

A Meta-Discourse Analysis of Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham

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ملخص البحث: موجز البحث وأهدافه. هذه الدراسة ما وراء الخطاب في خطبة الامام السجاد في الشام . وتم تحليل الخطبة لمعرفة استراتيجيات الخطاب المستخدمة من قبل الامام السجاد وتأثيرها على الجمهور . ركز التحليل على جوانب مختلفة بما في ذلك الادوات البلاغية وتقنيات الحجج و الملامح اللغوية المستخدمة في الخطبة ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف تم تحليل الخطبة بشكل نوعي استناد إلى نموذج هايلاند (٢٠٠٥) وحسب تقسيماته لما وراء الخطاب . تحول الدراسة الإجابة على الاسئلة التالية.

١. اي نوع من علامات ما وراء الخطاب تستخدم في خطبة الامام السجاد.
٢. ماهي العلامات الأكثر استخداما في خطبة الامام السجاد.
٣. ماهي أهم الوظائف ما وراء الخطاب في خطبة الامام السجاد في الشام.الكلمات المفتاحية : خطبة السجاد ، ما وراء الخطاب ، المستوى التفاعلي ، تحليل الخطاب ، قوة الاقناع

Abstract

The present study is intended to investigate the meta-discourse markers in Al-Sajjad's sermon in Al-Sham. The sermon was analyzed to examine the discourse strategies employed by Al-Sajjad and their impact on the audience. The analysis focused on various aspects, including rhetorical devices, argumentation techniques, and linguistic features used in the sermon. To do so, the main objectives of this study were to investigate the Meta-discourse markers most frequently used in selected data and to classify the functions of each marker in selected data. In order to achieve these aims, the data were analyzed qualitatively based on Hyland's model (2005) of Meta-discourse markers. The study tries to have the answers to the following Questions: (1) What type of meta-discourse markers used in selected data (2) What are the frequencies of the interactional and interpersonal meta-discourse markers in the selected speech?, and (3) What are the most important functions of meta-discourse in selected data?. Accordingly, two hypotheses were proposed: First, in selected data, the interactional markers through their resources are more frequent than those of the interactive level. Second, a higher frequency of self-mentions is employed in the selected samples to engage listeners. It is concluded that the overall patterning of Al-Sajjad's sermon indicate that interactional MD markers are dominantly used in selected data. The findings shed light on the persuasive power of Al-Sajjad's discourse and its effectiveness in conveying his message to the audience in Al-Sham. The study contributes to the understanding of the role of discourse in religious and rhetorical contexts, highlighting the nuanced strategies employed by speakers to engage and influence their listeners. **Keywords: Al-Sajjad's Sermon, Meta-Discourse, Interactive level, Interactional level, Discourse.**

I. Introduction

Meta-discourse has been dealt with by many scholars, first Harris (1959, p. 45) coined the term, and then Crismore, Goffman and Vande Kople continued analyzing the presence of meta-discourse in different discourses. Each linguist classified meta-discourse differently. They all agreed that it is discourse about discourse, yet there were no general guidelines and clear markers for detecting the field in any text (Ebrahimi, 2018, p. 9). Adel (2006, p. 10) states that meta-discourse is a contextual phenomenon, it cannot be restricted to certain terms or words, it can occur in morphemes, phrases, sentences or even paragraphs that aim to interact directly with the readers. While Ho (2018, p. 72) indicates that meta-discourse refers to the linguistic terms that make the writers interfere in their texts to communicate with the readers. For most researchers, 'meta-

