

**A Pragmatic Study of Speech Acts in Imam al-Ridha's (PBUH)
Argumentative Debate with Al Sabi'i**

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Abstract:

The present study is a pragmatic study that aims to show the importance of using speech acts in analyzing argumentative debate. The analysis is conducted by using Eemeren et al. (2014) distribution of speech acts and applying it to Imam Ali Bin Musa al-Ridha's (PBUH) argumentative debate with the Al Sabi'i. This analysis seeks to investigate the impact of speech acts in resolving the difference of opinions between the arguers. The study involves qualitative and quantitative analyses to accomplish its aim. This research paper comprises an introduction about pragmatics, an overview of argumentation theory, and the framework of the analysis. It also includes the analysis of speech acts found in Imam al-Ridha's (PBUH) debate with the Al Sabi'i, and a discussion of the data under analysis. The findings show that Eemeren et al.(2014) of speech acts is appropriate to analyze the debate under investigation and quite effective in resolving the difference of opinions between the arguers.

keywords: pragmatics, argumentation, speech acts, Imam al-Ridha
(PBUH).

دراسة تداولية لأفعال الكلام في مناظرة الامام الرضا (عليه السلام) مع الصابيء

الباحثة. هيام مناضل حسين

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المخلص:

الدراسة الحالية هي دراسة تداولية تهدف إلى إظهار أهمية استخدام افعال الكلام في تحليل النقاشات الجدلية. تم إجراء التحليل باستخدام افعال الكلام كما تم تقسيمها من قبل أميرن وآخرون(٢٠١٤) وتطبيقها على مناظرة الامام الرضا (عليه السلام) مع الصابيء. هذا التحليل يهدف إلى بحث تأثير افعال الكلام في حل اختلاف وجهات النظر بين المجادلين. تتضمن الدراسة تحليلات نوعية وكمية لتحقيق أهدافها. تشمل الدراسة على مقدمة لمفهوم البراغماتية ، نظرة شاملة لنظرية الجدل ، وإطار

عمل التحليل. كما يتضمن تحليل أفعال الكلام الموجودة في مناظرة الإمام الرضا (ع) مع الصابيء ، ومناقشة البيانات قيد التحليل لتوضيح الأرقام والنسب التي تم التوصل إليها. تظهر النتائج ان استخدام الافعال الكلام في أنموذج اميرن مناسب لتحليل المناظرة المستخدمة في الدراسة ولها تأثير فاعل في حل الخلاف في الاراء بين المجادلون.

الكلمات المفتاحية : (التداولية ، الجدل، أفعال الكلام ، الامام الرضا) عليه السلام

1. Introduction

The present research paper involves performing an introduction about pragmatics followed by an overview of the argumentation theory. Then, this study focuses on the importance of speech acts in argumentation. Finally, it performs Eemeren et al. (2014) distribution of speech acts as it represents the model of analysis to resolve the difference of opinions in the debate under investigation.

2. The Concept of Pragmatics

The meaning that is transmitted when someone speaks or writes anything is not necessarily restricted to the literal meaning (Tahir, 2020:1). It is best to try to unravel the threads of pragmatics emergence to the established scope of what pragmatics has become. Philosophers of language (e.g., Morris, Austin, Grice, and Searle) do the early foundational work that represents the core of pragmatics. Importantly, pragmatics arises from a desire to better understand how meaning is made when using language. Even though early work is purely introspective rather than empirical: it is concerned with the conditions of usage and performance (O'Keeffe et al.,2020:1).

In his book "Language and Linguistics", Lyons (1981: 171) defines pragmatics as "the study of actual utterances; the study of use rather than meaning; the study of that part of meaning which is not purely truth-conditional". Thomas (1995:22) defines pragmatics as "meaning in interaction". Yule (1996: 3) defines pragmatics in different ways. First, he defines it as "the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)". Then, as "the study of meaning in relation to context" and how more gets communicated than is said. Huang(2007:2) treats Pragmatics as "the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language. The central topics of inquiry of pragmatics include implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and deixis". According to Meyer (2009: 48), people need to grasp the whole social context in which a statement is pronounced. This investigates the role that context plays in the interpretation of what people say. Thus, pragmatics investigates the meaning of a speech in

context. In addition, it emphasizes the factors that influence users' utterances and the effects of those utterances.

In short, not every practitioner of pragmatics will experience it the same way. According to some thinkers, pragmatics is seen as the general study of language use, while others regard it as the study of communication, and yet others regard it as a method of studying language through its communicative function.

3. The Argumentation Theory: An Overview

Argumentation theory can be considered as a multidisciplinary field descending from communication theory, linguistics, philosophy, discourse analysis, and social psychology. The study of the nature and structure of the argument as it occurs in real-life settings is referred to as argumentation. It is an important branch of communication studies because of the regularity with which disagreements occur in everyday life. GHAILAN (2019,1) states that argumentation is known as a systematic way of convincing the opposing arguers. So, it arises when there is a difference of opinion, whether this difference is genuine or might be imagined by the arguers.

Argumentation is developed whenever someone adopts a point view that is not shared by others. So, the result is difference of standpoint. Usually, a difference of standpoint or opinion does not manifest itself as a comprehensive conflict between two opposing viewpoints, but rather as a fundamental difference of thought. One party might have an opinion about something, while the other party does not yet share it but is in doubt as to whether to accept it or not. It only makes sense to perform forward argumentation when it is assumed that the addressee is not yet persuaded of the acceptability of the standpoint under discussion. Otherwise, it would be pointless to do so (Eemeren,2018:1).

4. Speech Acts in Argumentation Study

Birner (2021:55) states that " To speak is to act ". To some extent, it is true that whenever we speak, we perform acts. Most of the time we speak to perform an action and our daily use of language is quite evidence of this idea. Searle (1976:1-23) writes a paper in which his basic aim is to develop a logical classification of essential categories under what's called illocutionary acts. His theory differentiated five speech acts. These types are directly relevant to the argumentative analysis.

He develops his teacher's ideas(Austin) of speech acts and presented them in a more systemic and formalized way. Searle claims that illocutionary acts in the form of a complete sentence are produced under specific circumstances and represent the basic unit of human communication. However, these acts affect the listener who should understand the speaker's utterance. Speaking, according

to Searle, is the act of doing illocutionary acts in a rule-governed manner. These rules are either regulative and can be expressed as imperatives, or constitutive and produce and identify new behaviors (Senft,2014: 19).

For the purpose of resolving a difference of standpoint, it is necessary to realize which argumentative moves are applicable in different argumentative stages and by which types of speech acts these argumentative discourse are performed. For resolving a difference of a standpoint on the merits, Searls' classification of speech acts (1979:1–29) is suitable for an argumentative analysis(Eemeren, 2018:38).

