the study:



5. Data and Analysis

5.1. Data Collection

The data of analysis are collected from a book by (الموسوي, 1975) and are represented by ten texts delivered by Al-Imam Al-Hasan during different situations. The main theme of the selected texts go along with the topic of the study, preaching.

Text (1)

"يا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ نَافِسُوا فِي الْمَكَارِمِ، وَسَارِعُوا فِي الْمَغَامِمِ، وَلَا تَحْتَسِبُوا بِمَعْرِوفٍ فَلَمْ تَعْمَلُوا، وَإِكْسِبُوا الْحَمْدَ بِالنَّجْحِ"

"O people! Vie for virtues, plunge into benevolence, never blame thy soul for not doing good, and cull the bless by success"

Analysis

On the semantic level, Al-Imam Al-Hasan preaches people earnestly to vie for virtues, plunge into benevolence, and cull the bless by success.

On the syntactic level, Al-Imam makes use of positive and negative imperative structures, that is, he employs the positive imperative verbs (نافسوا) "vie", (سارعوا) "plunge into", and (أكسبوا) "cull" and the negative imperative verb (لا تحتسبوا) "never blame" with the vocative to issue his preaching. Resorting to the imperative structure renders the act direct because imperatives are direct and they express strong meanings. The vocative (يا أيها الناس) "O people" is intended to catch the attention of the addressees. According to Arab rhetoricians, as is mentioned by علاوي (1982:34), speech is classified into two types: constative and performative; vocative is a branch of performatives because it is intended to perform an action which is represented by bringing the hearer's attention to what is being said by the speaker.

On the pragmatic level, use is made of direct explicit strategies with a vocative expression. The text functions as preaching because it satisfies the following felicity conditions:

1. PCC: Al-Imam preaches people to compete in doing good deeds and he hopes that they will follow what he preaches them.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will be advantageous to people. (2) It is not obvious to him whether people will follow his preaching.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his intended preaching will be beneficial to people so that he truthfully wants them to follow what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to count as a preaching which is in the best interest of the hearers.

Text (2)

"معاشر الشباب: عليكم بطلب الآخرة، فوالله رأينا أقبوا الآخرة فأصابوا الدنيا والآخرة، ووالله ما رأينا من طلب الدنيا فأصاب الآخرة"

"Multitude of youths: heave into the doomsday. By Allah, we do infer those who heave into the doomsday accrue here and hereafter. By Allah, we never infer one who heaves into here accrues hereafter"

Analysis

From a semantic point of view, Al-Imam is putting forth a genuine effort to preach people, particularly youths, to work for the doomsday by doing good deeds. He preaches them to think of the doomsday more than the mortal life and reminds them that those who work for the doomsday accrue the mundane and the hereafter and those who work for the mundane never accrue the hereafter.

From a syntactic point of view, Al-Imam uses a specific imperative structure (عليكم بطلب الآخرة) which means "الزموا" (work for your hereafter) with a vocative expression to yield his preaching. An inferred imperative construction is represented by the use of the construction (عليكم ب) "you have to". For Arab rhetoricians, such a construction expresses a strong meaning. Thus, Al-imam deliberately uses it to urge people to work for the doomsday and to remind them that life is mortal, while afterlife is immortal.

From a pragmatic point of view, Al-Imam uses a direct implicit strategy represented by the use of an inferred imperative verb. The speech act issued in the text is that of preaching since it satisfies the following felicity conditions which characterize it:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to think of the doomsday and to do good deeds to win in the second life hoping that people will behave in accordance of what he says.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam thinks that his preaching will benefit the addressed people. (2) It is not clear whether people will follow what he says in the normal course of action.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching will benefit the hearers; thus, he genuinely wants people to follow his preaching.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends what he says to count as preaching or exhortation which is in the best interest of the addressees.

