



Speech Act and Stylistic Devices in Lady Zainab's Sermon in Yazid's Palace: A Pragmstylistic Perspective

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Abstract

This study presents a pragma-stylistic analysis of Sayyida Zainab's speech in the court of Yazid after the tragedy of Karbala. The main goal of the researcher is to explore how language is used to express power, emotion, and resistance through different stylistic and pragmatic features. The analysis focuses on several linguistic devices such as speech acts, irony, metaphor, and rhetorical questions. The study follows the Speech Act Theory by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) as the main theoretical framework. Using a qualitative approach, the sermon was analyzed to identify the intended meanings and effects on the audience. The findings show that the sermon employs various literary devices, including metaphor, irony, and rhetorical questions, to create emotional and persuasive impact. Irony is used mainly to expose injustice and moral corruption, giving the speech a strong rhetorical effect of criticism and truth. Among the rhetorical devices, metaphor and irony appeared most frequently, as they added depth and spiritual meaning. Regarding speech acts, assertive acts were the most dominant in the sermon, reflecting Zainab's confidence and truthfulness, while expressive acts were the least used, mainly showing sorrow and emotional pain. Overall, her speech demonstrates a powerful combination of linguistic and spiritual strength that reflects deep resistance and moral awareness.

Keywords: pragmatics, stylistics, irony, metaphor, rhetorical, assertive, expressive, command.

أفعال الكلام والأساليب البلاغية في خطبة السيدة زينب في قصر يزيد: منظور براغماتي أسلوبية

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ملخص



تقدم هذه الدراسة تحليلاً براغماتياً أسلوبياً لخطبة السيدة زينب في بلاط يزيد بعد فاجعة كربلاء. يهدف الباحث بشكل أساسي إلى استكشاف كيفية استخدام اللغة للتعبير عن القوة والعاطفة والمقاومة من خلال سمات أسلوبية وبرagamاتية مختلفة. ويركز التحليل على عدة أساليب لغوية، مثل أفعال الكلام، والسخرية، والاستعارة، والأسئلة البلاغية. تستند هذه الدراسة إلى نظرية أفعال الكلام لأوستن (1962) وسيرل (1969) كإطار نظري رئيسي. وباستخدام منهج نوعي، تم تحليل الخطبة لتحديد المعاني المقصودة وتأثيراتها على الجمهور. تُظهر النتائج أن الخطبة تستخدم أساليب أدبية متنوعة، بما في ذلك الاستعارة والسخرية والأسئلة البلاغية، لخلق تأثير عاطفي وإقناعي. استُخدمت السخرية بشكل أساسي لكشف الظلم والفساد الأخلاقي، مما أعطى الخطاب تأثيراً بلاغياً قوياً للنقد والحقيقة. ومن بين الأساليب البلاغية، برزت الاستعارة والسخرية بشكل متكرر، لما أضفتاه من عمق ومعنى روحي. أما فيما يتعلق بأفعال الكلام، فقد كانت الأفعال التوكيدية هي الأكثر شيوعاً في الخطبة، مما يعكس ثقة زينب وصدقها، بينما كانت الأفعال التعبيرية الأقل استخداماً، حيث أظهرت في الغالب الحزن والألم العاطفي. وبشكل عام، يُظهر خطابها مزيجاً قوياً من القوة اللغوية والروحية التي تعكس مقاومة عميقة ووعياً أخلاقياً.

الكلمات المفتاحية: البرagamاتية، الأسلوبية، السخرية، الاستعارة، البلاغة، التأكيد، التعبير، الأمر.

1. Introduction

Every day there are many examples of the way that people have to communicate, and many examples of the way that those communications can also refer to feelings about the various elements in people's lives. The way we use language has also become the primary means through which we express our own thoughts, feelings, and/or attitudes about something and influence the way we behave in a particular context. This is why so many researchers have taken varied approaches to study the topic of language. One of the most effective methods for studying language, in this context, is called pragma-stylistics, which is the relationship between style, context, and meaning. It looks at the relationship between the word (or vocabulary) used in a speech act and the speech act performed by the speaker in that context. By using a pragma-stylistic approach to study how language works to accomplish objectives (e.g., persuade, create irony, or express affect) researchers can begin to understand the effects of their research on the language used.

The majority of past pragma-stylistic studies have been restricted solely to literature (i.e., fiction) including novels and short works, while there exists a dearth of empirical evidence involving speeches (oratory), particularly as it pertains to faith-related contexts. Prior research has also focused almost exclusively upon what literary authors suggest through their choice of verbal elements as to how to guide their readers through the process of constructing an interpretation of their written product, but have done so with a limited number of empirical examples outside of literary contexts such as sermons, political speeches and speeches associated with religious activities or events combining pragmatic elements and stylistic features,



and thereby affecting an audience. Consequently, there exists a significant gap within the literature as to the lack of research conducted into the various example of the pragma-stylistic characteristics in real-world communicative contexts.

The purpose of this study therefore is to examine the pragma-stylistic features of Sayyida Zainab's speech after Karbala. Examining the use of rhetorical and literary devices to convey a powerful message; and how they impacted the audience. The study seeks to answer three primary questions:

1. What literary devices were employed in the sermon?
2. How did Sayyida Zainab use irony, and what was its rhetorical effect?
3. Which rhetorical devices were most frequently used?
4. What are the most speech act has been used in the sermon?
5. Which speech act was used the most and which one was used the least in the sermon?

