

## RESEARCH

The purpose of this note is to ask for your help in a research project which investigates certain aspects of preaching and the discourse in which the sermon is delivered.

The project is a comparative investigation of sermons from the Baptist Church (in Britain), the Anglican Church (Church of England) and the Roman Catholic Church (in Britain).

In a sermon, we often encounter utterances where preachers directly or indirectly refer to sources other than themselves (e.g. *Jesus teaches us that...*), and often, utterances are accompanied by linguistic markers indicating the conviction with which a proposition is stated (e.g. *perhaps, may* etc. as in *This may sound like a contradiction and there is perhaps a contradiction in the way this has been emphasised by the church [...]*).

The aim of the research project is to investigate more closely the linguistic markers through which “other voices” and “conviction” are manifested in English sermons from the Baptist Church, the Anglican Church, and the Roman Catholic Church UK. This way we can, first, confirm or confute the sermon as a completely homogeneous genre from the point of view of these linguistic aspects and, second, we will learn more about how the preacher drives the discourse rhetorically with the help of “other voices” and “conviction”. In view of the role of religion in society, the investigation in the project contributes to an increased understanding of how language is used in a context characterised by conviction, tradition and the interplay between faith, knowledge and science.

## DATA

I am seeking your help in getting access to sermon texts (manuscripts, basically, and I am aware that you may either deviate from a manuscript when actually giving the sermon, or may not even use a manuscript in the first place).

I have decided that the sermon data forming the basis for the investigation should have a thematic denominator, and it is Easter sermon manuscripts I am after. The project definition of Easter is “the time between Palm Sunday and Easter Monday”.

If you have an Easter sermon manuscript from 2005 onwards saved electronically (or, if it is a paper copy, if you can scan it and send it to me) it could constitute a vital part of the data needed for my investigation, and I would be very grateful indeed for your assistance. If you have several such manuscripts and are willing to let me use them for the project, please send everything that you have with a clear indication of which day each sermon was given.

## ANONYMITY

Throughout the process you will remain anonymous and no one but the principal investigator will be able to connect a certain sermon text with a certain individual. However, for research purposes, it would be very useful for me to have some biographical data. At any point, you may contact me ([preachingresearch@gmail.com](mailto:preachingresearch@gmail.com)) and request that your sermon text(s) be withdrawn.

**Send your sermon text(s) and biographical information (see next page) to:**

[preachingresearch@gmail.com](mailto:preachingresearch@gmail.com)

**BIOGRAPHICAL DATA (please fill out)**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Academic degree, if several, list all:</b>	
<b>Year of ordination/equivalent:</b>	
<b>Current title/position:</b>	
<b>Place of work/Parish:</b>	
<b>If you have a background in another Christian society/denomination, please state which (otherwise leave empty):</b>	
<b>I believe that the role of the sermon is to...:</b>	
<b>Contact details (not obligatory):</b>	
<b>If you would like to have more information about the project and learn more about the results in due course, please indicate that by putting a "YES" in the box on the left.</b>	

Thank you very much for your contribution to research into preaching discourse!

Dr. Hans Malmström

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