

# **التضمنين التداولي للغة الدارجة لدى خطباء المنبر الحسيني من متكلمي اللغة العربية**

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## **Pragmatic Implications of Slang in Hussein Preachers' Iraqi Arabic**

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### المستخلص

تعنى هذه الدراسة بتقصي الاهداف التداولية وراء استخدام المنبر الحسيني للتعبير العامة الشعبية في سياق القاء المحاضرات الموجهة الى الشعب العراقي والجمهور الاسلامي بشكل عام. ويعتبر هؤلاء الخطباء مصلحين اجتماعيين بالإضافة الى كونهم ينحدرون من المؤسسة الدينية حيث يقومون بطرح الافكار الدينية التي تنبثق جلها من القضية الحسينية مستخدمينها كأساس للدعوة بالإصلاح. ومن هنا يتم توظيف اللغة العامة الشعبية من قبل هؤلاء الخطباء الحسينيين في محاضراتهم وخطبهم التي تتميز - كما يقتضي الحال - بسياق رسمي للغاية. الا انه وبعد تقديم جانب نظري للتداولية الخاصة باللغة العامة الشعبية وبعد تقصي الوظائف التداولية في عدد من المحاضرات والخطباء مختلفين. تم اختيار التعبيرات العامة الشعبية الأكثر استخداماً وتكراراً واثم وضعها في استبانة وحسب الدليل المعتمد والمختار لهذه الدراسة. بعد تحليل المعطيات التي تم استحصالها من المحاضرات والخطب واستبانة خاصة لهذا الغرض، تم التوصل الى وظائف تداولية بالغة الأهمية ومختصة بالمجتمع العراقي واستخدامه للمبادئ التداولية. والامر الأكثر أهمية هو ان الدراسة قد توصلت الى صياغة دليل جديد خاص بالسياق الخطب الحسينية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : المقتضيات العملية ، الطقوس الحسينية ، التداعيات ، سياق الطقوس ، الوظائف العامة .

### Abstract

This paper is concerned with the pragmatic functions of slangy utterances used by Hussein preachers in the Iraqi context. Hussein preachers are religious and social reformers who use the Hussein issue as a foundation to their reformation. Slang is employed by such Hussein preachers in their lectures and sermons which are characterized by a highly formal context. Theoretical literature about pragmatics of slang is given. Afterwards, the pragmatic ends are investigated in a considerable number of lectures for various preachers. The most frequented slangy utterances used by Hussein preachers are selected and put in a questionnaire in accordance with a model adopted and selected for the objectives of the paper. In analyzing the data taken from the lecturers, sermons and the questionnaire, significant pragmatic functions are found that are related to the Iraqi society and the pragmatic strategies under the pragmatic principles, in addition to a pragmatic model which is peculiar to the Hussein context.

Key words : Pragmatic implications , Hussein rituals , implications , context of rituals , functions of slang .

### **Introduction**

Language is used to serve social needs that any speech community may employ language to convey particular messages through language and particular social context (Ralph, 1984: 4). Sometimes, a special variety of language is utilized by speakers of a speech community for pragmatic ends with the benefit of all pragmatic strategies such as the cooperative principle of conversation and politeness principle of the face or even the pragma-rhetorical devices. Given these pragmatic domains, speakers use formal language in informal situations aiming to convey a special message (Jubair and Al-Hindawi, 2016: 9).

However, it is rare that speakers employ informal language to convey their own intention. In such a way, informal language is used as a pragmatic strategy. Such a pragmatic use is common in languages which are characterized by the highly use of diglossia, colloquialisms, and slang. Arabic is one of the highly diversified languages, i.e. having more than one variety and/or dialect which depend on the large society that uses Arabic. Iraq- as an Arabic speaking country- uses slang in a daily basis that one may predict that such use is for the sake of sociability and in group membership as introduced by Ferguson (1959: 325).

When using slang by individual speakers in the too formal situations, there should be other implications that the speaker wishes to convey. Such implications are related to pragmatics- the intended meaning of the speaker in particular context (Levinson, 1983; Yule, 1996). Therefore, this paper tries to answer the question of the pragmatic implications regarding the use of slangy language by particular speech community of Iraqi Arabic speakers, namely, Hussein Preachers.

As far as the objectives of this study are concerned, the core objective is that finding out how pragmatic domains are reflected when using slangy language or expressions in the midst of formal situations by Hussein Preachers. Other supporting objectives could be demonstrated in the frequency of using slang by Hussein Preachers in general as well as who use formal language mostly.

As far as the hypotheses of this paper is concerned, Hussein Preachers use slang for pragmatic reasons such as implicature, presupposition, relevance, understatement, in-group membership, bringing the public toward the speaker's position and to communicate socially with the hearer (speech community). It is also hypothesized that slangy utterances in particular are reused by Hussein Preachers when the

speaker cannot find the formal equivalent to be used or it is difficult for the speech community to grasp the idea which has been represented in a formal language.