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the theoretical and practical understandings of both linguistic pragmatics and linguistic stylistics through analyzing how a particular context can function rhetorically, thereby providing examples for teachers in reference to demonstrating the intersection of language and meaning; translators in terms of preserving the effect of an entire text (e.g., the sermon) through remaining true to its original rhetoric; and scholars in communications through providing them with illustrations of how language can facilitate resilience and resistance during pivotal periods of time throughout the history of mankind. Additionally, it enhances one's appreciation of Islamic Civilization through the moral courage and rhetorical excellence displayed by Sayyida Zainab in her speech at the death of her brother.

The research uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the sermon in terms of the rhetorical devices and their implications. It does not rely on quantitative information to conduct the analysis. The analysis examines the usage of these devices in terms of both their extent and frequency.

This paper contains four sections that will each discuss a number of topics. Section 2 provides an overview of theoretical Dimensions of Stylistics and Pragmatics and cites previous studies relating to them. Section 3 describes the methodology employed to conduct a pragma-stylistic analysis of Sayidda Zaynab's sermon. Section 4 reports on the results of the analysis and discusses findings based on the terms and usages found within the context of the research described. Finally,

Section 5 concludes with a summary of the results and recommendations for future research..

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Pragmastylistics

With the emergence of conversation analysis, pragmatics, and discourse analysis in the late 1980s, stylistics developed new tools that enabled scholars to investigate the meaning of dialogue and interaction in literary works. This shift gave rise to what is known as pragma-stylistics, which merges stylistics with pragmatics to explore how language operates in specific contexts, Norgaard et al (2010).

Unlike earlier approaches that focused mainly on the structure of utterances, pragma-stylistics extends its scope to examine how pragmatic interpretation interacts with linguistic form. It provides a framework that explains the relationship between explicit and implicit meaning, and how speakers guide hearers to uncover the underlying intentions of an utterance, Hickey (1990).

Pragma-stylistics has been defined as stylistics enriched with a pragmatic dimension, applying pragmatic theories to literary texts to show how language functions in context, shapes characterization, and establishes power relations, Davies (2007), Norgaard et al (2010). As Sell (1991) points out, its aim is to connect the writing and reading of texts to the linguistic and sociocultural contexts, making it both literary and linguistic, with an emphasis on contextualization.

Example: "I hope she'll be a fool that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool."

Stylistics: Simple sentence with a paradoxical wish.

Pragmatics: The implied meaning is not admiration for "foolishness" but a critique of women's roles in a male-dominated society.

Pragma-Stylistics: The plain style + social context = conveys hidden social criticism.

2.2. Stylistics Theory

2.2.1. Figures of speech

Writers often rely on figures of speech to add vividness and clarity to their language. These stylistic devices go beyond the literal meaning of words, creating expressions that are more engaging, memorable, and aesthetically appealing,

Steffoff (2018). By using figures of speech, authors enhance both the beauty and the impact of their literary works, making the message more striking and easier for readers to recall.

For example, in the metaphor “Time is a thief,” time is compared to a thief to emphasize how quickly it takes moments away from life, making the idea more powerful and easier to remember.

2.2.1.1. Irony

Irony is a figure of speech used to convey a meaning that is opposite to the literal expression. It often involves echoing words or adopting someone else’s opinions with the purpose of mocking or ridiculing, Cruse (2006).

However, irony can sometimes be difficult to recognize because it is closely tied to the author’s tone and attitude towards the work, Learning (1997).

For example: when someone looks outside during a heavy storm and says “What a beautiful day!”, the statement is ironic because its intended meaning is the opposite of the literal words.

2.2.1.2. Rhetorical Question

Rhetorical questions look like ordinary questions but are used as strong statements rather than real inquiries Quirk et al.(1985). Unlike regular questions, they do not expect an answer. Instead, they usually express the opposite of what they ask: a positive rhetorical question implies a negative meaning, while a negative rhetorical question implies a positive one. As Sadock (1974) explains, rhetorical questions are not meant to seek information or responses.

Example: Who needs a heart when a heart can be broken?

2.2.1.3. Metaphor

Metaphor is a rhetorical and linguistic device that describes an object or an idea by presenting it as something else, thus creating a non-literal comparison without the use of “like” or “as” Lakoff and Johnson(1980) Its main function is to construct vivid mental images, emphasize similarities between different concepts, and make abstract or complex ideas more accessible and understandable Richards(1936) The significance of metaphor goes beyond its basic function; it plays a vital role in enriching language by adding depth, creativity, and stylistic beauty to speech and writing Leech (1969). Furthermore, metaphors facilitate comprehension by connecting abstract ideas with familiar concepts, which allows the audience to

grasp meanings more effectively Kovecses (2002). In addition, they generate powerful mental imagery that enables readers and listeners to approach ideas from a fresh and engaging perspective Black(1962).

2.3. Pragmatics Theory

Pragmatics is a linguistic field that focuses on how meaning is shaped by context. It examines the relationship between language and the situations in which it is used, emphasizing how context affects interpretation. According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics investigates the connection between language and context as a fundamental aspect of understanding communication. Similarly, Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of meaning conveyed by a speaker or writer and understood by a listener or reader. Mey (2001) further highlights that pragmatics explores language use in human interaction, shaped by social conditions and communicative circumstances. The researchers apply the Speech Act Theory (SAT) as the theoretical framework.

2.3.1. SAT

Speech Act Theory in pragmatics explains how people use language to perform actions, not just to share information. Austin (1962) showed that speaking can mean doing (e.g., promising or apologizing). Searle (1969) expanded the idea by classifying speech acts into types like representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.