Searle's speech acts, as stated by ABOOD(1999:iv) is considered to be the worldwide accepted pragmatic theory. However, Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004) regard making several amendments to Searle's speech act is necessary when applying this theory to argumentative discourse. Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004:62) state that speech acts theory is ideally suited to supply the theoretical tools that deal with verbal communications that are aimed at resolving a difference of opinion. Thus, analyzing Argumentation as a speech act becomes possible by Eemeren and Grootendorst in which they make a connection between the illocutionary act of complex argumentation with the perlocutionary act of persuading.

5. Eemeren et al.(2014) Distribution of the Different Types of Speech Acts

A. Assertives

The first type of speech acts is called “assertives”. Eemeren et al. (2014:531) state that within this type, the truth of a proposition (i.e.claim)has to be set by the speaker or writer: “I assert that Chamberlain and Roosevelt never met”. Other assertives are, for example, "claiming," "stating," "assuring," "supposing," "opining," "denying," and "conceding."

The engagement to a proposition forwarded in an assertive may differ from “very strong, as is the case in an assertion or statement, to fairly weak, as in the case of a supposition ”. However, not always necessary for assertives to include a truth or claim but might also refer “ to the acceptability of propositions in a more general sense, as when the correctness or justness of an evaluative opinion concerning a certain state of affairs or event is at issue (“Baudelaire is the best French poet”)”. Assertive can show standpoints, make a satisfactory argumentation in advocate of a claim, and might be used to confirm a conclusion (Eemeren et al.2014:531). Eemeren, et al. (2007:12) mentioned that in such type of speech act the speaker and the writer perform their views on the standpoint or the state of affairs expressed in a proposition.

B. Directives

Directive is the second type of speech acts. It can be defined as the speech acts that the speaker might use to get the addressee to do something. Orders, requests, and commands are examples of such type. The "Ordering" act represents the archetype of directive in which the speaker or writer should have a special position towards the listener or reader (Levinson, 1983:240). For example, uttering a sentence like "Come to my room", means an order only in case the speaker has an authority position with regard to the listener, otherwise, it might be a request or an invitation. A question might be considered as a special design of request since it requires a verbal act (i.e. an answer) . "challenging," "recommending," "begging," and "forbidding" represent other examples of directives" (Eemeren, 2014: 531).

In argumentation, there are various purposes of using directives. For instance, one arguer might use directives to challenge another party to defend his claim. One party might ask the other party to provide support for his claim in the debate or to provide a "definition, explanation, or anything else to defend his standpoint". This speech act couldn't be applied in all critical discussions. Utterances that are performed as commands or prohibitions are not permitted in all stages. The speech act might take the shape of challenges to particular arguments to defend its arguments, as well as demands for clarification or explanation depending on the speaker's desire (Eemeren et al., 2007).

C. Commissives

The third category of speech acts is Commissives in which speakers or writers conduct a commitment towards their listeners or readers to take an action or to prevent from taking an action (Eemeren, 2018:40). These include "acts in which the words commit the speaker to future action, such as 'promising', 'offering', 'threatening', 'refusing', 'vowing' and 'volunteering'" (CUTTING, 2002:17). Promising represents the archetype of commissives that is commonly discussed by the speech acts theory. In promising, the speaker or writer concerns him/herself to do something or vice versa: "I promise you that I will get back to this point later". Other commissive speech acts are, for example, "accepting" ("I accept that you will get back to this point later"), "rejecting" ("I reject your getting back to this point later"), and "agreeing" ("I agree to your getting back to this point later") (Eemeren, 2018:40).

In addition to these acts, silence, in a specific context, can be considered as a commissive speech act. Alagözlü and Sahin (2011:1-5) treat silence as a speech act since it commits the hearer(s) to do an action. Language can be classified into verbal and non-verbal. Silence, however, as stated by Ibrahim (2021:1) is "a linguistic and socio-cultural nonverbal concept that depends heavily on the context, which makes it explicable and meaningful. Its interpretation is related to the context of the situation in which it occurs and what the interlocutor wants to convey through it". Thus, the interpretation of

silence differs, depending on people, circumstances, and societies. In Arabic societies, for instance, most of the time they say "Silence is a sign of agreement".

Many researchers including Jawaraski (1993), Blimes (1994), and Sacks et al (1974), indicate that silence does not mean only the absence of speech but it forms an essential and important part of communication as speech does (Ibrahim 2021:23).

There are different deductive roles of commissives in a critical discussion. This type of speech acts is used for showing agreement or non-agreement of a standpoint, deciding to begin a critical discussion, expressing an agreement for challenging to defend a standpoint, accepting to assume the discussion roles of protagonist and antagonist, and accepting the rules of discussion that are to be followed (Eemeren,2018:40).

D. Expressives¹

Huang(2007:17) states that “ Expressives are those kinds of speech acts that express a psychological attitude or state in the speaker such as joy, sorrow, and likes/dislikes. Paradigmatic cases include apologizing, blaming, congratulating, praising, and thanking ”.

Via this speech act, a speaker or writer expresses how s/he feels towards something, such as congratulation, thanks, regret, and so on. This type doesn't have a single prototype. "congratulating" "thanking", "commiserating", "regretting," "condoling", and "greeting" are examples of expressive (Eemeren et al.,2014:532).

¹Expressives do not play a constitutive role in a critical discussion that's why they are excluded from the distribution of speech acts in a critical discussion (Eemeren et al.,2014: 532).

E. Usage Declaratives

Declarative speech act is the fifth type of speech acts which includes those speech acts which enable the speaker or writer to perform a specific state of affairs into being. For example, if someone uttered "I open the meeting "his utterance makes sense only if "I" refers to the headmaster of the meeting (Eemeren et al.,2014:532-533). What is called “usage declaratives” represent a particular subdivision of declarative which control linguistic usage. Their major function is to make other speech acts easier to be understood by the listeners or the readers. "definitions," "precizations,” “explications,” and “amplifications.” are examples of declaratives (Eemeren et al.,2014:532-533).

6. Data Analysis

The analysis of this debate results in finding 288 utterances that are uttered by both arguers. Most of these utterances belong to the Imam (PBUH) who utters 245, whereas al-Sabi'i utters 43 utterances. These utterances include all of the four types of speech acts in variant degrees, as illustrated in the tables below:

Table (1) Types of Speech Acts in This Debate

Type	Number	Percentage
Assertives	171	59.37
Directives	58	20.14
Commissives	3	1.04
Usage Declaratives	56	19.45
All	288	100%

Table (2) Number and Percentage of Speech Acts in both Arguers Debate

Speech Acts	The Imam(PBUH)		Al -Sabi'i	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Assertives	161	94.16	10	5.84
Directives	25	43.10	33	56.9
Commissives	3	100	0	0
Usage Declaratives	56	100	0	0

1 .Assertives

Assertives are the most frequent type of speech acts that appeared in this debate. It accounts for 171 utterances (59.37%). This speech act appears 161 times (94.16) in the Imam's (PBUH) utterances, whereas it appears only 10 times (5.84%) in al -Sabi'i's utterances. Assertive is a speech act through which the speaker states what s/he believes to be the case or not. Statements of fact, assertions, stating, describing, admitting, assuring, opining, conceding, and denying are examples of this type. First, the Imam (PBUH) uses some assertive speech acts to describe Allah, the Exalted asserting that:

”أما الواحد فلم يزل واحدا كائنا، بلا حدود، ولا أعراض، ولا يزال كذلك، ثم خلق خلقا مبتدعا مختلفا بأعراض وحدود مختلفة، لا في شيء أقامه، ولا في شيء حده، ولا على شيء حذاه، ومثله له“

(As for the One, He has always been One Being; He has neither limits nor accidental qualities, and He will always remain so. Then He created

unprecedented, different creatures with accidental qualities and different limits, (i.e. He created them) not through a thing which He established nor through a thing which He limited nor according to a thing which He imitated or adopted as a previous exemplar for them).