In order to verify or refute the hypotheses above, and to fulfill the objectives of the paper, the methodology is conducted through giving a related account of the literature about slang in relation to pragmatics. Then, two methods to obtain data are followed: a questionnaire and selecting formal speeches that contain slang. The first method is to have the frequency of slang used by the subjects of the study and to elicit the slangy utterances to be used in the questionnaire. Concerning the questionnaire, it is formulated to find out the pragmatic functions mostly used by Hussein Preachers. After collecting and describing all the data, they will be analyzed and calculated in statistical methods in order to obtain the results according to which the hypotheses are verified.

The data of the study are limited to college students who are good representatives of using and interpreting slangy utterances in two parts of Iraq: southern and middle areas. The slang language is used by all these two speech communities.

## **2. Socio-pragmatics**

Eckert and Richard (2001, 3-5) argue that when using social parameters within social domains where language is involved and affected by social choices to convey the speaker's intention through a special social context, the concept of pragmatics of language inevitably exists. In other words, there is a strong overlap between sociolinguistics and pragmatics, they overlap the social elements of context (i.e. cultural background, social variables: gender, distance and the degree of imposition... etc.) which have the final decision to access the intended meaning of the speaker rather than any other type of context.

Sociolinguistics is defined at a large scale and go under many definitions that most of them are similar in core (Hudson, 1980; Ralph, 1984; Eckert and Richard 2001; Mesthrie, 2009). Thus, sociolinguistics can be summarized as follows: it is the study of language which is involved in society and culture of particular community. It deals with many social aspects as dialect, accent, language variety, the choice of picking up a variety speech communities, bilingualisms, colloquialisms, slang, and the like (Lucas and Bayley, 2011: 3). Lately, the focus is on colloquialism, slang and vernacular as these sociolinguistic concepts are regarded as the most attached ones to the specific culture of a speech

community, and culture, on the other hand, is very connected to them that their entire use count on it.

Spolsky (1998: 10) discussed the functions of such sociolinguistic concepts which are under investigation. However, they cannot be set altogether, since these concepts act differently in various social communities, i.e. different social contexts. Thus, it is not fair to deal with such concepts depending on one or limited cultures, nor is it fair to set generalizations with reference to particular culture. Their behavior definitely changes from one speech community to another according to the social context and the intention of the speaker who might give a completely new function to any of such domains.

Although it is highly related in particular context, the study of the speaker's intention is an integral part of sociolinguistics. The speaker's intended meaning is tackled under the wide topic of pragmatics. Pragmatics, on the other hand, can be collectively defined as the intended meaning of the speaker, the message of the speaker that should be conveyed through the use of particular type of language in particular context. Usually, the context of the linguistic situation is a social one, meaning that the social variables play an important role- in addition to the pragmatic principles- to access the speaker's prices meaning. Sometimes, the context of the linguistic situation is the otherwise (ibid).

Interestingly speaking, these two sub-disciplines of the macro-linguistics are interrelated. To analyze any given utterance is to go through the context in which it is uttered regardless of whether the context is social or not. With this in mind, analyzing the utterance means to check, at least, the social variable: distance, imposition, and gender. Having all cultural affairs and elements of sociolinguistics, pragmatics principles such as cooperative principle and politeness principle have the essential role of conveying the speaker's message clearly (Ferguson, 1959: 329).

Along with the pragmatic competence, there is the socio-pragmatic competence which both the speaker and hearer should have in order to be able to interpret the linguistic utterances and to put them in the social context and finally to reach the speaker's intention (Lodge, 1997: 77).

Sometimes, the hearer would not fully get the message of the speaker although there are the social context and the elements of the setting. This is due to either the lack of common ground between the speaker and the hearer or the lack of social communicative competence which causes a

failure in understanding the intended meaning. The failure is either pragmatic failure, i.e. the lack of pragmatic competence and context in which language is used, or socio-pragmatic failure which means the lack of sociolinguistic competence, a matter which is related to knowing "what to say" and "whom to say it to (ibid: 79-80).

Convincingly, Trudgill (2010: 64) states that the more the common ground there is between the speaker and the hearer, the clearer the message would be understood. In other words, the socio-pragmatic competence is fully acquired by the speakers of a collective community that any one of them can play the role of the speaker and the hearer with full capacity to interpret any given message and at any context.

### **3. Use of Informal Language**

Wherever language exists, there are two types in terms of formality, regardless of whether the form of language is spoken or written. Formal language is a variety which is highly related to the written form of language and the language which is used by most educated people. It is characterized by long and complex sentences, complete linguistic structures, using impersonal structures such as passive voice and keeping away from colloquial or slangy expressions. The other type of language is the informal language (Munro, 1997: 25). It is used in writing and/or in speaking. Such type of language shows characteristics which are quite the opposite of the formal language. They can be the points of the difference. Furthermore, the informal use of language contains simple grammar, sentences, and phrases that are poorly structured or disconnected, the use of personal style and vocabulary and use of colloquial, slang and vernacular language as well as the code language (ibid: 21).