2.3.1.1. Representative

Representatives (or assertive) are speech acts where the speaker states something believed to be true. They describe facts, events, or situations in the real world, Gran (2015)

Example:(20) “We watched a movie yesterday.”

2.3.1.2. Directive

Directives are speech acts used to make the hearer do something. They can be soft, like asking, or strong, like ordering, Widiatmoko (2017).

Example:(23) Would it be too much trouble for me to ask you to hand me that wrench?

2.3.1.3. Commissive

where the speaker commits to a future action, creating an obligation. It has a world-to-word direction of fit, Searle, J.R (1976)

Example: I promise to tell the truth.

2.3.1.4. Expressive

An act that expresses the speaker's psychological state or attitude about a situation. It has no direction of fit, Searle, J.R.(1976)

Examples: I apologize for the mistake. Congratulations on your win.

2.3.1.5. Declarative

An utterance that changes reality immediately based on the speaker's institutional authority. It has a double direction of fit, Austin, J.L (1962)

Examples: You're fired.

The meeting is adjourned.

3.1 Methodology

To achieve the objectives of this study and address the research questions, the researchers employed a qualitative approach to data analysis. This approach allows for a systematic identification and examination of data elements in accordance with the selected theoretical framework, facilitating the attainment of the intended results.

3.2 Data

The researchers have chosen the data of this search the Sermon of Sayyida Zainab in Yazid's Palace, (as shown in Appendix A) after the captives were brought to Kufa, Sayyida Zainab (peace be upon her) addressed the people who were weeping over Imam Hussain's tragedy. She exposed their hypocrisy, reminding them that they were the ones who had invited him with their letters and promises, yet they abandoned and fought against him when he came. She emphasized that this betrayal was not new; they had similarly turned against Imam Ali and Imam Hasan (peace be upon them). Using a vivid metaphor, she compared them to a foolish woman who undoes her own weaving, illustrating their lack of wisdom, loyalty, and stability.

She then turned to the enormity of their crime—the killing of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him)—and declared that it would remain an eternal disgrace that no amount of tears could erase. She warned them that God would never allow Hussain's blood to go in vain: in this world, they would face humiliation and defeat, and in the Hereafter, they would suffer severe punishment. She concluded by affirming that they had brought everlasting shame upon themselves, that God's

anger would pursue them, and that their ultimate fate would be torment in the Hereafter, and this search is found in Al-Majlisi (1983.)

3.3. Framework

This study focuses on the pragmatylistic analysis of Sayyida Zainab's sermon after the Battle of Karbala. On the stylistic side, the researchers analyzed the use of figures of speech specifically irony, metaphor, and rhetorical questions, to understand how they strengthen the meaning and impact of the speech. On the pragmatic side, the study applies the speech act theory to examine how Sayyida Zainab's words perform actions, show her moral authority, and influence the audience. This framework combines both stylistic and pragmatic approaches to provide a clear and structured analysis of the sermon's language, meaning, and effect.

3.4. Procedure

In this study, the researcher analyzed the Sermon of Sayyida Zainab (peace be upon her) delivered after the tragedy of Karbala. The procedure involved three main steps. First, the sermon was collected from authentic historical sources. Second, the text was translated into English to facilitate analysis. Finally, the sermon was examined using speech act theory to identify the pragmatic functions, such as representatives, directives, and expressives, within the discourse.

4. Analysis

After analyzing the selected speech depending on the two theories, the researchers found the following facts:

4.1. Figures of Speech

“ O Yazid, when you took control over the lands around us and narrowed for us the horizons of the sky, so that we became your captives, driven to you like prisoners in chains, while you had power over us — that this was because we were degraded by Allah and you were honored and favored by Him?”

Rhetorical question: Here Sayyida Zainab (Peace be upon her) uses this style not because she needs an answer from Yazid, but to blame and mock his way of thinking. He believed that his victory was a sign of dignity and honor, while she explains that it is nothing but a trial from Allah and a humiliation for the oppressors.

“And that this was due to the greatness of your status and the majesty of your rank?”



Rhetorical question: Here Sayyida Zainab (Peace be upon her) mocks Yazid again, showing irony in his belief that he is a great man with high status. She does not ask because she wants an answer, but only to show how

false and weak his imagination is.

“Is it justice, O son of the freed slaves, that you keep your women in seclusion while you drive the daughters of the Messenger of Allah as captives? You have exposed their veils and unveiled their faces, and the enemies lead them from one land to another.”

Rhetorical question: Sayyida Zainab (Peace be upon her) asks Yazid if this is justice: his women stay safe in their houses, while the daughters of the Prophet Mohamed are taken as captives and forced to walk among strangers. She does not expect an answer, but she uses this style to shame him and expose his

injustice.

“How can one expect consideration or fairness from a man whose mouth has chewed the livers of the martyrs, whose flesh has grown from the blood of the righteous, who raised war against the Master of the Prophets, gathered the confederates, brandished spears, and waved swords in the face of the Messenger of Allah? He was the most defiant of the Arabs against Allah, the one who most denied His Messenger, most openly showed enmity, and was the most arrogant in disbelief and rebellion against the Lord.”

Rhetorical question: Sayyida Zainab (Peace be upon her) scolds Yazid and describes him as a person who cannot be expected to fear Allah or do good. She points out that he comes from a family raised on blood, hatred, and enmity against the Prophet Mohamed. The question is rhetorical to highlight

his corruption.

“And what is your opinion but falsehood? And what are your days but numbered? And what is your gathering but soon to be scattered? On the Day when the Caller will call out: ‘Behold! May the wrongdoer who transgressed be cursed.’ And all praise is due to Allah, who has decreed happiness for His chosen ones.”