These assertive utterances are performed as an answer to al -Sabi'i who asks about "الكائن الاول" (the first being). In these assertive utterances, the Imam(PBUH) asserts an important fact; Allah is the One; He has always been and will always remain so. Hence, this Oneness is neither limited nor qualitative nor generic which means that Almighty Allah is not associated with material things. Then, to complete his answer, he (PBUH) performs some other assertive speech acts which function as describing, saying that:

”فجعل الخلق من بعد ذلك صفوة، وغير صفوة، واختلافا وائتلافا وألوانا وذوقا وطعما“

(Then, He made the creatures, choice and non-choice, different and harmonious (in) types and tastes). These descriptive (assertive) utterances are followed by some other assertions ;

”لا حاجة كانت منه إلى ذلك، ولا لفضل منزلة لم يبلغها إلا به، ولا رأى لنفسه فيما خلق زيادة ولا نقصان“

(Not for a need of them nor for an excellent rank which He did not attain but through them nor did He see for Himself an increase or a decrease in what He created).

The Imam(PBUH) performs these assertions to affirm that Almighty Allah is in no need for what he has created. It seems that the Imam (PBUH) deliberately begins his assertions with the word “لا”(Not).In Arabic, this “لا” is called “لا النافية للجنس” (Categorical negative lâ), hence, when it comes at the beginning of an utterance, it functions as a general denial to negate the case from all that comes after it. Thus, by such use, the Imam (PBUH) affirms strongly that Almighty Allah is in no need of what he has created. Then, to establish another affirmation of what has been asserted in the previous utterances, the Imam (PBUH) adds additional assertive utterances as a conclusion, affirming that if Almighty Allah is in need for what He has created, then it is supposed to create more than the actual number, supporting his claim by saying that:

”واعلم يا عمران أنه لو كان خلق ما خلق لحاجة، لم يخلق إلا من يستعين به على حاجته، ولكان ينبغي أن يخلق اضعاف ما خلق؛ لان الأعوان كلما كثروا كان صاحبهم أقوى“

(Know, Umra'n, that if He had created what He created for a need, He would have not created anything except those whom He asked for help in His needs, and that He should have created a hundredfold of what He created. That is because the more the helpers are, the more powerful their leader is).

To answer another question raised by al -Sabi'i who asks whether the Being is Known to Himself by His Self, the Imam (PBUH) performs assertive speech acts through which he (PBUH) states what he (PBUH) believes to be the case, stating that:

”أنما تكون المعلمة بالشئى لنفي خلافه، وليكون الشئى نفسه بما نفي عنه موجوداً“

(Knowledge is acquired by something which negates its opposites so that the thing itself would be existing through what it is negated).

These utterances are supported by another assertion which is performed as evidence. The Imam (PBUH) gives the following assertion to affirm what has been said before in the previous utterances, saying that :

”ولم يكن هناك شئى يخالفه، فتدعوه الحاجة إلى نفي ذلك الشئى عن نفسه بتحديد ما علم منها“

(without the existence of anything which contradicts its existence, a need arises to negate that thing about itself by defining what is known about it).

The Imam (PBUH), next, performs another series of assertive speech acts, to answer al -Sabi'i about the bounds of what Almighty Allah has created, stating that:

”وقد سألت فاعلم أن حدود خلقه على ستة أنواع : ملموس ، وموزون ، ومنظور إليه ، وما لا ذوق له وهو الروح، ومنها منظور إليه وليس له وزن ولا لمس ولا حس ولا لون ولا ذوق ، والتقدير والأعراض والصور والطول والعرض ، ومنها العمل والحركات التي تصنع الأشياء وتعملها ، وتغيرها من حال إلى حال ، وتزيدها وتنقصها“

(You have asked, then know that the bounds of His creatures are of six kinds: touched, weighed, seen, that which has no taste (soul), seen but has no weight nor touch nor sense nor color nor taste, ordination, accidental qualities, shapes, length, width. Among them are acts and movements which make things, do them, change them from state to state, increase them, and decrease them).

The Imam's (PBUH) answer is full of listing the features and qualities by which things can be distinguished, whether they are living beings or not. These utterances, open with the word " قد " (is liable to) which indicates assertive form if it is followed by past tense. The assertions about the bounds of the creatures are followed by some questions of al -Sabi'i about the Creator. Consequently, these questions are answered by performing a series of assertions. The first two utterances are :

”قديم لم يتغير عز وجل بخلقه الخلق ، ولكن الخلق يتغير بتغييره“

(He (Allah) is Eternal. He, the Great and Almighty, does not change through His creating the creatures, but the creatures change through His changing them).

Looking deeply at these two utterances, it can be observed that although al -Sabi'i's question is about whether Almighty Allah is changed or not, the Imam (PBUH) adds a new assertive speech act by saying; ولكن الخلق يتغير بتغييره (but the creatures change through His changing them, to assure the authority of Almighty Allah and His control upon His creatures. The third assertive speech act is "بغيره" (With other than Him), this utterance is performed as an answer to al -Sabi'i's directive question about the way by which Almighty Allah can be recognized. The fourth assertion is ;

”مشيئته واسمه وصفته ، وما أشبه ذلك ، وكل ذلك محدث مخلوق مدبره“

(His desire, His name, His attribute, and the like. All these are originated, created, and managed).

In this assertion (which includes three utterances), the Imam (PBUH) asserts that the evidence for knowing Almighty Allah, is His desire, His name, His attribute, and the like. Hence, this assertion is to answer al -Sabi'i's question about how Almighty Allah can be known. In the fifth assertive speech act, the Imam (PBUH) asserts that Almighty Allah is light, saying that ;

”هو نور“

(He is light)

This assertion has previously been stated by Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (PBUT) in

”دعاء الصباح“ (Morning Supplication), through which he (PBUH) describes Allah, the Exalted, saying that ;

”يا من دل على ذاته بذاته“

(Oh, He who demonstrates His Essence by His Essence).