Eble (1996:13) argues that there is yet another type of language which is between the formal and informal. It is labeled as medium language, it is a variation of the formal and informal language using some structures and vocabulary to be used in rather different contexts.

E.g.

1. Prior to the discovery of America, potatoes were not consumed in Europe. Formal
2. Before America was discovered, potatoes were not eaten in Europe. Medium
3. Before America was discovered, Europeans did not eat potatoes. Informal

In the spoken language, if one might ask for someone:

- Have you seen Ahmed? Formal
- Seen Ahmed? Informal

Based on the arguments above, these two or three varieties of language serve different purposes depending on the situation in which language is used. The formal style/variety of language is used in the formal situations such as in courts, lectures, sermons, political speeches and the like (Sternson et al., 2002: 6).

While the medium and informal styles are employed in daily communication: among friends and family members, i.e. wherever there is informality such as the degree of imposition, the social distance between the speaker and the hearer and the social status. When, on the other hand, the informal language is utilized in a formal situation, the matter is different. Here, it is another implication that should be kept in mind. This is related to pragmatic principles that can be associated with the sociolinguistic context in reaching the intended implication of the speaker (ibid).

Chief among the sociolinguistic aspects are colloquialism and slang which is the focus of this study.

a. Colloquialism

Collins Dictionary defines colloquialism as the informal use of words, phrases, and expressions in situations that are informal.

Colloquialism, from Latin word colloquium, means the use of a common variety of language employed mostly in speaking and by the very speech community (www.vocabulary dictionary.com).

Colloquial language is influenced by the way people speaking in the society they belong to; the colloquial expressions vary from region to region, although there are some general ones that can be used by the whole speech community. It is also interrelated with the standard variety of language. Colloquialism serves the precise information for the sake of communication at the level of informal, familiar, conversational; paralinguistic context, non-verbal communication (Dumas and Liter, 1978: 14).

Colloquialisms can be used for other purposes as Anderson and Trudgill (1990: 70) assert; in addition to the denotative meaning, it can be used for connotative purposes, usually used by politicians as when President Obama used the slang word "fiddy," instead of "fifty," in a speech to a group in Alabama. His strategy was to connect with the



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largely African-American audience by reminding them that, despite his position of power, he was still one of them.

Other examples can be found in the literary works which are concerned with the informal literature (realistic literature), e.g.

- Mark Twain in "Adventure of Huckleberry Finn" used Black American Vernacular to realistically show how the "negroes" [Black Americans] talked:

"I didn't want to go back no more. I had stopped cussing, because the widow didn't like it; but now I took to it again because pap hadn't no objections... But by-and-by pap got too handy with his hick'ry, and I couldn't stand it. I was all over with welts. He got to going away so much, too, and locking me in. Once he locked me in and was gone three days. It was dreadful lonesome."

- The use of double negatives is evident in the above passage that is a typical characteristic of Black American Vernacular.

Example #2

"Busy old fool, unruly Sun,

Why dost thou thus,

Through windows, and through curtains, call on us?

Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?

Saucy pedantic wretch,"

Colloquialism overlaps with the nearest sociolinguistic aspect: slang. In other words, colloquial variety is full of slangy expression. However, colloquialism is not the same as slang. Slang is another aspect of sociolinguistics which refers to words used only by specific social groups, such as teenagers or soldiers. Colloquial language may include slang, but consists mostly of contractions or other informal words and phrases known to most native speakers of the language and employed for special purposes (Allen, 1998: 76).

### b. Slang

Although slang has various challenging definitions in terms of time restriction and terminology overlapping with colloquial variety, this phenomenon reflects the sociological implications and can be set as follows:

an ever changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers used to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large" Eble (1996: 11)



Sternstron et al (2002: 67) define such phenomenon as a stylistic variety which is "below the level of the neutral language". So many scholars attain that slang is a variety which is used by a group of society in a speech community for temporarily particular purposes.

Dictionaries put slang in two senses that it is peculiar to the speech community and temporary; using connotative meaning of words, phrases, and sentences for a short period of time (Dictionary of Urban Thesaurus, Dictionary of Everyday Vocabulary).

Thus, slang can be defined as the use of a particular variety of colloquial language which is generally characterized by its two defining characteristics: peculiarity to the speech community and temporary use with the very speech community (Sager, 1982: 12).

There are other defining properties for this phenomenon. Slang is not a formal variety. It is used in situations where there is informality. Utilizing slang in formal or semi-formal situations means that they are used to convey other tacit purposes, not the normal ones. Furthermore, slang is a pivot phenomenon, i.e. it has two reflections. It is a social variety that can be used with one group community. It is also a regional variety which may determine the geographic area or the district to which one belongs (Nash, 1993: 433).