discourse' is a fuzzy term referring to 'talk about talk' or 'discourse about discourse'. That is, 'meta-discourse', for them, has the role of looking internally and inwardly to reveal the aspects and elements of text itself. Yet, this view does not include potential features necessary for the activation of meta-discourse (Hyland, 2019, p. 19). Hyland (2005) defines MD as a set of self-reflective language terms that relate to the changing text, the writer, and the text's imagined readers or speakers. It is founded on a notion of writing or speaking as a social interaction, and it demonstrates how speakers project themselves into their speech to signal in academic environments their devotion and attitudes. This term is seen by Crismore et al., (1993) as "the interpersonal resources utilized to organize a discourse or the speaker's attitude toward the topic" (p. 109). Although MD is based on the assumption that the ultimate meaning of a text is derived from the interaction of its constituent elements, it is still necessary to define the text ideational content from different aspects that arrange the text and convey the speaker's thoughts and feelings towards the direction of MD (Hyland & Tes, 2004). Thompson in his study (2001) distinguished two basic types of interaction in spoken texts, which is further extended into interactive and interactional. The interactive type concerns information organization and propositional content coherence, and so seeks to guide speakers through the substance of the text via transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses. The interactional type, on the other hand, engages readers or speakers in the text argument or spirit and invites them to comment on it. The speaker attempts to create an interaction with their viewers and indicate their intentions for this reason through specific linguistic strategies, a perspective on propositional substance (Hatipoglu and Mirici, 2015: 53). Accordingly, the interactional type depicts the listener-speaker interaction in speech, which is accomplished through the use of specific devices (such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers, and self-mentions) by speakers to express their point of view, focus on the listener attention, position themselves, and initiate a dialogue with the listener. Based on the above argument, MD devices are generally required to help listeners understand the speakers' goals.

II. Discourse and Metadiscourse

Ideologically, Foucault (1972) has indicated that 'discourse' is the rules which constitute the subjects systematically (p. 49). On the other hand, Burr (1995) has expanded Foucault's claims by expanding Foucault's overview. Burr regards discourse as a group of definitions, analogies, manifestations, images, narratives, claims, and other elements that, when combined, generate a specific version of events (p. 32). According to Mills (1997), 'discourse' is a group of statements that are acceptable and have institutionalized impression. In other words, the way individuals act and think is subjected to the profound impact of such statements (p. 62). Moreover, Hoey (2001) has regarded written discourse as the interactional relationship between two extremes, that is to say, writers and readers (p. 11). Crystal (2008) has stated that in linguistics "a discourse is a behavioural UNIT which has a pre-theoretical status in linguistics" (p. 148). In other words, 'discourse' constitutes any speech event that is realisable without referencing any linguistic structure; for instance conversations, sermons, jokes, and interviews.

II. What are Metadiscourse Markers

The linguistic term 'Meta-discourse' is used to refer to the interacting of speakers or writers with their readers and persuading them through interactive and interactional categories. Meta-discourse (MD) is a linguistic term that is commonly used in discourse analysis, It refers to a relative new concept that conceptualise the interaction through the text between speakers/writers and listeners/readers. In addition, 'MD' is basically a fuzzy term that refers to 'talk about talk' or 'discourse about discourse'. Interactive Meta-discourse refers to the writers' knowledge, interests, expectations and understanding of their readers. The role of the writer is to organise a text to satisfy the needs of readers by arranging arguments so that readers retrieve the writer's interpretations. Interactional level refers to writers' interaction with their readers by making comments on their text. The writers' goal is to allow readers to interact with the text by interacting with the writers' explicit viewpoints (Hyland, 2019, p. 57-58). The term 'meta-discourse refers to "discourse about discourse," is unclear. In other words, MD plays the role of looking inward and inward to reveal the features and components of text itself. However, this perspective does not take into account potential language characteristics that could be important for the activation of MD, such as: "linguistic characteristics that describe not only how we organize our ideas but also how we relate to our readers or listeners" (Hyland, 2019, p. 19). Nash (1992, p. 100) noted the ambiguity surrounding this term earlier: "The word MD may have a reassuringly objective, 'scientific' ring, but its usage suggests boundaries of definition no more firmly drawn than those of, say, 'rhetoric' or 'style'. One reader may perceive a clear stylistic intention in something which another reader

dismisses as a commonplace, 'automatized' use of language According to Zhang & Hyland (2012: 64), MD creates the bond between speakers and listeners and serves as a framework for comprehending socially engaged communication. It demonstrates the linguistic elements that enable listeners to sense the speakers' presence in their speeches and comprehend their attitude toward the data & facts offered in the speeches. Instead of speaking a dry, boring speech, speakers can use meta-discourse to produce a speech that is coherent and "listener friendly" Meta-discourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers a members of a particular community.