Al-Majlisi (١٦٩٨:344) comments that this utterance (i.e. Oh, He who demonstrates His Essence by His Essence) means that Allah, the Exalted is light. This means two important indications; first, it is impossible to recognize the reality of Allah, the Exalted like the rest of possible beings, second, Allah, the Exalted can be recognized by His manifest attributes like His guidance to creatures and other evidence that demonstrate His existence. Another assertive speech act which is performed by the Imam (PBUH) is that ;

”لا يكون السكوت إلا عن نطق قبله“

(Silence is not except out of utterance before it).

This assertive speech act is performed as a direct standpoint to refute al -Sabi'i's wrong beliefs which lead him(i.e. al -Sabi'i)to ask whether Almighty

Allah was silent, then He spoke. Thus, this utterance is delivered as a direct standpoint to show the wrongness of al -Sabi'i's thoughts. Hence, the Imam (PBUH) gives explications and clarifications that support his standpoint by using usage declarative (For more details see p.108). Other assertive speech acts are :

”جل يا عمران عن ذلك ، ليس هو في الخلق ، ولا الخلق فيه ، تعالى عن ذلك“

(He is above all that, Umra'n. He is not in the creatures; nor are the creatures in Him; He is exalted above that).

In these utterances, the Imam (PBUH) asserts that it is impossible for Almighty Allah, to exist in His creatures or they exist in Him. Following the discussion of this standpoint, al -Sabi'i asks whether Allah, the Exalted, exists in His reality or description. Consequently, the Imam (PBUH) asserts that:

”إن الله المبدىء الواحد ، الكائن الأول ، لم يزل واحد لا شيء معه ، فرداً لا ثاني معه ، لا معلوماً ، ولا مجهولاً ، ولا محكماً ، ولا متشابهاً ، ولا مذكوراً ، ولا منسياً ، ولا شيئاً يقع عليه اسم شيء من الأشياء غيره ، ولا من وقت كان ، ولا إلى وقت يكون ، ولا بشيء قام ، ولا إلى شيء يقوم ، ولا إلى شيء استند ، ولا في شيء استكن ، وذلك كله قبل الخلق إذ لا شيء غيره ، وما أوقعت عليه من الكل ، فهي صفات محدثة وترجمة يفهم بها من فهم“

(Verily, Allah is the Originator, the One, the First Being. He has always been One. There is nothing with Him. He is single without a second with Him. He is neither known (i.e. in His reality) nor unknown nor clear nor ambiguous nor remembered nor forgotten nor a thing to which the title of a thing is applied nor from a time He was nor to a time He will be nor on a thing He stood nor on a thing He stands nor on a thing He depends nor in a thing He is hidden. All that was before the creation. As for the whole, you have applied to Him, it was attributed which appeared later, and translation through which understands he who understands).

In this series of assertive speech acts, the Imam (PBUH) not only gives an answer to al -Sabi'i's question, but he also (PBUH) shows the Greatness of Allah, the Exalted by mentioning the features that are not attributed to anyone, but to Almighty Allah. Hence, it seems that the Imam (PBUH) presents all these assertive utterances to reflect what has been said in the Holy Quran, Sura Ash-Shura, verse:11:

”لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ“ (١١)

(There is nothing like Him. He is the One that Hears and Sees).

The Imam (PBUH) completes his previous assertive utterances, stating that :

”واعلم أن الإبداع والمشينة والإرادة معناها واحد وأسمائها ثلاثة ، وكان أول إبداعه وإرادته ومشينته الحروف التي جعلها أصلاً لكل شيء ودليلاً على كل مدرك ، وفاصلاً لكل مشكل“

(Know that the meaning of origination (aʔibdaaʔ), will, and intention is one, but their titles are three. The first was His origination, His will, and His intention which He made the origin of all things, evidence for all perceived things, and separator for all vague things).

In these utterances, the Imam (PBUH) begins to describe the creativity of Almighty Allah. However, such description is performed to attract al -Sabi'i's attention to the Greatness of Allah. It seems that the use of assertive speech acts varies from one function to another. For instance, when he (i.e. the Imam, PBUH) talks about what Almighty Allah is, he (PBUH) uses the assertion form(which is the strongest form), whereas assertive speech acts are performed as a description when talking about the Creativity of Allah, the Exalted.

To affirm what has been asserted in the previous utterances, the Imam (PBUH) states that:

”ولكن يدل على الله عز وجل بصفاته ، ويدرك بأسمائه ، ويستدل عليه بخلقه ، حتى لا يحتاج في ذلك الطالب المرتاد إلى رؤية عين ، ولا استماع أذن ، ولا لمس كف ، ولا إحاطة بقلب“

(However, Allah, the Great and Almighty, is indicated by His attributes, known by His names, and His creatures are proofs of Him, that the willing seeker concerning that may be in no need of the vision of an eye nor hearing of an ear nor touching of the palm of hand nor encompassment of a heart).

These utterances begin with “لكن”, (lakin: however).In Arabic, this letter indicates assertiveness only in case it comes at the beginning of an utterance and is preceded by the conjunction “و” (and). Thus, the Imam (PBUH) affirms his previous assertions by using such an indicator. Immediately, following these utterances, five assertive utterances are performed by the Imam (PBUH) as evidence for the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, saying that:

”فلو كانت صفاته جل ثناؤه لا تدل عليه ، وأسمائه لا تدعو إليه، والمعلمة من الخلق لا تدركه لمعناه ، كانت العبادة من الخلق لأسمائه وصفاته دون معناه ، فلولا أن ذلك كذلك ، لكان المعبود الموحد غير الله“

(If His attributes, great be His laudation, do not indicate Him; His names do not summon to Him; the knowledge of the creatures does not perceive His core; the creatures will worship His names and His attributes, not His core. If this is such, then the one god will be other than Allah).

Al -Sabi'i, then , asked about “الابداع” (creativity) whether it is creation or not which makes the Imam(PBUH) asserts that:

”بل خلق ساكن ، لا يدرك بالسكون ، وإنما صار خلقاً ؛ لأنه شيء محدث ، والله تعالى الذي أحدثه فصار خلقاً له، وإنما هو الله عز وجل وخلق لا ثالث بينهما ولا ثالث غيرهما ، فما خلق الله عز وجل لم يعد أن يكون خلقه“

(Rather it (creativity) is still creation and is not perceived through stillness. It becomes creation for it is something originated. It is Allah who originates it and it becomes His creature. Allah, the Great and Almighty, creates it, and there is no third (thing) between them, and no third (thing) is other than them. So what Allah, the Great and Almighty, creates is His creature).