Bruke (1995: 3) asserts that slang can be characterized with coining new words, using some word formation process, in order to be effective at the level of the meaning to the in-group hearers, such as bird for a girl. Sometimes this characteristic is employed to produce nuisance meaning depending on the mini-situation context and the common ground of the speech event, in which the social norms are taken into account. Such nuisances represent pragmatic implications (the intention of the speaker who deliberately uses slangy language).

The last defining property is that slang can be either specific or general in the same speech community. It is specific when used by a group from the speech community to keep all members inside the group and anyone who is not from the group is regarded an outsider. This takes place through the use of special slangy words and expressions. Slang could be general, a matter which is utilized at a large scale, especially for pragmatic purposes. In such aspect of slang, speakers often exploit pragmatic principles to intentionally quit the standard vocabulary to change into using the slangy variety instead (Trudgill, 2010: 8 and

Simpson, 1994: 78). This is to convey the speaker's intention- the core question of this paper.

#### **4. Functions of Slang**

Slang, as a sociolinguistic variety, may have different functions, depending on the cultural background and social context. This section is dedicated to tackling the functions of slang ([www.huffing.com](http://www.huffing.com)).

1. Slang is a literary device mostly used by literary writers in order to give a sense of reality and render the literary piece temporality. Many eminent writers use such device such as Mark Twain, William Faulkner and others (Gordon, 2007: 326).
2. It is used to differentiate groups, tribes, communities, i.e. each community has its own slangy words, phrases, and idioms within the same language. In Iraq, for instance, one may recognize the speaker's identity or the social community to which the speaker belongs. Such recognition is deduced through the speaker's slangy language ([www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com))
3. In slang, new words are used through the word formation processes. Thus, it gives new words through neologisms or coining which would be colloquial or formal (ibid).
4. Slang can create one's identity. It depends on social status, age, education, occupation (Mesthrie, 2009: 66).
5. It is used for humorous purposes to set a relief break (ibid).
6. Sometimes, slang is utilized to break the standard variety for the offensive effects on the speech (ibid).
7. Slang can be a strategy for showing euphemisms to avoid vulgar utterances (Allen, 1998: 878).
8. Slang is employed to strengthen the communication through creating bonds between people aiming to improve the channels used to convey the speaker's message (ibid: 879).

In addition to these brief functions above, Matteillo (2005: 26-31) sets general functions for which slang is used in different contexts where the speaker indirectly states that such functions are pragmatically utilized; contextualizing any linguistic phenomenon leads to the intention of the speaker.

Such functions, in addition to the researchers' observations, are adopted in analyzing the data of the study as they are suitable to the utterances and the speech genre under analysis. The functions are as follows:

1. Secrecy: in this function, the speaker uses ambiguous slangy expressions that can only be interpreted by the hearer who shares the similar common ground with the speaker. The speaker's use of such ambiguous expressions is to exclude other hearers and to keep the hearer(s) to whom he intends his utterance to.
2. Intimacy: slang can be used to show intimacy between the speaker and the hearer. In this way, the speaker uses a specific in-group slangy expression to show his intimate attitude towards other members of the group. It is not peculiar use rather it is used to maintain intimacy and friendship.
3. Jocular is another function of slang. Speakers may use slangy expressions accompanied with the musicality of the expressions in order to make the situation jocular. On the other hand, the speaker may use slang – in its jocular form- in order to convey a kind of meaning which the speaker rather than anyone else wants to convey such as saying “fruit-cake”, an utterance used as an address to someone who is the opposite of fruit-cake. Here, the speaker intends otherwise, and so he is being ironic.
4. Offensiveness: speakers often use slang to be offensive through showing others' defects and negative faces for the purpose of derogation, regardless of whether the situation is formal or informal. Employing such offensive slang in an informal situation might have normal opposite implications. Yet, using the same offensive slang in a formal situation by a highly educated person definitely has abnormal and the same implication that the slangy expression denotes. For instance, an Iraqi Hussein preacher (a religious preacher who tries to call people for practicing the teaching of Imam Hussein's cause) utters an offensive word against somebody “Fahi” which means someone who speaks or behaves so slowly. This utterance is said in a very formal situation. However, the speaker asserts his pragmatic intention.
5. Sympathy: a slangy variety of language is used by speakers to convey particular messages. The speaker expects the hearer to understand the message (the speaker's intention). In such a way of complete understanding, the speaker sympathized with the hearer when the hearer is offensive ... so, it is used to show sympathy toward the hearer.
6. Mitigation: when using slangy expressions in a very formal, tense situation such expressions are employed to mitigate the taboo words

or the type of language that could be used instead such as saying “shoot” instead of the taboo word “shit”. Thus, it could be a euphemistic language because the interactants try to avoid using direct language, even if it is slang, and adopt more implicit forms of slang.