III. Categories of Meta-discourse (MD)

According to Vande Kopple (2002) there are six categories of MD (as cited in Vande Kopple, 2012, p. 38):

1. Text Connectives

The text connectives explain how the parts of a text are connected and organised by using sequence elements such as (next, first) and temporal or logical links like (at the same time, consequently). Furthermore, it includes reminder connectives about the previous subject in texts such as (as we saw in ...) as well as sentences about the next subject such as (as we shall see in the next ...). Ultimately, speakers sometimes employ some words that are called 'topicalisers' which are words that focus on the main topic of a sentence, paragraph, and section as in (with regard to, as for, in connection with).

2. Code Glosses

According to Vande Kopple (1985), code glosses clarify the meaning of elements in a text and make it more understandable for readers (p. 84). Writers sometimes define or specify a word for readers as well as signal a problem with word interpretation. So, writers use such expressions as (what some people call) or (so-called) (Stubbs, 1986, p. 13). Moreover, strictly or loosely, writers aim for readers to utilise the writer's words. That is why writers utilise statements like (strictly speaking) or (technically) and expressions as (sort of) and (roughly speaking) to indicate possible interpretation. Other times, writers anticipate that readers may face a problem with passage interpretation so they indicate such trouble by rephrasing the expression as (What I mean to say is) or (I'll put it this way).

3. Illocution Markers

According to Vande Kopple (1985), through using such markers, the speech or discourse which is delivered to readers will be evident, for instance, the components that are used in a text as (to sum up, for example, we claim that, I hypothesise that and I promise to). In addition, the force that illocution markers have can be modified; for example, a direct request might be annexed to a modal verb as (I must ask that you). On the contrary, boosters such as (enthusiastically and most sincerely) can increase the impact of specific speech acts (p. 84).

4. Epistemology Markers

Williams (1985) has stated that speakers or writers sometimes lead readers or listeners to what they think or believe through employing 'emphatics' such as (most certainly and without a doubt) (p. 49). Another type of attitude that is regarded with the 'epistemological status' of ideational material is relevant to the evidence kinds or the material bases (Anderson, 1986, p. 273). Chafe (1986) has noted that for ideational materials there are different potential grounds derived from personal views as (I believe that) from perceptual experience as (it feels like) and what heard from others (the professor told me that) (p.264). Some types of MD have a link to the overall function of conveying an individual's attitude toward the experience of the conveyed ideational material. Sometimes, people have awareness, so they use 'shields' to signal such caution as in (perhaps) and (it is possible that).

5. Attitude Markers

Individuals can use the MD function to reflect on their stance on ideational materials. Individuals can convey their feelings with adverbs such as (Fortunately), clauses such as (I am grateful that), and parenthetical statements such as (I regret) and (I rejoice) (Vande Kopple, 2012, p. 40).

6. Commentary

Vande Kopple (2012) has stated that through this technique, writers or speakers directly address readers/listeners as well as draw them into an implicit conversation. Writers can comment on readers' moods, visions, or reactions such as (some of you will be amazed that) (p. 40). Hyland (2005) has expanded a model of MD that is always functionally based. Such a functional perspective emphasises specifically its contextuality instead of Vande Kopple's demarcation which distinguishes between interpersonal and textual

function, whereas Hyland employs Thompson and Thetela's (1995) distinction between interactional markers to identify interactional features viz the organisational and evaluative features (p. 82)

IV. Hyland's Model (2005)

The model of MD that this study adopts consists of two categories of MD: the interactive and interactional categories. Hyland (2005) has indicated that interactive markers assist readers by guiding them through the structure of discourse and explaining the linkage between paragraphs. As for the interactional MD, it is concerned with how the writer or speaker makes his interaction clear to engage readers/listeners by enabling them to comment or respond to the unfolding text (p. 57- 58).

a. Interactive Meta-discourse

As for the interactive category, this relates to the writer's understanding of readers' participation and the ways by which the writer accommodates his likely interests, processing abilities, knowledge, and rhetorical expectation. The goal of the writer is to restrict a text as well as shape it to fulfil the needs of readers by persuading them to recognize the writer's intended goals. Thus, this category organizes discourse and reveals that the text construction is in concordance with the reader's needs (Hyland, 2019, p. 57). In this regard, there are five subcategories of interactive MD, namely: transition markers, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses. These subcategories are illustrated in Table (1) (p. 58).