In these assertive utterances, the Greatness of Almighty Allah has been shown by asserting that origination became creation only under the Will of Allah, the Exalted. what seems important to be mentioned is that the Imam (PBUH) opens his answer with the word "بل" (bal: rather), to negate the previous utterance for the purpose of asserting the forwarded utterances. Other assertive utterances are :

”واعلم أن الواحد الذي هو قائم بغير تقدير ولا تحديد ، خلق خلقاً مقدرًا بتحديد وتقدير ، وكان الذي خلق خلقين اثنين ، التقدير والمقدر ، وليس في كل واحد منهما لون ولا وزن ولا ذوق ، فجعل أحدهما يدرك بالآخر، وجعلهما مدركين بنفسهما ، ولم يخلق شيئاً فرداً قائماً بنفسه دون غيره للذي أراد من الدلالة على نفسه وإثبات وجوده“

(Know that the One who is standing without any ordination or bounds created creatures ordained by bounds and ordination, and what He creates is two creatures: the ordination and the ordained. In each of them, there is neither color nor weight nor taste. He makes one of them perceive the other and makes them perceive their nature. He does not create a single thing standing in its nature without other than it which He wills to be proof of His selfness and His existence).

In these utterances, it seems that the Imam (PBUH) seeks to attract al - Sabi'i's attention, first, by saying the One instead of saying Allah, the Exalted, then he (PBUH) strengthens his assertion (i.e. the Oneness of Almighty Allah) by stating that Allah, the Exalted, never creates a thing that could stand by its nature. The other 10 assertive speech acts are performed by al Sabi'i. These assertive acts vary in their functions. The first two utterances are :

”نعم ، والله يا سيدي“

(“Yes”, by Allah, master).

These utterances indicate the acceptability of what has been said by the Imam (PBUH) at the beginning of this debate (see appendix (2)). Then, he uses this type of speech acts to assert a standpoint that he has previously upheld, saying that:

”فإن الذي كان عندي أن الكائن قد تغير في فعله عن حاله بخلقه الخلق“

(The knowledge I have says that the Being is changed in His essence by His action of creating).

Al -Sabi'i had already mentioned this assertion in the form of a question; nevertheless the Imam (PBUH) proved the wrongness of such an assertion. Then, he performs an assertive utterance, stating:

”لم أر هذا إلا أن تخبرني يا سيدي“

(I don't see that unless you tell me, master).

This utterance is performed as an answer to the Imam (PBUH)who asks al -Sabi'i whether he has seen anyone seeing his vision. Thus, by a such question, the Imam (PBUH) wants to turn al -Sabi'i's mind, making him recognize his wrong ideas. The Imam (PBUH), later on, asks al -Sabi'i to tell him how he could see his own reflection in the mirror, accordingly, al-Sabi'i asserts that :

”بضوء بيني وبينها“

(Through the light between myself and it?).

Another assertive utterance is that :

”يا سيدي أشهد أنه كما وصفت“

(I witness that He is just as you have described).

This assertive utterance indicates that al -Sabi'i starts to be persuaded by what has been argued by the Imam (PBUH). Other assertive utterances are performed by al -Sabi'i to assure that he has understood what al-Imam(PBUH) has said and at the same time to show his acceptance (i.e. al -Sabi'i's reaction)to what has been argued by the Imam (PBUH). These utterances are :

”نعم، والله يا سيدي“

(Yes, by Allah, master).

”نعم“

(Yes).

”نعم يا سيدي“

(Yes, master).

The last assertive utterances performed by al -Sabi'i are :

”نعم يا سيدي قد فهمت ، وأشهد أن الله تعالى على ما وصفت ووحدت ، وان محمداً عبده المبعوث بالهدى ودين الحق“

(I witness that Allah, the Most High, is as you have described, and witness that Muhammad, is His Servants sent with guidance and the religion of the truth).

This last assertion reflects the result of the argumentative discussion, therefore it has been followed by an act “ثم خر ساجدا نحو القبل واسلم” (Then he prostrated himself in prayer before Allah and submitted to Him), which in turn shows that al -Sabi'i is completely persuaded and he is upholding a new standpoint (the Oneness of Almighty Allah). Consequently, the result of this discussion makes him turn into a Muslim.

2. Directives

This speech act is used by the speaker to get the addressee to do something. In argumentation, directives might have additional functions. For instance, one arguer might challenge the other party to defend his claim, asking for providing support for his claim in the argumentation, or asking to perform an explanation, definition, or anything that assists to defend his claim. This type of speech acts appears in 58 utterances (20.14)% of all utterances made by both arguers in this debate. Consequently, it is the second most common type among the four types of speech acts. The Imam (PBUH) utters 25 utterances (43.10)%, whereas 33 utterances (56.9)% are performed by al -Sabi'i.

The arguers (i.e.the Imam (PBUH) and al -Sabi'i) differ in their use of this type of speech acts. The Imam (PBUH)uses it for achieving persuasion by attracting al -Sabi'i's attention to his wrong ideas whereas, al -Sabi'i uses this type, first, to challenge the Imam(PBUH), and second to discover the matter of Oneness (which is the main point from which the difference of opinions starts in this debate). The Imam (PBUH) performed some directive utterances to assure that what he (PBUH)has argued is understood by al -Sabi'i. Thus, the results of such understanding became the beginning of achieving persuasion. Some of these directive utterances are:

”تعقل هذا يا عمران؟“

(Umra'n, did you understand ?).

”أفهمت يا عمران؟“

Umra'n, did you understand?

”أفهمته“

(Did you understand it ?).

”أفهمت؟“

(Did you understand?).

Other directive utterances performed by the Imam (PBUH) are :

”أرأيت إذا علم بضمير ، هل تجد بدأ من أن تجعل لذلك الضمير حداً تنتهي إليه المعرفة؟“

(If it had been by mind, would He then find any way not to appoint for that mind a bound where knowledge ended?).

These utterances are performed to show the wrongness of al -Sabi'i who asks whether Allah, the Exalted, could be recognized by the mind. The Imam (PBUH) establishes a strong argument and defines evidence of such wrong beliefs because if this comes to be true, there should be another mind to recognize His selfness, the Exalted. This mind depends on another mind, and so on. This matter leads to an endless chain. If the second mind depends on the first mind, it will result in a vicious circle. Then the Imam completes his argument and his proof, saying :

”يا عمران أليس ينبغي أن تعلم أن الواحد ليس يوصف بضمير ، وليس يقال له أكثر من فعل ، وعمل ، وصنع ، وليس يثوهم منه مذاهب وتجزئة كمذاهب المخولفين وتجزئتهم ؟ فاعقل ذلك وابن عليه ما علمت صواباً“

(Umra'n, is it not incumbent on you to know that the One cannot be described by mind, and it is not said that He has more than one deed, work, and make. None imagines that He has views and members like those of the creatures. Therefore, understand that and correct (your beliefs) with it as long as you have come to know of (it)).