#### **4.2. Iraqi Slang**

Due to political and geographical neighboring between Iraq and other countries, the Iraqi Arabic receives so many vocabularies. Some of these vocabularies are included in the standard variety and other are included in the colloquial varieties and a lot in the slang. In addition to these borrowed vocabularies, Iraqi Arabic has its own slang variety (McCloughlin, 2003: 97).

Meanwhile, Iraqi Arabic has been experiencing many changes at the level of language throughout the history. So many people who have had different languages and dialects along history lived in Iraq, not to mention the interference of the languages that the invaders brought to Iraq. Such circumstances led to a diversification of Iraqi Arabic to the extent that the Iraqi Arabic received new types of slang to be used in the daily communication. Such interfering languages are in constant interrelatedness that the Iraqi Arabic is constituted out of a mixture of all the languages found in Iraq (ibid: 99).

Muttar (2009: 13-14) states that Iraqi Arabic has so many words, idioms, expressions which have been borrowed from the abundance of languages used there such as Acadian, Arminian, Sumerian, Babylonian ... to mention but few. Each of these languages has its own influence on Iraqi ordinary speakers that they are in close contact with the users of the foreign languages.

Zalalah (2006: 7) argues that the colloquial, slang and vernacular Arabic is highly demonstrated in Iraqi Arabic that such varieties are widely used by Iraqi people to show particular types of communication or to best delivering the speaker's message. Mixing words, idioms and expressions borrowed from different languages result in producing varieties that are employed by the collective society for communicative purposes, i.e. the speaker's choice depends on what variety s/he may use, and the hearer, in turn, depends on the common ground and the context of the situation in interpreting the speaker's utterance.

A very considerable amount of slangy expressions used by Iraqi speakers (general slang) to convey pragmatics ends. In other words, the locutions of slang are used in order to intend other pragmatic

perlocutionary acts through the hearer's interpretation and by the assistance of the social variable and context. In such pragmatic process, the principle of cooperation and the principle of politeness are brought into use as well as all elements of the social context (ibid)

E.g. A social reformer who is a very educated person tries to preach Iraqi people for something. The language used is the formal language with little colloquial or slang. The audience is an educated and ordinary people with different ages and all of them are men. The audience do not expect that such man uses any kind of slangy expressions unless there is a hidden message behind that. Within his speech, he mentions the slangy expression "Khal iywalan" (let such matters go). This slangy expression is used when the speaker is not convinced of what he hears or reads. However, such use is quite informal.

In the example above, in order for the audience to reach out the speaker's intention, they have to activate the maxim of relevance. Relating the social context and the speech event to the utterance said will lead to an impolite utterance which might have a face threatening act towards someone. Using the politeness maxim of on record strategy leads to the face threatening act by the speaker to the addressee, a matter that has the audience interpret the pragmatic implication of the speaker which is the speaker's disapproval. This process is much easier than using long sentences to tell the audience about the speaker's disapproval. So, the speaker tries to use the shortcut to communicate with his audience.

### **5. 1. Methodology and Data**

Two sources are to be dealt with to collect as much accurate data as possible. They are formal gatherings which are represented by Hussein preachers, relying on the most common slangy utterances used, a questionnaire is administered to individuals who regularly attend Hussein gatherings. These language events can be a good representative of the phenomenon under study.

The first source of data is the religious speeches, lectures or sermons which are delivered by religious preachers who take the Hussein case as a way to urge the audience to practice all its objectives. In such a type of lectures, sermons and speeches; the speaker is expected to use a highly formal Arabic language. Yet, the informal Arabic i.e. slang variety is widely employed for several reasons as it will be found out when analyzing the situations of the data.

Iraqi Hussein speakers are selected due to the nature of the study: investigating slang implications in the Iraqi Arabic. Six Iraqi Hussein speakers are elected. They are selected according to their followers on social media and to the numbers of people who attend their lectures and sermons. Chief among these Hussein preachers who use slang are: Sheikh Jafar Al-Ibraheemi, Sheikh Zaman Al-Hisnawi, Sayed Muhammad Al-Safi, Sheikh Salah Al-Tufaili, Sayed Farqad Al-Qizwini and Sheikh Ali Al-Simawi. These six Hussein preachers are well-known preachers for using many slangy utterances and expressions. The data of the study are well represented in the sermons of these Hussein preachers. Interestingly, they are trying to connect the sublime objectives of the Hussein revolution to the current ongoing events in Iraq in order to apply what is good to society. Thus, they do need to address people in a special code of language from which social norms cannot be detached.

The slang utterances used by the speakers are listed and analyzed, and then the data are taken again to formulate a questionnaire later on.

