Investigating Imam Ali's War Sermons Based on the Speech Act Theory

Dr. Ensieh Talebi
PhD in Arabic Language and Literature, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Dr. Abbas Talebzadeh Shoshtari[1]
Associate Professor in Arabic Language and Literature, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Dr. Ahmad Reza Heidaryan Shahri
Associate Professor in Arabic Language and Literature, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Extended Abstract

1- Introduction

Pragmatics is a branch of the science of semiotics, and in 1970s it has been structured around a set of applied studies, including the dialogical analysis and textual analysis (Mazeed, 2010).

One of the most important theories in pragmatics research is the theory of speech acts. This theory is used in various studies, including research on people's daily conversations, as well as research on the use of speech acts in various literary, religious, and other texts. By using this theory and examining the extent of the use of speech acts, one can find some hidden angles of the speaker's intention. Hence, we used this theory to examine sermons 34, 27, 25, and 179 of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), which are related to sermons related to Muawiya's war.

2- Theoretical Framework

Pragmatics is not limited only to linguistic levels of phonetics, grammar. In other words, it is not limited to a certain aspect of linguistics, but it can cover all levels (Elengar, 2005). Pragmatics does not capture only the apparent meaning of the phrase but it can also capture the implicit concepts of the speaker's intention during his communication with the audience.

John Langshow Austin was the founder of the speech act theory, and John Searle was able to complete this theory by dividing speech acts into five categories, and making changes to his master's theory. He categorizes five groups of speech acts as follows: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives.

John Searle, also, has two types of direct and indirect speech acts. On the other hand, context is important in the theory of speech acts.

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1 Corresponding Author .Email: shoshtari@ferdowsi.um.ac.ir

Therefore, in order to conduct the research from the point of view of speech acts, it is necessary to study and analyze the context. Scientists divide context into two types: linguistic and paralinguistic contexts. Since many studies of Nahjul-Balagheh have focused on linguistic context (although they did not necessarily have this title), in this study, linguistic context is not an issue, yet the focus is on the physical context including situational and social contexts to analyze speech acts.

3- Method
The method of this research is descriptive-analytic. Initially, it refers to the theory of speech acts and its principles. The following sermons are then analyzed based on this theory.

4- Findings and Discussion
For the sermons 34, 27, 25, and 179, in the light of this theory, we used the table of speech acts including utterances, apparent or direct acts, indirect or indirect acts, as well as non-verbal acts. Through lexical methods (through action verbs), the structure of the sentence, and the sentence context, we will come to the non-verbal acts of the utterances.

By examining the sermons which are related to the battle against Mu'awiyah and finding the number of speech acts in sermons and calculating their percentages, it was found that these sermons contain commissive, expositives, behabitive, and exercitive acts. The order of the percentage of the speech acts mentioned in the sermon, except in sermon 24, is the same. The behabitive in these sermons has the highest rank.

At first glance, it seems that verdictive act in the war sermons has the first place because the atmosphere of the war is such that the speaker encourages people to fight against the enemy. Since people of Kufa showed their weakness in defending their homeland, Amir al-Mu'minin's grief from this weakness led to use this act more than any other acts.

On the other hand, the third kind of speech act is verdictive in sermons of 34, 27, 25, and 179 with respectively of 14, 17, 29, and 7 percent. In addition to the low percentage of this speech act, the remarkable notion about this act is that 95% of the speech acts have multiple interactions with non-verbal acts. In other words, utterances, in addition to assertive acts, include non-verbal acts. This point indicates that Imam Ali (AS) does not encourage people to directly engage in jihad, and the context of the word is such that Imam will use this way to guide the people.

The minimum occurrence is for commisives and expositives, since Imam Ali (AS) was not in a position to express his commitment to a particular matter, nor did he seek to express a new condition that would entail a commitment.

5- Conclusion
Calculating and comparing the statistics of the volume of speech acts as well as the direct and indirect acts of the utterances in a few sermons from Imam Ali (AS) tell us the hidden points of these sermons. One of the things that can be achieved by comparing and interpreting speech acts is the speaker's and audience's thoughts. The high or low percentage of a speech act represents the perspectives of speakers and audiences which may not be explicitly stated. In particular, these percentages are repeated with a very little change in all of these sermons. The context and condition of the people of Kufa have not

been significantly different in all of these sermons, and their weakness in performing their duty makes the order of application and the percentage of their use

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speech act, Non-verbal act, Sermons of war.

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