When al -Sabi'i asserts that the Being is changed in His essence by His action of creating, the Imam (PBUH) uses this type of speech acts to refute the such assertion, challenging al -Sabi'i by mentioning these impossible cases, asking that:

”يا عمران ، هل تجد النار يغيرها تغير نفسها؟ وهل تجد الحرارة تحرق نفسها؟ أو هل رأيت بصيراً قط رأى بصره؟“

Directive speech acts are also used by the Imam (PBUH) to challenge al -Sabi'i to defend his standpoint, saying that:

”أخبرني عن المرأة أنت فيها أم هي فيك ؟ فإن كان ليس واحد منكما في صاحبه ، فبأي شيء استدلت بها على نفسك يا عمران؟“

(Tell me about the mirror: are you in it or is it in you? If neither one of you is in the other, then how did you come to see your own reflection in it, 'Umra'n?).

Through these directive utterances, The Imam(PBUH) shows that Almighty Allah cannot exist in His creatures or they exist in Him. Thus, al -Sabi'i answers this question by saying: "بضوء بيني وبينها" (Through the light between myself and it). Consequently, the Imam (PBUH) performs another directive utterance, asking that:

”هل ترى من ذلك الضوء أكثر مما تراه في عينك؟“

(Can you see that light more than what you can see with your own eyes?).

This directive question has been answered by al -Sabi'i who says "نعم" (Yes), which leads the Imam (PBUH) to challenge him with another directive question, saying that: "فأرنا" (Then show it to us). The Imam (PBUH) establishes the result of what has been discussed in the previous utterances by this directive utterance. He(PBUH) knew very well that it is impossible to see that light, so such a directive question will be enough to refute what al -Sabi'i has asserted and attracted his attention(i.e. al-Sabi'i's attention)to his false ideas.

Directives have also appeared in al -Sabi'i's utterances, however, all these directive speech acts are performed for requesting evidence for the Oneness of Almighty Allah. In the beginning, al -Sabi'i uses this type of speech acts to ask about the First Being, saying that:

”أخبرني عن الكائن الأول وعما خلق“

(Can you tell me about the first being and about what he created?).

This argumentative debate opens with this directive utterance. It represents the main point that al -Sabi'i wants the Imam (PBUH)to prove it. Then, another directive speech act performed by al -Sabi'i is that:

”فأخبرني بأي شيء علم ما علم ، أبيض أم بغير ذلك؟“

(Tell me, then, by what means did He come to know what He knew with a mind or without a mind?).

Although this question is performed for the purpose of requesting usage declarative, its main (indirect)purpose is to oblige the Imam (PBUH)to say that Almighty Allah was compound since He had a mind. Al-Sabi'i uses this type for requesting usage declarative, asking that:

”يا سيدي ، ألا تخبرني عن حدود خلقه كيف هي؟“

(Do you not tell me how the bounds of His creatures are?).

In this directive utterance, al -Sabi'i asks the Imam (PBUH) about the bounds which distinguish the creatures from each other. Directives have also

been used by al -Sabi'i to challenge the Imam (PBUH)to defend his standpoint, as :

”ألا تخبرني عن الخالق إذا كان واحدا لا شئ غيره، ولا شئ معه، أليس قد تغير بخلقه الخلق“

(Master, will you not tell me about the Creator? If He is One, there is nothing other than Him and nothing is with Him, has He not changed (His Essence) through His creating the creatures?).

In this question, al Sabi'i means that the natural realities founded by Almighty Allah require changing the Creator due to their change. This means that they are united with Allah, the Exalted in His selfness which is quite impossible. Al Sabi'i, next, uses this type of speech acts repeatedly to ask about Allah, the Exalted, and the way by which He can be recognized. These utterances are :

”يا سيدي ، فبأي شئ عرفناه؟“

(Master, with what have we recognized Him?).

”فأي شئ غيره؟“

(Which thing is other than Him?).

”يا سيدي ، فأبي شئ هو؟“

(Master, which thing is He?).

These questions are immediately followed by al-Sabi'i's question ;

”يا سيدي أليس قد كان ساكناً قبل الخلق لا ينطق ، ثم نطق؟“

(Master, was He not silent before (creating) the creatures and then He spoke?).

These directive questions are performed for requesting usage declarative. Although al -Sabi'i requests an explication or clarification for his questions, he insists on his standpoint (i.e. Allah, the Exalted might change due to the changing of what He has created).

Al Sabi'i also uses this type to ask about the matter of Oneness, saying that:

”يا سيدي ، ألا تخبرني عن الله عز وجل ، هل يوحد بحقيقة أو يوحد بوصف؟“

(Master, will you tell me about Allah, the Great and Almighty? Does He exist in His reality or in description?).

What is important to be noticed in these directive utterances is that al -Sabi'i uses the words "the Great and Almighty" which he has never used along

his previous utterances (in asking about the matter of Oneness of Allah, the Exalted). This gives a hint that he starts to be convinced in that Allah is the Great and the One.

In argumentation, directives, are mostly introduced for challenging, asking for clarification, explanation, and defending certain standpoints. In other words, they are used for requesting usage declarative. However, in this debate, al -Sabi'i also performed this type of speech acts requesting the Imam(PBUH)to add additional information, saying that:

”زدني“

This directive utterance has an imperative mood. Imperative always indicates either an order or a request. Thus, this utterance is a request for additional information about Allah, the Exalted. It seems important to observe that this utterance is an indicator for al -Sabi'i's persuasion, specifically because al -Sabi'i performed it immediately after his assertive utterance ” نعم “ (yes). Then, al -Sabi'i turns his argumentative questions from asking about Allah, the Exalted to ask about His creatures, saying that :

”ياسيدي ، ألا تخبرني عن الإبداع ، أخلق هو أم غير خلق ؟“

(Master, tell me about origination: Is it creation or other than creation?).

This directive utterance is one of the most vacuous questions through which al -Sabi'i attempts to challenge the Imam (PBUH) because if it (i.e. origination)is not a creation, then how is it found? On the other hand, if it is a creation, what is the explications behind such an assertion. The last directive utterances performed by al -Sabi'i are:

”أسألك عن الحكيم في أي شيء هو ؟ وهل يحيط به شيء ؟ وهل يتحول من شيء إلى شيء ؟ أو به حاجة إلى شيء ؟“

(I want to question you about the All-wise (Allah): In which thing is He? Does anything encompass Him? Does He change from state to state? Is He in need of a thing?).

These directive utterances summarize all of al-Sabi'i's previous questions that are performed for requesting usage declaratives. However, the Imam (PBUH) answers these questions by giving full argumentative details about Allah, the Exalted, showing His authority, greatness, and power. By such an answer, he (PBUH) establishes the results of the discussion and summarizes all what has been argued from the beginning till the end of this debate. Consequently, it leads to persuasion and resolving the difference of opinions which are approached by Al Sabi'i's last assertive utterances in which he witnesses that there is no God but Allah, the Exalted.