Table (1): Interactive Meta-discourse Model

Category	Function	Example
Interactive Transitions	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resource
	express relations between main clauses	In
	addition; but; thus; and	
Frame markers	refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	finally; to
	conclude; my purpose is	
Endophoric markers	refer to information in other parts of the text	noted
	above; see Fig; in section 2	
Evidentials	refer to information from other texts	According
	to X; Z states	
Code glosses	elaborate propositional meanings	namely; e.g.; such as ; in
	other words	

b. Interactional Meta-discourse

Hyland (2019) has stated that the use of interactional MD markers allows writers to organise their interactions with their readers. They include hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers. The purpose of the writer is to engage readers by enabling them to react to the evolving text (p. 58). He also mentions that interactional MD engages readers and allows them to contribute to the discourse by involving them in the writer's perspective. The category of Interactional MD is subcategorised into five subcategories of MD (p. 61). Table (2) below is based on Hyland's (2019) model:

Table (2): Interactional Meta-discourse Model

Category	Function	Example
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	Resource
Hedges	withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible; about
Boosters	emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude markers	express writer's attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self-mentions	explicit reference to author(s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement markers	explicitly build relationship with reader	consider; note; you can see that

V. Data Description

It is significant to highlight the selected data to offer ample clarification to the reader. Regarding data description, the researcher intends to select the data from Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham. The Sermon of Ali ibn Husayn in Damascus are the statements of Ali ibn Husayn in the presence of Umayyad caliph Yazid I. After the Battle of Karbala, the captured family of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, and the heads of those killed were moved to the Levant by the forces of Yazid. By order of Yazid, a pulpit was prepared, and a public speaker gave a lecture that placed blame on Ali and Husayn ibn Ali. In reply to the Yazid's speaker, Ali Ibn Husayn; introduced himself and his descendants. Also, he recounted the events leading to the death of Husayn ibn Ali .

V. Data collection

The collected data is analyzed in terms of graphs, diagrams, figures, and tables of data can assist the researcher to analyse the results (p. 2829). The whole sermon has been read word by word to extract the interactive and interactional MD markers according to Hyland's model (2005). In addition, the following formula calculates the percentage of interactive and interactional markers:

$$\frac{\text{The overall number of each marker}}{\text{The overall number of each level}} \times 100$$

VI. Data Analysis

As for data analysis, all the selected samples are to be analysed in terms of the two cornerstones of MD: the interactive category which includes (transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and, code glosses) and the interactional category which includes (hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers). It is worth mentioning that the method of analysis which is adopted here is a mixed one. i.e. the study adopts both a qualitative method of analyzing and conclusively elucidating the data under investigation, which are supported and justified by the quantitative method to get more solid and sound results that can be made use of in drawing at some conclusive remarks. The qualitative and quantitative results will be presented as follows:

1. Qualitative Analysis

The current study focuses on conducting a qualitative analysis of the meta-discourse markers (MD markers) present in Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham. The analysis aims to categorize and identify the subcategories of MD markers used in the sermon, as well as examine their functions. Specifically, the study will determine whether the MD markers fall under the category of interactive or interactional MD, utilizing Hyland's model (2005) as a framework. Qualitative analysis involves a detailed examination and interpretation of textual data to identify patterns, themes, and meanings. In this study, the researchers will closely examine the discourse of Al-Sajjad's sermon to identify instances of MD markers. These markers will be categorized based on their characteristics and functions, following Hyland's model. Hyland's model provides a framework for understanding and categorizing MD markers, distinguishing between interactive MD markers that engage the audience and interactional MD markers that reflect the speaker's stance and evaluation. The researchers will utilize this model to classify the MD markers found in the sermon into these two main categories, and further identify subcategories within each category. By conducting a qualitative analysis of the MD markers in Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham, the study aims to gain insights into the discourse strategies employed by Al-Sajjad and how these markers contribute to the overall effectiveness and impact of the sermon. The findings of this analysis will provide a deeper understanding of the rhetorical and persuasive elements present in the sermon, shedding light on the use of MD markers in religious discourse within the specific context of Al-Sham.