Having listed the data from the first and the second sources, the most frequent ones used by all the selected Hussein preachers are set in a questionnaire with all the functions and implications that are used in the model mentioned above [see 4]. The questionnaire is administrated to enhance the findings of the study that lead to accurate conclusions. The questionnaire on which this data is based has been exposed to experts<sup>1</sup> who made significant notes on the ways used in it. A number of hundred Iraqi Arabic speakers taken from places where slang variety is involved. These are college students – the Islamic University College, Department of English. The goal behind selecting these students is that they belong to diversified social classes and variables and they have more knowledge of the Hussein cause than other students as they have classes regarding Hussein cause.

The questionnaire consists of eleven slangy expressions which are the most frequently used by Hussein preachers as investigated in the Hussein lectures. A model by Matteillo (2005: 26-31) regarding the pragmatic functions of slang variety is adopted to find out the pragmatic implications of slang used by Hussein preachers. These and other extra questions such as other functions and suitability of using slang are added to the questionnaire in order to have as accurate data as possible.



## 5.2. Overall Performance

Going through ten Hussein lectures and sermons of each of the six selected Hussein preachers as a matter of collecting data, a considerable amount of slangy utterances are extracted. Some of these utterances are highly frequented while others are not. This indicates that the society – regarding the preachers as belonging to the same society- use such utterances less frequently than others. Afterwards, a list of the frequently used utterances is made [see Table 1]. Eleven of these utterances are taken to be set in the items of the questionnaire in order to be good representatives to the slang used by Hussein preachers. The utterances are chosen according to their frequency, meaning that the most frequent eleven ones are selected. One item is answered as an example and ten of them are set to be answered by the subjects. All the slang utterances are written in Roman letters and translated into English.

**Table 1: Slangy Utterance Used by Hussein Preachers**

No.	Slangy utterances in Roman	Meaning in English	Frequency	Context
1.	Khal'walan	Such excuses are useless.	64%	Religious, social lectures, various cultural background audience
2.	Jararah	Intentional delay, procrastination	76%	
3.	La' boon urwahikum aghani	Never mind	50%	
4.	shali	Altogether	33%	
5.	La' asid wala' shaid	No one. No distinction	70%	
6.	Widum laddhaloonah nihchi ihachi	Do not drive us mad	33%	Religious, social lectures, various cultural background audience
7.	La' dhalil' Misin wulhain sowah	Do not mix good and bad	60%	
8.	Khata' minil ras hirjlan	Completely wrong	54%	
9.	Gam' y'la' m'um tak goal	One wins, one overwheats	71%	
10.	Ghasban 'wadum	Force people on something	66%	
11.	Ya' sam'a' khart khart	It is a complete mess.	83%	Explaining the Quran verses regarding pilgrimage of Mecca, various cultural background audience.
12.	Nisan waldeeh	Punish him severely	64%	
13.	Tukrah' Misila w' tala'	The matter will fail and get worse	67%	
14.	Mabeeha qarub warah	There is no way out.	77%	
15.	Pumal' 'wadum	People died	75%	
16.	La' 'baa' 'urwahah	We got fed up with them	66%	Criticizing Iraqi ministry of foreign affair and the religion men who have no stance against the ongoing situation, various cultural background audience.
17.	Ghasban 'alaa khashmak	Involuntarily	87%	
18.	Lak' unum mahalea, shum	Do you know what mistake you are committing?!	58%	
19.	Allah ykash' rask, ma'oon ihwalain	May Allah damn you.	53%	
20.	Italoon hadha	They will severely punish him.	82%	
21.	'ab alaikum	Shame on you	66%	Challenging enemies of Shia doctrine and the ones who criticize Hussein rituals, various cultural background audience.
22.	La' nat waldeekum	May Allah curse their parents	61%	
23.	Ghasban 'alaa, shoofha bilkamirah	Look at the camera: you will involuntarily accept what we do	49%	
24.	'Aboos eedak habeebi	I beg you to pay attention.	53%	
25.	Somme khilal	You may call it madness	47%	
26.	Yahas-ha bilasana	Lick it with his tongue	42%	Addressing simple minded people, various cultural background audience.
27.	Tulid' hima good	You swear to the poor man.	44%	
28.	'irig' hildifan	A kind of reprimand	77%	
29.	'Misyay ydhal beeha ganul	There are wicked ones in this world	57%	
30.	Widum al'age	Oh, dumb ones, oh idiots	39%	Religious, social criticism lectures, various cultural background audience
31.	Qanaqenah	The one who objects a lot	54%	
32.	'Alkhal'ek naya bilhara'	I may set you astray.	57%	
33.	'Yanfudh' 'abarah w' yimshi	Leave	81%	
34.	'Mlak' wul' alin	Murdering	41%	
35.	'Tida' tila' shahdak min batak hal' chadak	If you have your own witness, then there is no way to deny.	56%	Religious, social criticism lectures, various cultural background audience.
36.	Thalath arbas dhalrah tal', ma'oon ihwalain	Three quarters of his back are exposed., may Allah curse his parents.	64%	
37.	'Yim beek hadh	You are not brave enough	88%	