3. Commissives

Only 3 commissive utterances (1.04%) appeared in this debate. All these utterances are performed by the Imam (PBUH). This type is used by the speaker (s) to commit the listener(s) to take an action. In an argumentative debate, commissive utterance is used for accepting or not accepting a standpoint; accepting the challenge to defend a standpoint, deciding to start a discussion, and agreeing to assume the role of protagonist or antagonist. In this debate, the Imam (PBUH) uses commissive speech act for two purposes: non-acceptance of a standpoint and an acceptance to start a discussion. The Imam (PBUH) uses this type of speech acts, saying that:

”أحلت يا عمران في قولك : إن الكائن يتغير في وجه من الوجوه حتى يصيب الذات منه ما يغيره“

(You have wronged in saying that: the being does not in any way change its essence except when it affects its own essence in a way which changes it).

In these commissive utterances, the Imam (PBUH) expresses his non - acceptance of what has been asserted by al -Sabi'i.

The other commissive act is that :

”سل ما أردت“

(Question whatever you desire)

In this utterance, the Imam (PBUH) shows his acceptance to start an argumentative discussion and answer al -Sabi'i's last questions.

4. Usage Declaratives

Usage declaratives are used in argumentation to facilitate the listener's understanding of other speech acts via explaining or clarifying how certain speech acts are to be interpreted. Definition, precization, explication, and amplification are examples of such type. Usage declarative appears 56 times (19.45%) in this debate and they are all performed by the Imam (PBUH). Al Sabi'i never performed this type of speech acts along this argumentative debate. Usage declarative has been used for different purposes by the Imam (PBUH) who performs this type of speech acts, saying that:

”فأما الأعمال والحركات فإنها تنطلق ؛ لأنه لا وقت لها أكثر من قدر ما تحتاج إليه فإذا فرغ من الشيء انطلق بالحركة وبقي الأثر ، ويجري مجرى الكلام الذي يذهب ويبقى أثره“

(As for works and deeds, they set out, for they have no time more than that which is ordained for their need. When it (deed) finished by thing, it sets out with movement, and effect remains. It takes the same course of speech which goes and its effect remains).

The Imam (PBUH) performs these usage utterances to facilitate al - Sabi'i's understanding of his (i.e.the Imam, PBUH) assertions about the bounds of the creatures (See table 6). When the Imam (PBUH), gives a standpoint, asserting that ;

”لا يكون السكوت الا عن نطق قبله“

(Silence is not except out of utterance before it).

He (PBUH) immediately performs a series of usage declaratives , saying that:

”والمثل في ذلك أنه لا يقال للسراج : هو ساكت لا ينطق ، ولا يقال : إن السراج ليضيء فيما يريد أن يفعل بنا ؛ لأن الضوء من السراج ليس بفعل منه ولا كون ، وإنما هو ليس شيء غيره ، فلما استضاء لنا ، قلنا : قد أضاء لنا حتى استضاءنا به ، فبهذا تستبصر أمرك“

(An example of that it is not said that the lamp is silent and does not utter; nor is it said that the lamp shines, so what does it want to do toward us, for light is from the lamp, not out of an act or make from it; it is not a thing other than it. When it shines for us, we say: ‘It has shined for us, so that we may seek light through it.’ In this manner you can understand your affair).

All these usage declarative utterances are performed by the Imam (PBUH) to give some explications and clarifications for his standpoint. The Imam (PBUH) explains how silence and utterance follow each other, giving an example of the lamp in that it is not logical to say that the lamp is silent and also it is not optional for it to utter. Other usage declarative utterances are :

”وبتلك الحروف تفريق كل شيء من اسم حق وباطل ، أو فعل أو مفعول ، أو معنى ، أو غير معنى ، وعليها اجتمعت الأمور كلها ، ولم يجعل للحروف في إبداعه لها معنى غير أنفسها يتناهى ، ولا وجود لها ؛ لأنها مبدعة بالإبداع“

(All things were separated by these words, such as the name of right and wrong, action, done, and meaning other than meaning. All affairs gathered on them. When He originated the words, He did not make meaning for them other than

themselves. They came to an end and had no existence, for they originated with an origination).

These utterances are performed by the Imam (PBUH) to define the functions of the letters, through which the greatness of Almighty Allah is reflected. To give some details about the letters (which he, PBUH previously states that they are thirty-three), their divisions, and their indicators, the Imam (PBUH) again performs sequence utterances of usage declaratives, saying that :

”والحروف هي المفعول بذلك الفعل ، وهي الحروف التي عليها مدار الكلام ، والعبارات كلها من الله عز وجل علمها خلفه ، وهي ثلاثة وثلاثون حرفاً فمنها : ثمانية وعشرون حرفاً تدل على لغات العربية ، ومن الثمانية والعشرين اثنان وعشرون حرفاً تدل على لغات السريانية والعبرانية ومنها : خمسة أحرف متحرفة في سائر اللغات ، من العجم والأقاليم واللغات كلها ، وهي خمسة أحرف تحرفت من الثمانية والعشرين حرفاً من اللغات، فصارت الحروف ثلاثة وثلاثين حرفاً ، فأما الخمسة المختلفة فبحجج لا يجوز ذكرها أكثر مما ذكرناه“

(Twenty-eight letters of them indicate the letters of Arabic. Twenty-two of the twenty-eight letters show the letters of Assyrian and Hebrew. Five letters of them were changed (and are) in the rest of the languages of non-Arabs in the regions. These five letters were derived from the twenty-five letters, so the letters became thirty-three. As for the five different (letters), it is not permissible to mention them more than what we have mentioned).

The Imam (PBUH) also performs usage declarative by giving an example of how Allah, the Exalted, makes these letters so powerful, saying that:

”كقوله عز وجل : كن فيكون“

(So His sign was like these words of Him, the Exalted: ‘Be and it is.’).

Immediately, following these utterances, the Imam (PBUH) introduces some usage declaratives to list the characteristics of the creatures. Mentioning these characteristics is important for the purpose of reflecting how Allah, the Exalted is Great in His creation. These usage utterances are:

”فالخلق الأول من الله عز وجل الإبداع ، لا وزن له ، ولا حركة ، ولا سمع ، ولا لون ، ولا حس ، والخلق الثاني الحروف ، لا وزن لها ، ولا لون ، وهي مسموعة موصوفة غير منظور إليها ، والخلق الثالث ما كان من الأنواع كلها محسوساً ملموساً ذا ذوق منظوراً إليه“

(So the first creature of Allah, the Great and Almighty, was the origination which had neither weight nor movement nor hearing nor color nor sense; the second creature was the letters which had neither weight nor color. They were heard and described; (none) looked at them. As for the third creature, it was all the kinds that were sensed, touched, with taste, and seen).