Text (3)

"يا أيها الناس إنكم لو التمسنتم بين المشرق والمغرب، رجلاً جدّه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله، وأبوه وصي رسول الله، لم تجدوا غيري وغير

أخي، فاتقوا الله ولا تضلوا بعد البيان . أيها الناس اسمعوا وعوا وأتقوا الله وارجعوا"

"O people, having reconnoitered the East and the West to find someone whose grandfather is the messenger of Allah and whose father is the guardian of the messenger, thou will never find but my brother and me. Then only then, fear Allah and never derail after being enlightened. O people hearken and perceive and fear Allah and reckon"

Analysis

On the semantic level, Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to fear Allah and not to derail after being enlightened. He also preaches them to hearken and perceive and fear Allah and reckon reminding them that they will not find a man whose grandfather is the messenger of Almighty Allah and whose father is the guardian of the messenger even if they search the East and the West.

On the syntactic level, Al-Imam uses a positive as well as a negative imperative structure with a vocative expression to issue his preaching. The positive imperative verbs (أتقوا) "fear", (أسمعوا) "hearken", (عوا) "perceive", and (راجعوا) "reckon" as well as the negative imperative (لا تزلوا) "never derail" are used to express the earnestness and seriousness of Al-Imam in preaching people. The use of the imperative constructions expresses strong meanings; it is intended to remind people of Allah and how he wants people to behave. The vocative construction (يا أيها الناس) "O people" is intended as a direct address whose function is to seek hearers' attentiveness.

On the pragmatic level, the direct explicit strategy, represented by the use of the imperative construction, is employed to issue the intended act of preaching with the following felicity conditions:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to fear Allah and not to be deceived. He wishes that people will follow what he says.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will benefit people since if they follow it, they will be on the right way. (2) It is not clear to Al-Imam that the people he addresses will follow what he says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching is beneficial for the addressees so he sincerely hopes that they fulfill what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to function as preaching which is advantageous to the addressees.

Text (4)

يَا بَنَ آدَمَ عَفِّ عَنْ مَحَارِمِ اللَّهِ تَكُنْ عَابِدًا ، وَأَرْضَ بِمَا قَسَمَ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَكُنْ غَنِيًّا ، وَأَحْسِنِ جَوَارَ مَنْ جَاوَرَكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ تَكُنْ مُسْلِمًا ، وَصَاحِبِ النَّاسِ بِمِثْلِ مَا تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُصَاحِبُوكَ بِهِ تَكُنْ عَادِلًا

"O son of Adam! Avert the sins which Allah forbids, thou will be a worshiper; be contended with what Allah ordains, thou will be prosperous; be neighborly, thou will be a Muslim; be acquainted with people as thou deem if they consent, thou will be fair"

Analysis

Semantically, Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to avert the sins which Allah forbade, to be contended with what Allah ordained, to be neighborly, and to be acquainted with people in order to be worshiper, prosperous, muslim, and fair.

Syntactically, Al-Imam employs the negative and the positive imperative structures with a vocative to yield his preaching. He uses the negative imperative verb (عَفِّ) "avert" and the positive imperative verbs (ارْضَ) "be contended", (أَحْسِنِ) "be neighbourly", and (صَاحِبِ) "be acquainted". The use of the imperative verbs in the act of preaching is intended to say that what Al-Imam preaches is good and necessary. Here, preaching is intended to recommend a particular behavior (that which is demonstrated through the use of the imperative constructions) and recommend against another behavior (that which is demonstrated through the use of the negative imperative construction).

Pragmatically, direct explicit strategies, represented by the use of the imperative, are used by Al-Imam to issue his preaching. The text is regarded as an act of preaching because it achieves the felicity conditions of the act under preview as follows:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to avoid what God prevents and to be satisfied with God's judgement. He wishes that they will follow what he says.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that what he preaches will be of benefit to those whom he addresses since if they follow it, they will gain the satisfaction of Almighty Allah. (2) It is not apparent to Al-Imam that the addressed people will follow what he says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching is for the benefit of the addressees so he sincerely hopes that they fulfill what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to count as preaching which is in the best interest and benefit of the addressees.