Rhetorical question: Sayyida Zainab (Peace be upon her) tells Yazid that his opinion is weak, his days are limited, and his people will soon scatter. The rhetorical question shows that his power has no real value, and that soon he and his followers will face destruction.

"O Yazid, when you took control of the horizons of the earth around us and narrowed for us the expanses of the sky, so that we became your captives, driven to



you like prisoners in chains, while you hold power over us — that this is because we are disgraced by Allah and that you are honored and favored by Him? And that this is due to the greatness of your importance and the majesty of your rank?”

Irony: Sayyida Zaynab employs irony in addressing Yazid, challenging his illusion of power. She questions his perception of triumph, highlighting that merely capturing the land and holding the captives does not make him superior. Her words imply that his worldly dominance is not a sign of divine favor or genuine greatness. Instead, she emphasizes that such victories are temporary and serve as a test through which God examines His servants.

“Allah is sufficient for you as a Guardian and Judge, and the Messenger of Allah will be your adversary, and Gabriel will be your supporter against you.

Soon will those who placed you in power and gave you authority over the necks of the Muslims know that what an evil exchange the wrongdoers have made, and that surely you are the worst in position and the most astray in path.”

Irony: In this passage, Sayyida Zaynab places her complete trust in God, emphasizing reliance on divine authority, the Prophet, and the angel Gabriel. She delivers a strong admonition to Yazid, asserting that those who oppress the Muslims will face severe consequences. Her words highlight the ultimate justice of God, declaring that the oppressors’ fate will be destruction and that their position is both evil and misguided. This use of irony underscores the contrast between Yazid’s perceived power and the inevitable divine judgment awaiting him.

“It is neither because I see you as insignificant, nor because I find reproaching you to be great, that I speak these words — for after what you have done, leaving the eyes of the Muslims weeping and their hearts burning with grief at his remembrance, what more remains to be said? Indeed, they are hardened hearts, tyrannical souls, and bodies filled with the wrath of Allah and the curse of His Messenger. In them, Satan has made his nest and laid his eggs. From such people as these, one like you has risen and taken his place.”

Irony: Sayyida Zaynab asserts that her criticism of Yazid is not due to any hope of good within him or expectation of mercy. She depicts him as filled with evil, likening his heart and soul to being hardened and dominated by Satan. His disposition is utterly devoid of compassion, and his actions are a manifestation of divine wrath and the Prophet's curse. This ironic address

highlights the stark contrast between Yazid's self-perception and his true moral corruption.



“All wonder — absolute wonder — at the slaughter of the pious, the scions of the prophets, and the offspring of the successors, by the hands of base freedmen and the children of shameless libertines. Their hands are wiped clean of our blood while their mouths lick our flesh. The pure corpses that lie on the bright hills are seized by predators and defiled by scavengers. If you have taken us as plunder, you will surely take us as a hateful and ruinous spoil — for you will find nothing there except what your own hands have brought about. And Allah is never unjust to His servants. To Allah alone is the complaint and the one to rely upon; to Him is refuge and hope.”

Irony: In this passage, Sayyida Zaynab denounces Yazid for the murder of the purest and most honorable among people, emphasizing the brutality carried out by the hands of the corrupt. She ironically points out that what he considers a triumph is merely a worldly act of injustice, and that he will ultimately face accountability for his deeds. Her words underscore reliance on God’s justice, affirming that divine retribution is inevitable, and that the oppressed have no recourse but to appeal to God, the ultimate authority and refuge.

“And by his blood, you have drawn closer to disbelief, following the path of your ancestors.”

Irony : Yazid thinks he achieved victory by killing Imam Al-Hussain (peace be upon him), but Sayyida Zaynab tells him: in reality, you did not come closer to Allah with this act, rather you drew closer to the unbelievers—your ancestors who fought against the Prophet.

“And you loved your mother who did not carry you.”

Irony: This is an indication that Yazid will one day come to hate himself and his very existence when he faces the consequences of his actions. Here lies an ironic contrast between his current joy and his destiny in the Hereafter.

“And do not think of those who were killed in the way of Allah as dead; rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision.”

Irony: Sayyida Zaynab (peace be upon her) uses the Qur’anic verse to tell him: your killing of them was not an end but a beginning. This is an implicit reminder of your doomed fate, despite your current happiness.

“And your days are but numbered, and your gathering is nothing but scattered.”

Irony: She tells him: your days are numbered and your army is but scattered. This is a mockery of his arrogance, position, and pride.

“Then plot your plots and strive with all your effort.”

Irony: This phrase in itself is sarcasm toward Yazid: no matter how hard you try, all your efforts are in vain and will fail—because truth has triumphed and will remain victorious.

“You have taken over the horizons of the sky against us.”

Metaphor for oppression, tyranny, and domination.

“You have narrowed the horizons of the sky for us.”

Metaphor: It is an image of severe distress or both physical and psychological suffocation.

“So we became your captives.”

Metaphor: Indicating being bound or imprisoned.

“We are driven to you in chains, one after another.”

Metaphor for being driven or forced under compulsion.

“You lifted your nose in arrogance.”

Metaphor for arrogance and pride.

“You beat your chest with joy.”

Metaphor for boasting over a false victory.

“You shake off your dust with delight.”

Metaphor for vanity and excessive pride.

“The world seems secured and ready for you.”

Metaphor meaning that fortune favors you, or as colloquially expressed, “life has smiled at you this time.”

“You have exposed their veils.”

Metaphor for disrespect and violation of the sanctity of the Prophet’s daughters, symbolizing the breaking of modesty.