Extract (1):

“Whoever recognizes me knows me, and whoever does not recognize, let me tell him who I am and to what family I belong: I am the son of Mecca and Mina; I am the son of Zamzam and al-Safa; I am the son of the one who carried Zakat in the ends of the mantle; I am the son of the best man who ever put on a loincloth and clothes; I am the son of the best man who ever put on sandals and walked barefooted; I am the son of the best man who ever made tawaf (the procession round the Kaaba) In this extract, the first and second-person pronoun and possessive adjectives in a text are a measure of the speaker's explicit presence. In this text, the Self-mention "I am" and "me" were used to refer to the speaker's (Al-Sajad) presence in the sermon by using possessive adjectives and pronouns in the first and second-person pronouns. As an interactive MD, the connector 'and' is sub-categorized as a transition marker that indicates additive. This marker helps readers

or listeners to understand the logical consequences between sentences and paragraphs. In this regard, the use of transitions in texts guides the listener to understand the cohesion and the coherence between sentences viz. the syntactic and the semantic levels of discourse. Here, the adverbial phrase 'Whoever' which indicates concession is sub-categorized as transition marker in interactive MD. The function of transition marker is to link the argument between sentences. Besides, the verbs 'know', 'tell' and 'recognize' are subcategorised as booster in interactional level of MD. This marker also indicates that Imam Al-Sajjad argues that he is certain in what he says.

Extract (2):

“Do **you permit me** also to ascend these pieces of wood **and** to **say** a few things which **may** please Allah **and** also become the means of the hearers earning spiritual reward” This speech is said by Imam Al-Sajjad to Yazid. The first person pronoun 'me' is subcategorised as self-mention. Most importantly, this indicates the interactional MD between Al-Sajjad as a protagonist character who has attendance and the Governor of Sham Yazid. Besides, the modal verb 'may' is subclassified as hedge marker in interactional MD. It indicates Al-Sajjad's subjectivity which means that Al-Sajjad does not state deceit. In this regard, Al-Sajjad reflects his opinion. However, the additive connector 'and' is subcategorised as transition marker in interactive MD. It is used to indicate the logical relation between arguments to make the listener understands the intended meaning.

Extract (3):

“**I am** the son of Fatima, the best woman of the world”

This quotation is said by Al-Sajjad in the court to Yazid, which effect on everybody in the court and they began to weep and blame Yazid. The first person pronoun 'I' is subcategorised as self-mention, this indicates that Al-Sajjad projects himself as a present man in the discourse. Moreover, he wants to interact the listeners with him.

Extract (4):

“**I am** the son of the best man who ever offered the hajj **and** pronounced talbiya (Here I am at your service); **I am** the son of the one who was transported on the buraq in the air; **I am** the son of the one who was made to travel from the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Mosque... In this sample, the speech is said by Imam Al-Sajjad to Yazid in the court when the people insisted that Yazid should accord the Imam permission, but he declined persistently. The first person pronoun 'I' is subcategorised as self-mention in interactional level of MD. What is more, the conjunction 'and' is sub-categorised as an interactive transition marker. The function of this marker is to indicate additive so that Imam Al-Sajjad wants to link her argument to make his speech clear and organised.

Extract (5):

“**I am** the son of the one who defended the Muslims, killed the oath breakers of allegiance **and** the unjust and the renegades, struggled against his tiring enemies, the most excellent one of those who walked (to war) from among Quraysh, **the first** to respond to Allah from among the believers Self-mentions refer to the writer's presence in a text or speech by using possessive adjectives and pronouns in first or second-persons, for instance (I). The first-person pronoun 'I' is sub-categorized as self-mention in interactional MD. So, the speaker (Imam Al-Sajad) tries to identify his presence in the discourse. Furthermore, the connector word 'and' is sub-categorized as transition marker which indicates concession, which is used as a logical connectives that shows connection between ideas. The word 'first' is a sub-categorized as sequencers in the textual level of MD since it indicates to sequences or ordering.