Text (5)

"إِتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۖ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ جُودُوا فِي الطَّلَبِ وَ بَادِرُوا الْعَمَلَ قَبْلَ مُقَطَّعَاتِ النَّقِمَاتِ وَهَامِمْ اللَّذَاتِ ، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا لَا يَدُومُ نَعِيمُهَا وَلَا يُؤْمَنُ فَجِيعُهَا وَلَا تُتَوَقَّى
وَانْتَفِعُوا بِالْمَوَاعِظِ، فَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ مُعْتَصِمًا وَنَصِيرًا، وَكَفَى مَسَاوِيهَا، غُرُورٌ حَائِلٌ وَسَنَادٌ مَائِلٌ فَاتَعَزَّوْا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِالْعَبْرِ، وَأَعْتَبِرُوا بِأَثَرِ. وَازْدَجِرُوا بِالنَّعِيمِ
بِالْكِتَابِ حَجِيْبًا وَخَصِيْمًا وَكَفَى بِالْجَنَّةِ ثَوَابًا وَكَفَى بِالنَّارِ عِقَابًا وَوَبَالًا"

"O creatures of Allah, fear none but Allah, be diligent in invocation. Heaving into doing before culling but calamities and desires obliterating: life at loggerheads with bliss and whose wails at the horizon intend to be, whose abominations run unshielded: it is collapsible conceit; a toppling buttress. O creatures of Allah, take hold of experiences; be cultivated. Bliss is to succor thee. Exploit the angles of sapience sufficient enough to have recourse in Allah, a buttress by Him. Sufficient enough to hold the Quran as a reason and an arbitrator. Sufficient enough to cuddle the paradise for bless. Sufficient enough to eschew perdition for nothing but nemesis and calamity"

Analysis

On the semantic level, Al-Imam preaches people many things: he preaches them to fear Almighty Allah, to be diligent in invocation, to take hold of experiences, and to be cultivated.

On the syntactic level, Al-Imam uses the positive imperative construction six times to deliver his piece of preaching or exhortation. This is represented by the use of the following imperative verbs (أتقوا) "fear", (وجدوا) "be diligent", (بادروا) "heave into", (اتعظوا) "take hold of", (أعتبروا) "be cultivated", and (أنفقوا) "exploit".

On the pragmatic level, a direct explicit strategy, represented by the use of the imperative, is used to reveal the seriousness of the act of preaching which has the following felicity conditions:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to fear Allah and to follow the path of Islam and he wishes that they take his words into consideration.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will benefit people since if they follow it, they will be on the safe side. (2) It is not obvious to Al-Imam that the people he addresses will follow what he says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching will benefit people so that he sincerely wants them to follow what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends what he says to count as a piece of preaching which is in the best interest of the addressed people.

Text (6)

"لَا تُجَاهِدِ الطَّلَبَ جِهَادَ الْغَالِبِ وَلَا تَتَكَلَّ عَلَى الْقَدْرِ اتِّكَالَ الْمُسْتَسْلِمِ فَإِنَّ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفَضْلِ مِنَ السَّنَةِ وَالْإِجْمَالَ فِي الطَّلَبِ مِنَ الْعَفَةِ وَلَيْسَتْ الْعَفَةُ بِدَافِعَةٍ
رِزْقًا وَلَا الْحَرِصُ بِجَالِبِ فَضْلًا ، فَإِنَّ الرِّزْقَ مَقْسُومٌ وَاسْتِعْجَالَ الْحَرِصِ اسْتِعْجَالُ الْمَأْتَمِرِ"

"Never exert thyself in soliciting as a victor. Never plunge into destiny as a slave. It is a tradition to supplicate. Sublimity in invoking tends to be chastity. Chastity never runs into bless and frugality never be a harbinger of virtue. Bless is destined. Holding frugality, holding sins"

Analysis

Semantically, Al-Imam earnestly preaches people not to exert themselves in soliciting as victors and not to plunge into destiny as slaves. He reminds them that bless is destined and sublimity is invoking tends to be chastity.

Syntactically, Al-Imam uses the negative imperative verbs (لا تجاهد) "never exert" and (لا تتكل) "never plunge into" to issue his exhortation. The use of the imperative in preaching indicates the earnestness of the preacher in recommending people to follow what he says. Al-Imam uses the imperative because he is delivering divine advice. In such case, he prefers to be more direct through the use of the imperative construction which is characterized by directness, clarity, obviousness, or intelligibility.