“The people of the camps gaze upon them.”



Metaphor for people staring openly without any sense of shame.

“And their faces are examined by both near and far.”

Metaphor for the crowd gazing at them without respect.

“They have rebelled against you and turned their defiance toward Allah.”

Metaphor for transgression and exceeding limits against Allah, the Almighty.

“He spat out the livers of the martyrs.”

Metaphor for brutality and the inhumane acts committed against Al-Hussain and his family (peace be upon them).

“His flesh grew from the blood of the righteous.”

Metaphor indicating that his life and possessions are built upon the blood of the innocent and the sacrifices of the righteous.

“A serpent drags itself in the chest.”

Metaphor in which the “lizard” (a despised animal) symbolizes the dark, crawling hatred within the soul.

“He gnashes his teeth in his face.”

Metaphor for rejoicing in what he committed against the Imam.

“She reopened the wound.”

Metaphor for reopening the wound, symbolizing the renewal of pain or hatred toward the Prophet’s family.

“She cut off the lip.”

Metaphor for reviving enmity and eliminating any possibility of reconciliation.

“The sun of the family of Abdul-Muttalib.”

Metaphor for Imam Al-Hussain (peace be upon him), portraying him as the radiant and noble face of the Hashemite family.

“Let your wrath fall upon the man who spilled our blood.”

Metaphor for divine wrath directed toward those who shed our blood.

“You left nothing unharmed but your own skin.”

Metaphor for self-inflicted harm, meaning that the wrong ultimately turns back upon oneself.

“He gathers them together and unites their scattered ranks.”

Metaphor for restoring dignity and reuniting the scattered community.

“The joy of killing him does not provoke you.”

Metaphor equating joy over his killing with a provoking force.

“He granted you authority over the Muslims’ necks.”

Metaphor for control and authority, symbolizing that the lives of believers are placed under the sword of the ruler.

“You left the eyes of the Muslims in tears.”

Metaphor indicating that people mourn over the bodies lying on the ground, symbolizing grief and sorrow for the tragedy that occurred.

“Their hearts burn with grief at his remembrance.”

Metaphor for grief over Al-Hussain (peace be upon him), like fire burning in their chests.



“Hardened hearts and rebellious souls.”

Metaphor for the lack of mercy and harshness of the oppressors.

“Bodies filled with wrath.”

Metaphor representing the bodies of the disbelievers being filled with divine wrath and curses.

“Satan has nested and multiplied within it.”

Metaphor depicting the hearts and bodies of the disbelievers as a nest for devils.

“One like you has risen and taken his place.”

Metaphor criticizing Yazid (may God curse him) with blame and condemnation.

“Their hands are wiped clean of our blood.”

Metaphor for the hands of the oppressors being soaked in blood, showing killing has become ordinary for them.

“Their mouths are smeared with our flesh.”

Metaphor indicating they delight in killing the Ahl al-Bayt, shedding blood mercilessly and violently.

“The bright hills.”

Metaphor for the bodies thrown on the ground, left unburied and uncovered.

“And the scavengers defile them.”

Metaphor for the horses trampling over the chest of Al-Hussain (peace be upon him).

“Plot your plots.”

Metaphor for challenge and mockery.



“You will neither reach our time nor achieve our goal.”

Metaphor for a high status or position that cannot be reached.

“You cannot erase our memory.”

Metaphor for reputation and enduring remembrance.

“Your days are but numbered.”

Metaphor indicating a short lifespan.

“Your gathering will surely disperse.”

Metaphor for power that will eventually be scattered or wasted.

“No one has wronged them except you.”

Metaphor showing that the presence of the Ahl al-Bayt brings blessing, while for Yazid it is a curse.

“The goodness of succession.”

Metaphor symbolizing comfort and relief after loss or hardship.

“Beautiful repentance.”

Metaphor representing returning to God with a beautiful, sincere spirit.

4.2. Speech Act

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. And may Allah send blessings upon my grandfather, the master of the messengers. Allah, the Exalted, has spoken the truth as He says: "Then the end of those who did evil was the worst [consequence] because they denied the signs of Allah and used to ridicule them."

Representative (Assertive): Here, Sayyida Zainab declares a universal religious truth—praising God, sending blessings upon the Prophet, and quoting a Qur’anic verse. This is classified as an assertive speech act because she merely states a fact without requesting, commanding, or committing to any future action.

Did you think, O Yazid, when you seized the horizons of the earth from us... that this was due to the greatness of your worth and the majesty of your rank?

Expressive: In this segment, Sayyida Zainab expresses her indignation and contempt toward Yazid. The focus is on conveying her emotional stance—anger and resentment at the humiliation imposed upon her and her family—rather than providing information or making a request.

So, slow down! Slow down! Do not act in foolish haste! Have you forgotten the saying of Allah...?

Directive: Here, Sayyida Zainab admonishes Yazid, urging him to reflect and restrain his arrogance. This qualifies as a directive speech act because it seeks to influence the listener’s future behavior.

Is it justice, O son of freed slaves, that you keep your own women veiled in seclusion while you parade the daughters of the Messenger of Allah as captives?

Expressive: In this part, Sayyida Zainab denounces Yazid’s injustice and dishonorable treatment of the Prophet’s family. She conveys deep moral outrage and grief, which makes it expressive rather than directive or assertive.

And how can one expect fairness from a man whose mouth chewed the livers of martyrs and whose flesh has grown from the blood of the righteous...?

Representative (Assertive): Here, Sayyida Zainab recounts historical and factual details of the enemy’s brutality. It is an assertive speech act since it describes past events without expressing a request or making emotion the main focus.