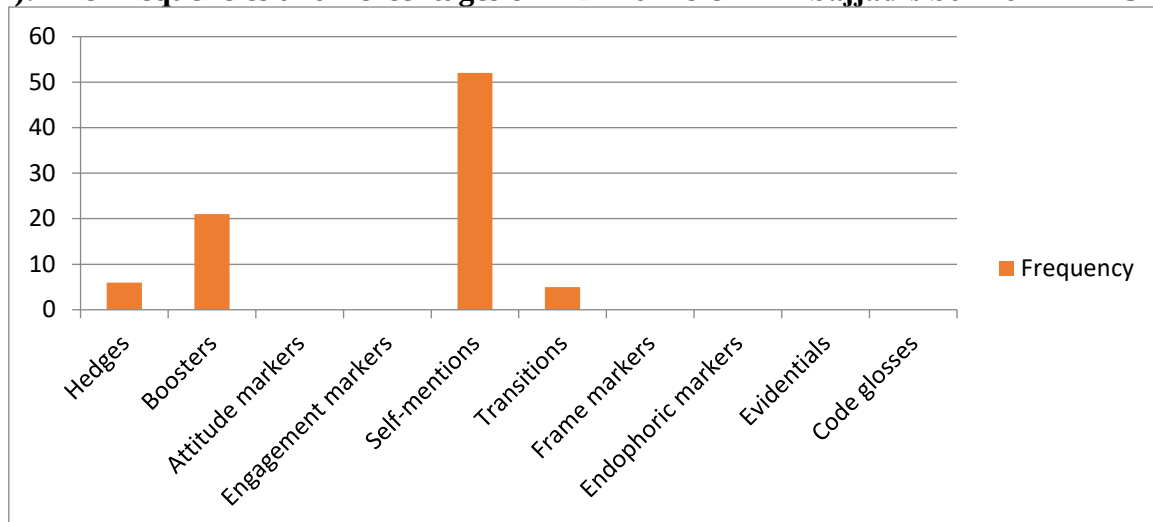
2. Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis is a technique that uses mathematical and statistical measurement to understand linguistic behavior, this part focuses on the descriptive mathematical analysis of the data, which aims to verify or justify the findings of the qualitative MD markers analysis. Here, Here, the aims and the hypotheses of the study will be verified by discussing the MD categories that basically form this study through presenting the MD markers in Al-Sajad's sermon in Al-Sham. This study shows the statistical results of MD markers, including (Hedges, Boosters, Attitude markers, Engagement markers, Self-mentions, Topicalizers, Reminders, Sequencers, Logical connectives, Transitions, Frame markers, Endophoric markers, Evidentials and Code glosses). The results show the percentages of the aims and the hypotheses of this study.

Table (2): The Frequencies and Percentages of MD Markers Markers in Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham

	Meta-Discourse Markers									
	Interactional Markers					Interactive Markers				
Freq.	Hedges	Boosters	Attitude markers	Engagement markers	Self-mentions	Transitions	Frame markers	Endophoric markers	Evidentials	Code glosses
	6	21	0	0	52	5	0	0	0	0
Perc.	7.14 %	25%	0%	0%	61.90%	5.95%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	79					5				

Figure (1): The Frequencies and Percentages of MD Markers in Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham



Based on the data analyzed, with reference to interactional MD in Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham, self-mention markers scored the highest percentage 61.90%. The next score was 25% (21) for Booster. Then, hedge markers scored 7.14% (6). As for interactive MD, transition markers scored the highest percentage in the interactive 5.95% (5).

VII. Conclusions

Based on the results of the current study, the conclusions below are reached: 1. As concerning the first hypothesis, which states that "In Al-Sajjad's Sermon in Al-Sham, the interactional markers through their resources are more frequent than those of the interactive level", the results show that the overall patterning of Al-Sajjad's sermon indicate that interactional MD markers are dominantly used in Al-Sajjad's sermon. On the other hand, the interactional MD markers help speakers to engage with listeners interactively. At the end, the current study has proved that interactional MD markers exist dominantly as linguistic tools which facilitate communication between the speaker and the hearer in Al-Sajjad's sermon in Al-Sham. Hence, the first hypothesis is verified.

2. With reference to the second hypothesis, which indicates that "a higher frequency of self-mentions is employed in the selected samples to engage listeners", the results of the current study indicate that self-mention markers has been employed more frequently in Al-Sajjad's sermon, than the other categories. This answers question two 'What are the frequencies of the interactional and interpersonal meta-discourse markers in the selected speech?'. Al-Sajjad reflects attitudes, feelings, and presence by applying such markers. The overused number of these markers indicates the points below:

- a. Al-Imam intend to self-mentions as a strategy through which he could reflect his presence, contributions, and rhetorical personality in his sermon.
- b. Al-Imam Al-Sajjad employ booster markers frequently as a subcategory in his sermon since he creates interpersonal relations with the listeners to attract their attention to the mood and atmosphere of the speech. Consequently, the listener would be fond and interested in the sermon through the main effective words. Thus, the second hypothesis is verified.

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