Pragmatically, the act of preaching as advice-giving is direct because of the use of the negative imperative construction which renders the act direct. Preaching, as a directive act, is an act in which the speaker intends his addressees to do something, to behave in a certain way, and to believe in something. The aforementioned text is regarded as an act of preaching because it achieves the felicity conditions of the act:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people not to exert themselves in soliciting as victors and not to plunge into destiny as slaves and he wishes that they follow what he says.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will benefit the hearers since if they follow it, they will gain the gratification of Almighty Allah (2) It is not obvious to Al-Imam that the addressees will follow what he says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching is for the benefit of the addressees so he sincerely hopes that they fulfill what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to count as preaching which is in the best interest and benefit of the addressees.

Text (7)

"يَا أَبْنَ آدَمَ إِعْمَلْ لِدُنْيَاكَ كَأَنَّكَ تَعِيشُ أَبَدًا، وَأَعْمَلْ لِآخِرَتِكَ كَأَنَّكَ تَمُوتُ غَدًا فَإِذَا أَرَدْتَ عِزًّا بِبِلَا عَشِيرَةٍ وَهَيْبَةً بِبِلَا سُلْطَانٍ فَأَخْرِجْ مِنْ ذَلِّ مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ"

"O son of Adam! Work for your worldly life as if you were living forever and work for your hereafter as if you were dying tomorrow. If you want greatness out of your kindred and status without dominion, leave sins and obey Almighty Allah""

Analysis

From a semantic point of view, Al-Imam preaches people to work for their mundane life as if they were living forever and to work for their hereafter as if they were dying tomorrow. Moreover, he recommends them to obey Allah all the time and avoid disobedience. He reminds them that the greatness of their kindreds as well as their status will not intercede them

From a syntactic point of view, Al-Imam makes use of the positive imperatives (أعمل) "work" and (أخرج) "leave" to issue his preaching. Such a use of imperative verbs indicates the earnestness of Al-Imam in preaching people and leading them to the right way. The vocative expression (يَا أَبْنَ آدَمَ) "O son of Adam" is intended to draw the attention of people and to urge them to take what will be said into consideration.

From a pragmatic point of view, the act of preaching as advice-giving is direct because of the use of the positive imperative construction which renders the act direct. Further, the text is regarded as an act of preaching in accordance with the following felicity conditions:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to obey Allah and to work for their mundane life as if they were living forever and to work for their hereafter as if they were dying tomorrow. What is more, he wishes them to take what he says into consideration.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will benefit the hearers since if they follow what he says, they will gain the gratification of Almighty Allah. (2) It is not obvious whether the addressees will follow what Al-Imam says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching is for the benefit of the addressees so he sincerely hopes that they fulfill what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to count as preaching which is in the best interest or benefit of the addressees.

Text (8)

"اتَّقُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ! وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ مَنْ يَتَّقِيَ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا مِنَ الْفِتَنِ وَيُسَدِّدُهُ فِي أَمْرِهِ"

"Creatures of Allah! Fear Allah and know that if you fear Him, He will pick you out of sins and expedite your affairs if you fear Him"

Analysis

From a semantic perspective, Al-Imam issues his preaching as an act of advice-giving and recommendation. He preaches people to fear Allah, reminding them that those who fear Allah will not regret because Allah will pick them out of sins and expedite their affairs.

From a syntactic perspective, Al-Imam utilizes the positive imperative construction to fulfill his goals, namely that of preaching people. This is manifested in the use of the imperative verbs (اتَّقُوا) "fear" and (اعلموا) "know".

From a pragmatic perspective, Al-Imam intends his preaching as an act of advice-giving to be direct through the use of the positive imperative construction which automatically renders the act direct. Furthermore, the prior text fulfills the following felicity conditions of the act of preaching:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to fear Allah in order not to regret in the hereafter. He wishes that they will follow what he says.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will benefit the hearers since if they follow what he says, they will gain the gratification of Almighty Allah. (2) It is not obvious whether the addressees will follow what Al-Imam says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching is for the benefit of the addressees that is why he sincerely hopes that they fulfill what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to count as a preaching which is in the best interest and benefit of the addressees.