So let not anyone who harbors hatred and enmity toward us, the People of the House, think that his enmity will be without consequence...

Directive: Sayyida Zainab addresses Yazid with a moral admonition, warning him not to assume his hostility toward the Prophet’s family would go unpunished. The

utterance is directive because it aims to provoke self-reflection and a change in attitude.

O Allah, take our right and avenge us against our oppressor...

Commissive: This is a supplication in which Sayyida Zainab appeals to God to avenge the oppressed. It reflects a commitment to a future action carried out by divine justice, thus qualifying as a commissive speech act.

And do not think of those who were killed in the way of Allah as dead; rather, they are alive, provided for by their Lord. (Qur'an 3:169)

Representative (Assertive): Sayyida Zainab proclaims a religious truth regarding the martyrs' eternal life in the presence of God. It is assertive because it provides a theological fact, not a request or an emotional expression.

And sufficient for you is Allah as a Protector and Judge, and [sufficient is] the Messenger of Allah as your adversary, and Gabriel as your supporter.

Expressive: In this statement, Sayyida Zainab expresses her reliance and spiritual confidence in divine support. It reflects her inner feelings of reassurance rather than commanding or informing the listener.

And soon shall the one who has granted you your seat of power over the necks of the Muslims know what an evil substitute he has chosen for the wrongdoers.

Commissive / Expressive: This utterance both warns Yazid of the impending divine reckoning (directive) and conveys her moral indignation (expressive).

It is not my belittling of your worth, nor my magnifying of my rebuke of you...

Expressive & Representative: Sayyida Zainab asserts the truth that her criticism of Yazid is not due to underestimating or overestimating him.

It is partly assertive as it clarifies a fact and partly expressive as it reflects her defiance and inner stance.



How truly astonishing—most astonishing of all—is the killing of the righteous and the descendants of the Prophets...

Assertive & Expressive: She highlights a shocking reality—the killing of the virtuous descendants of the Prophets—asserting a fact while also expressing moral outrage.

You will find nothing except what your own hands have put forth, and Allah is never unjust to His servants. (Qur'an 3:182)

Assertive / Expressive / Commissive: This combines three acts: affirming a theological truth about divine justice (assertive), revealing an emotional sense of moral certainty (expressive), and implying God's future judgment (commissive).

So plot your plots, and exert all your efforts! By the One Who has honored us with Revelation and the Book...

Directive & Expressive: Sayyida Zainab challenges Yazid to exhaust his schemes, asserting her unwavering resolve (expressive) while daring him in a way that directs his response.

And all praise is due to Allah Who has decreed happiness for His friends and has granted the fulfillment of His will to His chosen ones...

Expressive: She praises God for His justice and the fulfillment of His divine will. The focus is on expressing gratitude and reverence, making it an expressive speech act.

5.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this study seeks to show how Sayyida Zaynab eloquent speech combined emotion with logic to confront injustice and express divine truth. This came after analyzing the sermon of Sayyida Zaynab (Peace be upon her) after the tragedy of Karbala from both stylistic and pragmatic perspectives, in order to reveal how language was used as a means of power, faith, and resistance. This research begins with the introduction, followed by theoretical part consisting of pragmatics and stylistics, and then research methodology. Finally, the data were analyzed, and the researchers reached the desired results.



The study found that the most dominant figure of speech in Sayyida Zinab's sermon is metaphor, because her language is highly figurative and symbolic, allowing her to express pain, courage, and divine justice in elevated and indirect ways. As or Speech Act Theory, the most frequent type is the Expressive act, as her speech reflects emotions of grief, anger, courage, and unshakable faith. Through expressive and directive acts, she transformed words into actions that condemned tyranny and inspired strength.

This research is significant due to the following reasons: It highlights the linguistic and spiritual power of Sayyida Zainab's sermon, showing how language can serve as a tool of resistance and faith, theoretically, it links pragmatics and stylistics, demonstrating how meaning and emotion work together in real communication, practically, it helps readers, students, and researchers understand how rhetorical and linguistic features can be used to express truth and inspire others.

This study also encourages future researchers to conduct comparative analyses between the sermons of Sayyida Zainab (peace be upon her) and Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) to explore their shared themes and stylistic differences.

In conclusion, this research found that Sayyida Zainab's (peace be upon her) sermon stands as a timeless example of eloquence, strength, and divine expression, where language becomes both an act of worship and a form of resistance.

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Appendix (A)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى جَدِّي سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، صَدَقَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ كَذَلِكَ يَقُولُ: ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ
أَسَاؤُوا السُّوَى- أَنْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

أَطْنَنْتَ يَا يَزِيدُ حِينَ أَخَذْتَ عَلَيْنَا أَفْطَارَ الْأَرْضِ، وَصَيِّفْتَ عَلَيْنَا آفَاقَ السَّمَاءِ، فَأَصْبَحْنَا لَكَ فِي إِسَارٍ، نُسَاقُ إِلَيْكَ
سَوْقًا فِي قَطَارٍ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَيْنَا ذُوِ الْاِقْتِدَارِ، أَنْ بِنَا مِنَ اللَّهِ هَوَانًا وَعَلَيْكَ مِنْهُ كَرَامَةٌ وَامْتِنَانًا؟؟ وَأَنَّ ذَلِكَ لِعِظَمِ خَطَرِكَ
وَجَلَالَةِ قُدْرِكَ؟؟ فَسَمَخْتُ بِأَنْفِكَ وَنَطَرْتُ فِي عِطْفٍ، تَضْرِبُ أَسْدَرَكَ فِرْحًا وَتَنْفُضُ مِذْرُوكَ مَرِحًا حِينَ رَأَيْتَ
الدُّنْيَا لَكَ مُسْتَوْسِقَةً وَالْأُمُورَ لَدَيْكَ مُتْسِقَةً وَحِينَ صَفَى لَكَ مُلْكُنَا وَخَلَصَ لَكَ سُلْطَانُنَا.