**Table 2: Overall Functions of Hussein Preachers' Use of Slang**

Secrecy	Intimacy	Jocularly	Offensiveness	Sympathy	Mitigation	Others
19%	17%	91%	89%	31%	32%	86%

The questionnaire has resulted in giving some of the functions adopted from the model which are highly represented in the choices of the subjects [see Table 2]. Meanwhile, other functions are rarely picked and employed. Considerable implications are mentioned by the subjects. In other words, in addition to the functions and implications set in the questionnaire; it seems that the subjects have other ones -as listeners/audience- to why Hussein preachers intentionally use slang. Among the six pragmatic functions of slang, jocularly and offensiveness have got the highest percentage, i.e. 91% and 89% respectively; indicating the use of slang is to have the attitudes of mocking and offending the addressee. The percentages go down in sympathy and mitigation whose scores are 31% and 32%, a matter which suggests that the use of slang does not implicate these two functions. Secrecy and intimacy are the least ones represented in such context; they have got 17% and 19% percentages, showing the weakest tendency to be utilized as pragmatic implications. As far as the item "other functions" is concerned, subjects mention several functions that they believe to be employed by Hussein preachers when using slang.

**Table 3: Other Functions of Hussein Preachers' Use of Slang**

Being at the same educational level of audience	Drawing the audience's attention	No formal equivalent found	Persuasive device
40%	21%	15%	10%

Four pragmatic functions can be summarized and deduced from using the slang variety by Hussein preachers after testing the context of the situation [see Table 3]. A percentage of 40% is given to the function of being at the same educational level with the various educational background audiences. The second function - 21% - is justified as to draw the listeners' attention and keep the audience in contact while lecturing. Another function is that slang is employed when there is no formal equivalent is found which has got 15% percentage, this could only be used by the Hussein preacher to effectively convey his idea. The last function is that slang is used by such formal events and under all the formal contextual clues to be a persuasive device, with a 10%percentage.

## **6. Discussion**

Finding the slangy utterances used by Hussein preachers and seeking the pragmatic functions include the pragmatic principles when interpreting the slangy utterances in comparison to the context of situation. Illustratively, the speaker employs slang variety to reach out one of the aforementioned pragmatic functions. Meanwhile, the listener would use the pragmatic principles such as cooperative principle and politeness principle till reaching the speaker's intended meaning. The slangy utterances used by the speaker can, by nature, be interpreted according to the lexical level, yet they cannot convey the effect and the same meaning that the speaker expects the listener to interpret.

Starting with jocularity and offensiveness, the speaker (Hussein preacher) intentionally employs such slangy utterances leading to mocking or offending the addressee in such a formal context which is not at random. The speaker, in fact, wishes to convey his own attitudes exploiting a pragmatic principle. By using slang jocular and offensive utterances, the speaker makes a conversational implicature in which the listener is expected to make the relevance that the speaker intends to use these types of utterances for pragmatic purposes in mind (as introduced by Grice 1975), although sometimes the principle of politeness is violated. The listener, in such a situation, would consider such breaching as an acceptable act. This can be included within the banter principle – using an impolite utterance in the surface, but the speaker intends solidarity and comity- as introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Therefore, Hussein preachers use slangy utterances for the purpose of jocularity and offensiveness. In such use, Hussein preachers make conversational implicatures, commit to the politeness principle and expect that the audience to make the relevance through the contextual clues to finally interpret the intended meaning of the speaker. The subjects of the questionnaire successfully interpret the Hussein preachers' uses of slang as jocularity and offensiveness; the Hussein preacher uses slang as a pragmatic strategy to mock and jocular the addressee and seek the audience's acceptance to be on the same side with him.

As far as the functions of sympathy and mitigation are concerned, subjects seem that they do not make enough relevance to use slang for pragmatic ends. However, these two functions can use slang to be a pragmatic facilitator to convey the speaker's intention. In this case,

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Hussein preachers employ slang to make mitigation improper, understated language or to sympathize with the addressee.

As for secrecy and intimacy, subjects do not prefer to use them at a large scale that the contextual factors, the implicature and the politeness principle are not well represented to be processed through relevance principle so as to reach the Hussein preachers' intention. Something related to the social context which limits the use of these two functions. Eventually, these two pragmatic functions are rarely used by the Hussein preachers.