Text (9)

"يا عباد الله اعلموا أن الحلم زينٌ والوقار مودةٌ والصلوة نعمةٌ والاكثارُ صنفٌ ومُجاملَةُ أهلِ الدنائةِ شينٌ"

"O creatures of Allah! Know that patience is grace, dignity is cordiality, kinship is blessing, propagation is smugness, and complimenting villainous people is flaw"

Analysis

On the semantic level, Al-Imam preaches people to be dignified because dignity is cordiality and to be patient because patience is good. Moreover, he recommends them not to extol the gentiles and recommends them of dignity and kinship and warns them of complimenting villainous people.

On the syntactic level, Al-Imam makes use of the positive imperative verb (أعلموا) "know" as well as the vocative expression (يا عباد الله) "O creatures of Allah" to issue his preaching. The vocative here is not specific because it does not have a specific reference; it is general because it is intended to address all people.

On the pragmatic level, the act of preaching as advice-giving is direct because of the use of the positive imperative construction which makes the act direct. This directness makes the text clear and intelligible. Besides, the previous text functions as an act of preaching because it satisfies the following felicity conditions:

1. PCC: Al-Imam earnestly preaches people to be dignified, patient, and not to extol the gentiles. He earnestly wishes them to follow what he says in order to be on the safe side.
2. PC: (1) Al-Imam believes that his preaching will benefit the addressees. (2) It is not obvious whether the addressees will follow what Al-Imam says in the normal course of events.
3. SC: Al-Imam is sure that his preaching is for the benefit of the addressee so he sincerely hopes that they follow what he says.
4. EC: Al-Imam intends his speech to count as preaching which is in the best interest and benefit of the addressees.

6. Statistical Analysis

The following table shows the statistical results of the aforementioned analysis:

Table (1): The Syntactic and Pragmatic Realizations of the Act of Preaching

Syntactic realizations of preaching		Pragmatic realizations of preaching		
Positive imperative	Negative imperative	Direct strategies		Indirect strategies
25 83%	5 17%	Explicit		—
		10 91%		
		With vocative 6 60%	Without vocative 4 40%	
		Implicit		
		1 9%		

The above table shows that the percentage of the positive imperative construction is higher than that of the negative imperative one, 83% and 17% respectively. The direct strategy has got 100% while the indirect strategy scores no percentage at all. The percentage of the explicit direct strategy is higher than that of the implicit direct strategy, 91% and 9% respectively. Vocative expressions are used in most of the texts, thus, scoring 60%.

These percentages indicate that preaching in Arabic is a directive speech act issued mostly through the use of direct strategies because the speaker earnestly wants his addressees to do something, to behave in a certain way, or to believe in something. Thus, to preach is to recommend or advise directly and earnestly. This directness is manifested through the use of the imperative construction, whether positive or negative. Imperatives are direct; they express strong meanings. In the above texts, Al-Imam Al-Hasan resorts to the imperative construction because it is clearer, more direct, and more intelligible than other constructions. Thus, since Al-Imam addresses people with different backgrounds, he uses the imperative construction in order to be understood by all. Moreover, he is giving divine instructions with the aim of earnestly and seriously recommending people. This, at the same time, explicates why the indirect strategy scores no percentage at all.

Vocative expressions are performatives rather than constatives because they are intended to perform an action. They are used widely in the case of preaching because they are intended to catch the addressees' attention since a vocative is a direct speech indicating that somebody is being directly addressed by the speaker.

7. Conclusions

On the basis of the theoretical and practical parts, the study comes up with the following conclusions:

1. Preaching is defined as the act of advice-giving in a religious context by a person with a religious status, usually Imam.
2. Preaching, as an act of advice-giving, usually takes the form of an imperative, whether positive or negative, to illustrate the importance of the advised act and to urge people to follow what is earnestly and seriously advised. This verifies the first hypothesis set up by the study.
3. Preaching as advice-giving is best issued by using direct strategies to urge the advice getter to consider the advice seriously and to advise or recommend a particular course of action or against a particular course of action. This verifies the second hypothesis of the study.
4. Positive and negative imperative structures with or without vocatives are employed in all the analyzed texts
5. In the analyzed texts, preaching as advice-giving is issued through the use of explicit direct strategies except in one text where an implicit direct strategy represented by the use of an inferred imperative verb is used (عليكم بطلب الآخرة) (work for your hereafter).

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