فَمَهْلًا مَهْلًا لَا تَطِشْ جَهْلًا! أُنْسِيَتْ قَوْلَ اللَّهِ: وَ لَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ
لِيُزَادُوا فِي إِثْمِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ [١]

أَمِنَ الْعَدْلُ يَا ابْنَ الطُّلُقَاءِ تَخْدِيرُكَ حَرَائِرِكَ وَسَوْفُوكَ بَنَاتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ سَبَايَا؟؟ قَدْ هَتَكْتَ سُورَهُنَّ وَأَبْدَيْتَ
وُجُوهُهُنَّ بِحُدُودِ بَهَنِ الْأَعْدَاءِ مِنْ بَلَدٍ إِلَى بَلَدٍ وَيَسْتَشْرِفُهُنَّ أَهْلُ الْمَنَاقِلِ وَيَبْرُزْنَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَنَاهِلِ وَيَتَصَفَّحُ وَجُوهُهُنَّ
الْقَرِيبُ وَالْبَعِيدُ وَالْعَائِبُ وَالشَّهِيدُ وَالشَّرِيفُ وَالْوَضِيعُ وَالذَّنِي وَالرَّفِيعُ، لَيْسَ مَعَهُنَّ مِنْ رَجَالِهِنَّ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا مِنْ
حُمَاتِهِنَّ حَمِيمٌ، عَثُوا مِنْكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَجُحُودًا لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَدَفَعَا لِمَا جَاءَ بِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ، وَلَا عَزْوَ مِنْكَ وَلَا عَجَبَ
مِنْ فِعْلِكَ.

وَ أَتَى يُرْتَجَى مُرَاقِبَةٌ مِنْ لَفْظِ فُوهِ أَكْبَادِ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَنَبَتْ لَحْمُهُ بِدِمَاءِ السُّعْدَاءِ وَنَصَبَ الْحَرْبِ لِسَيِّدِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَجَمَعَ
الْأَحْزَابَ وَشَهَرَ الْحَرَابَ وَهَزَّ السُّيُوفَ فِي وَجْهِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أَشَدَّ الْعَرَبِ لِلَّهِ جُحُودًا وَأَنْكَرَهُمْ لَهُ رَسُولًا وَأَطْهَرَهُمْ
لَهُ عُدُونًا وَأَعَانَهُمْ عَلَى الرَّبِّ كُفْرًا وَطُغْيَانًا.

أَلَا إِنَّهَا نَتِيجَةُ خِلَالِ الْكُفْرِ، وَضَبَّ يُجْرَجُ فِي الصَّدْرِ لِقَتْلَى يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ! فَلَا يَسْتَبْطِئُ فِي بُغْضِنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ
كَانَ نَظَرُهُ إِلَيْنَا شَتْفًا وَشَتَانًا وَأَحْنًا وَضَعْنًا يُظْهَرُ كُفْرُهُ بِرَسُولِهِ وَيَفْصَحُ ذَلِكَ بِلِسَانِهِ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ فِرْحًا بِقَتْلِ وَلَدِهِ
وَسَبِي دُرَيْتِهِ غَيْرَ مُتَّحِبِّ وَلَا مُسْتَعْظِمٍ:

لِأَهْلُوا وَاسْتَهْلُوا فِرْحًاو لِقَالُوا يَا يَزِيدُ لَا تُشَلِّ

مُنْتَحِيًا عَلَى ثَنَائِي أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ مُقْبَلٌ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص يَنْكُتُهَا بِمُخَصَّرَتِهِ، قَدْ التَّمَعَ السُّرُورُ بِوَجْهِهِ! لَعَمْرِي لَقَدْ
نَكَاتَ الْفُرْحَةَ وَاسْتَأْصَلَتْ الشَّافَةَ بِإِرْفَاقِكَ دَمَ سَيِّدِ شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ وَابْنَ يَعْسُوبِ الْعَرَبِ وَشَمْسِ آلِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ
وَهَتَفَتْ بِأَشْيَاخِكَ وَتَقَرَّبَتْ بِدَمِهِ إِلَى الْكُفْرَةِ مِنْ أَسْلَافِكَ ثُمَّ صَرَخَتْ بِنِدَائِكَ وَلَعَمْرِي قَدْ نَادَيْتَهُمْ لَوْ شَهِدُوكَ
وَوَشِيكَأ تَشْهَدُهُمْ وَيَشْهَدُوكَ، وَلَتَوَدَّ يَمِينُكَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ شَلَّتْ بِكَ عَنْ مِرْقِيهَا، وَأَحْبَبْتَ أَمَّكَ لَمْ تَحْمِلْكَ وَأَبَاكَ لَمْ
يَلِدْكَ، حِينَ تَصِيرُ إِلَى سَخَطِ اللَّهِ، وَمُخَاصِمِكَ وَمُخَاصِمِ أَبِيكَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ.