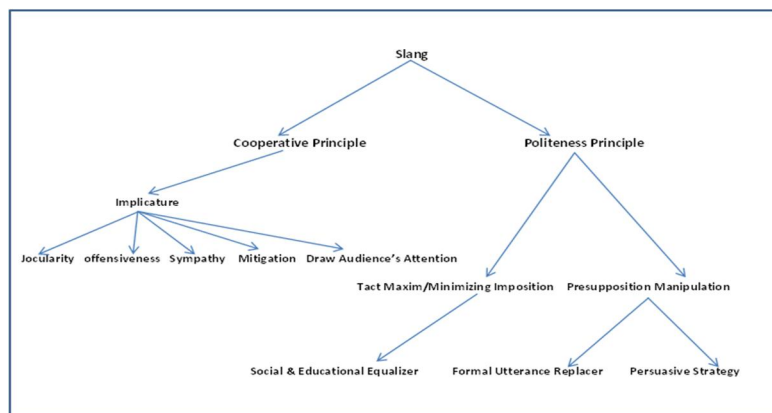
Interestingly, the subjects interpret the Hussein preachers' slangy utterances under four additional pragmatic functions, other than the ones followed in the model. It is mentioned that Hussein preachers employ the same slangy utterances under the same contextual factors, but the Iraqi Arabic speakers analyze and interpret the utterances differently that in the slot "other functions" the subjects state these four functions. Slangy utterances can be used as a social and educational equalizer, an attention drawer, formal utterance replacer in order to make the audience feel that Hussein preacher belongs to their social group, or a persuasive strategy to bring the audience's position toward the speaker's.

Regarding the social and educational function, it is pragmatically employed to reflect Leech's (1983: 104) tact maxim which states that the speaker makes less imposition on the hearer and much cost on himself, a maxim which goes hand in hand with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies. The strategy is that of minimizing the imposition. The second pragmatic function is to draw the audience's attention. This function is included within the conversational implicature and the politeness principle of giving one's point of view through using the same maxims of cooperative principle as introduced by Brown and Levinson's (1987). The formal utterance replacer and persuasive strategy reflect presupposition manipulations as politeness principle strategy in addition to the maxims of cooperative principles, meaning that the Hussein preachers use slangy utterances through manipulating the presuppositions in order to either fill the blank of the formal utterance which is not easy to find or to persuade the audience. The audience, in return, reaches the intended meaning through adopting the relevance maxim with the context of situation so as to interpret the slang utterance as the Hussein preacher wants.

Actualizing the analysis, it can be said that slangy utterances used by Hussein preachers are employed under two major pragmatic principles: cooperative principle and politeness principle. More precisely, conversational implicature is employed and some of the politeness strategies are also used to yield the functions intended by the Hussein preachers. Under conversational implicature, jocularity, offensiveness, sympathy, mitigation, draw the audience's attention are demonstrated. On the other hand, as a politeness strategy, slang can indicate a social and education equalizer within the tact maxim or minimizing imposition. Formal utterance replacer and persuasive strategy are included within the politeness strategy of presupposition manipulation.

This can be regarded as an effective model for analyzing such type of discourse, i.e. Hussein discourse. Figure one illustrates how the model works.

**Figure 1: A Pragmatic Model Developed for Analyzing Hussein Preachers' Function of Slang**



Based on what is mentioned above, all these four functions and the ones adopted in the model verify some of what has been hypothesized in the section 1 that Hussein preachers use slang for pragmatic ends through the use of implicature, relevance to make understatement, in-group membership, bringing the public toward the speaker's position and to communicate socially with the hearer (speech community). The second verified hypothesis is that slangy utterances in particular are reused by Hussein preachers when the speaker cannot find the formal equivalent used or it is difficult for the speech community to grasp the idea which has been represented in a formal language.

## 7. Conclusions

Analysis of Hussein preachers' lectures and sermons has proved that slangy utterances are highly employed in their speeches for pragmatic purposes. The slangy utterances extracted and found in the data are frequently used and vary according to each Hussein preacher.

Through the analysis and discussion of the questionnaire, it is concluded that Hussein preachers use slang for only four pragmatic functions among those in the model adopted and applied to the Iraqi context. The functions are as follows:

- a. Jocularly means that the Hussein preacher intends to mock the addressee by using slang.
- b. Offensiveness indicates that the Hussein preacher intends to offend the addressee by using slangy utterances.
- c. The Hussein preacher employs slang to mitigate the hard situation towards the addressee.
- d. Sympathy means that Hussein preacher intends to sympathize with the addressee.

It is also concluded that Hussein preachers do not use slang for the aforementioned pragmatic purposes only, but there are also four other pragmatic implications which reflect the use of slang in their lectures and sermons in a very formal Iraqi context. These are as follows:

- a. Hussein preachers try to be at the same educational level with the various educational background of audience.
- b. Hussein preachers intend to draw the listeners' attention and keep the audience in contact while lecturing.
- c. Hussein preachers use slang when there is no formal equivalent found to effectively convey his idea.
- d. Hussein preachers use slang in such formal events and under all the formal contextual clues to be a persuasive device.

Most importantly, a model is developed by this paper to analyze slang in Hussein lectures and sermons in terms of pragmatics functions and strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mudhar Sabah Al-Jiboori, Islamic University, specializing in testing and questionnaires