اللَّهُمَّ خُذْ بِحَقِّنَا وَانْتَقِمْ مِنْ ظَالِمِنَا، وَأَحْلِلْ غَضَبَكَ بِمَنْ سَفَكَ دِمَاءَنَا، وَنَقَصَ دِمَامَنَا وَقَتَلَ حُمَاتَنَا وَهَتَكَ عَنَّا
سُدُونَنَا، وَقَعَلْتَ فَعَلْتَنَّا الَّتِي فَعَلْتَ وَمَا فَرَيْتَ إِلَّا جِلْدَكَ، وَمَا جَزَرْتَ إِلَّا لِحْمَكَ، وَسَتَرْدُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ بِمَا

تَحَمَّلَتْ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ، وَإِنْتَهَكْتَ مِنْ حُرْمَتِهِ وَسَفَكْتَ مِنْ دِمَائِ عَثْرَتِهِ وَلَحْمَتِهِ، حَيْثُ يَجْمَعُ بِهِ شَمْلُهُمْ وَيَلْمُ بِهِ سَعَتَهُمْ وَيَبْنَتُهُمْ مِنْ ظَالِمِهِمْ وَيَأْخُذُ لَهُمْ بِحَقِّهِمْ مِنْ أَعْدَائِهِمْ.

وَ لَا يَسْتَوِزَنَّكَ الْفَرْحُ بِقَتْلِهِ، وَ لَا تَحْسِنَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ فَارْجِنَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ [٢]

وَ حَسْبُكَ بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَ حَاكِمًا وَ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ حَصِيمًا وَ بِجَبْرَيْلَ ظَهِيرًا. وَ سَيَعْلَمُ مَنْ بَوَّأَكَ وَ مَكَّنَكَ مِنْ رِقَابِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ أَنْ يَنْسُ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا وَ أَنْتُمْ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا.

وَ مَا اسْتِصْغَارِي قَدْرِكَ وَ لَا اسْتِعْظَامِي تَفْرِيعِكَ تَوْهُمًا لِإِنْتِجَاعِ الْخَطَابِ فِيكَ بَعْدَ أَنْ تَرَكْتَ عُيُونَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بِهِ عَبْرِي وَ صُدُورَهُمْ عِنْدَ ذِكْرِهِ حَرَى فِتْلِكَ قُلُوبٍ قَاسِيَةً وَ نُفُوسٍ طَآغِيَةً وَ أَجْسَامَ مَحْشُوءَةً بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ وَ لَعْنَةِ الرَّسُولِ قَدْ عَشَّسَ فِيهِ الشَّيْطَانُ وَ فَرَّخَ وَ مَنْ هُنَاكَ مِثْلُكَ مَا دَرَجَ وَ نَهَضَ. فَالْعَجَبُ كُلُّ الْعَجَبِ لِقَتْلِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ أَسْبَاطِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ سَلِيلِ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ بِأَيْدِي الطَّلَقَاءِ الْخَبِيثَةِ وَ نَسْلِ الْعَهْرَةِ الْفَجْرَةِ تَنْطِفُ أَكْفُهُمْ مِنْ دِمَائِنَا وَ تَتَحَلَّبُ أَفْوَاهُهُمْ مِنْ لُحُومِنَا وَ لِلْجُنْتِ الرَّآكِيَةِ عَلَى الْجُبُوبِ الصَّاحِيَةِ تَنْتَابِهَا الْعَوَاسِلُ وَ تُعَفِّرُهَا الْفَرَاعِلُ فَلَيْنِ اتَّخَذْنَا مَغْنَمًا لِنَتَّخِذُنَا وَ شَيْكًا مَغْرَمًا، حِينَ لَا تَجِدُ إِلَّا مَا قَدَمْتَ يَدَاكَ وَ مَا اللَّهُ بِظَلَامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ وَ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْمُسْتَكِي وَ الْمَعُولِ وَ إِلَيْهِ الْمُلْجَأُ وَ الْمُؤَمَّلُ.

ثُمَّ كَذَّ كَيْدِكَ وَ اجْهَدْ جُهْدَكَ! فَوَ الَّذِي شَرَّفَنَا بِالْوَحْيِ وَ الْكِتَابِ وَ النُّبُوءَةِ وَ الْإِنْتِجَابِ لَا تُدْرِكُ أَمَدَنَا وَ لَا تَبْلُغُ غَايَتَنَا. وَ لَا تَمْحُو ذِكْرَنَا وَ لَا تَرْحُضْ عَنَّا عَارِنًا. وَ هَلْ رَأَيْكَ إِلَّا فَنَدًا وَ أَيَّامَكَ إِلَّا عَدَدًا وَ جَمْعَكَ إِلَّا بَدَدًا يَوْمَ يُنَادِي الْمُنَادِي أَلَا لَعْنُ الظَّالِمِ الْعَادِي وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي حَكَمَ لِأَوْلِيَانِهِ بِالسَّعَادَةِ وَ خَتَمَ لِأَوْصِيَانِهِ بِبُلُوغِ الْإِرَادَةِ نَقَلَهُمْ إِلَى الرَّحْمَةِ وَ الرَّأْفَةِ وَ الرِّضْوَانِ وَ الْمَغْفِرَةِ وَ لَمْ يَشَقْ بِهِمْ غَيْرَكَ وَ لَا ابْتَلَى بِهِمْ سِوَاكَ وَ نَسَأَلُهُ أَنْ يُكْمِلَ لَهُمُ الْأَجْرَ وَ يُجْزِلَ لَهُمُ الثَّوَابَ وَ الذَّخَرَ وَ نَسَأَلُهُ حُسْنَ الْجِلَافَةِ وَ جَمِيلَ الْإِنَابَةِ إِنَّهُ رَحِيمٌ وَ دُودٌ. [٣]