The Imam (PBUH), then , asserts that the letters indicate noting other than themselves. Consequently, he (PBUH)uses usage declarative to give reasons for his assertion via explaining that there is always meaning behind gathering these letters, saying that:

”لأن الله تبارك وتعالى لا يجمع منها شيئاً لغير معنى أبداً ، فإذا ألف منها أحرفاً أربعة ، أو خمسة ، أو سنة ، أو أكثر من ذلك أو أقل ، لم يؤلفها لغير معنى ، ولم يكن إلا لمعنى محدث لم يكن قبل ذلك شيئاً“

(Because, Allah, the Blessed and Most High, never gathered a thing from them for another meaning. When He created from them four or five or six words or more than that or less than that, He created them for a certain meaning, and they were not for anything except for an originated meaning, which was nothing before that (time)).

Following this clarification, al -Sabi'i utters a directive utterance performed for requesting usage declarative, saying:

”فكيف لنا بمعرفة ذلك“

(How can we come to know that?)

As a result of this directive question, the Imam (PBUH) performs some usage utterances through which he(PBUH) clarifies how separate letters have no meaning by themselves , saying that:

”أما المعرفة فوجه ذلك وبيانه : أنك تذكر الحروف إذا لم ترد بها غير نفسها ، ذكرتها فرداً ، فقلت : ا ب ت ث ج ح خ حتى تأتي على آخرها ، فلم تجد لها معنى غير أنفسها“

(As for the way and explaining knowledge, it is (as follows): You mention the letters when you want nothing other than themselves. You mention them one by one when you say: Alif, ba'', ta'' tha'', jeem, ha'', kha'', until you finish them. You will find no meaning other than them).

The Imam (PBUH) continued his explanation by using usage declarative to clarify how meanings can be attributed to letters when they come together, saying:

”وإذا ألفتها وجمعت منها أحرفاً ، وجعلتها اسماً وصفة لمعنى ما طلبت ووجه ما عنيت ، كانت دليلاً على معانيها داعية إلى الموصوف بها“

(When you gather them and make from them letters and make from them the name and adjective for a certain meaning, you will not seek the meaning of what you have meant. They are proof of their meanings and the cause of the thing described by them).

The last usage declarative utterance performed by the Imam (PBUH) to give persuasive justification is that:

”لأن صفاته واسماءه غيره“

(because his attributes and his names are other than him).

This usage utterance is performed to justify previous assertive utterances. In other words, to facilitate al -Sabi'i's understanding of such assertion which is that :

”فلو كانت صفاته جل ثناؤه لا تدل عليه ، وأسماءه لا تدعو إليه, والمعلمة من الخلق لا تدركه لمعناه ، كانت العبادة من الخلق لأسمائه وصفاته دون معناه ، فلولا أن ذلك كذلك ، لكان المعبود الموحد غير الله“

(If His attributes, great be His laudation, do not indicate Him; His names do not summon to Him; the knowledge of the creatures does not perceive His core; the creatures will worship His names and His attributes, not His core. If this is such, then the one god will be other than Allah).

7. Discussion of the Results

In the light of the previous analysis of this debate according to Eemeren et al.(2014) distribution of speech acts, there appears that all the four categories of speech acts are utilized. These speech acts which account for 288 utterances are classified into four categories that are; assertives, directives, commissives, and usage declaratives. The table below shows the number and percentage of each speech acts category in this debate:

Table (3) Numbers and Percentages of each Speech Acts Category in This Debate

Type	Number	Percentage
Assertive	171	59.37
Directive	58	20.14
Commissive	3	1.04
Usage Declarative	56	19.45
all	288	100%

The above table shows that the dominant category in this debate is the "Assertives" which include 171 (59.37%) out of 288 utterances. Next to this category is the "Directives", with around 58 utterances (20.14%) and "Usage Declaratives", under which acts occur in 56 utterances (19.45%), and finally "Commissives" with only 3 utterances (1.04%).

The arguers attempt to reflect their standpoints (or how they see the case under discussion), so it is expected that the majority of the utterances in this selected debate are assertives and usage declaratives. Despite the most prominent cause for the use of "Assertives" in an argumentative discourse is to perform a claim and standpoint, in various scenes within this debate, this act has some other different functions such as describing, assuring, and asserting the upholding of new standpoint. "Usage declaratives", on the other hand, is utilized to explain, explicate, define, and clarify other speech acts. "Directives" also have important roles in this debate. This type of speech acts is used along this debate for requesting usage declaratives and challenging to defend certain standpoints. Finally, commissive speech acts is used just for acceptance and non-acceptance.

Though table (1) shows that the four types of speech acts are used, still this use differs between arguers. In other words, some speech acts are not used by both arguers. Accordingly, making a comparative discussion between the use of each speech acts in the arguers' utterances will be very useful.

Table (4) Number and Percentage of Speech Acts in both Arguers in This Debate

Speech Acts	The Imam(PBUH)		Al -Sabi'i	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Assertive	161	94.16	10	5.84
Directive	25	43.10	33	56.9
Commissive	3	100	0	0
Usage Declarative	56	100	0	0

As shown in the above table, "Assertives " is used by both arguers. However, it most frequently occurs in the Imam's (PBUH) utterances than al Sabi'i and at the same time, the functions of this type of speech acts differ between them. The Imam(PBUH) performs 161 utterances (94.16%) whereas Al Sabi'i performs only 10 utterances (5.84%). In this debate, the Imam (PBUH) uses "Assertives " for describing, claiming expressing certain standpoints, and supplying evidence. All these various functions perform for resolving the difference of opinions. Differently, Al Sabi'i uses "Assertives " to claim, assert, and show the acceptability of the Imam's (PBUH) certain standpoints and uphold a new standpoint(see appendix:2). These assertives are performed for two aims; the first one is to find an accurate argumentation for the matter of Oneness and the second, is to express his persuasion of the Imam's (PBUH) argumentation.

"Directives", on the other hand, occur in both of the arguers' utterances, the Imam (PBUH) performs 25 utterances (43.10%) whereas Al Sabi'i performs 33 utterances (56.9%)(see table:4). Within this debate, the Imam(PBUH) and al -Sabi'i use "Directives" to challenge each other to defend their standpoint and to request usage declaratives. At the same time, their aim (i.e. the Imam(PBUH) and Al Sabi'i) is to resolve the difference of opinions.

All commissive utterances are performed by the Imam (PBUH). He (PBUH) performs it in 3 utterances (100%) in the second debate (see table:4). In this debate, the Imam (PBUH)uses commissive to show his acceptance and non-acceptance.

Finally, all usage declaratives are performed by the Imam (PBUH) whose usage declarative utterances account for 56 utterances (100%) whereas non is performed by al Sabi'I (see table: 4). Within this debate, the Imam (PBUH) utilizes"Usage Declartives" to explain, explicate, clarify, and define some utterances through which he (PBUH) aims to increase al Sabi'i's understanding of some other speech acts and accordingly, resolve the difference concerned the matter of Oneness. What is important to be discussed is that al-Sabi'i's non-

performance of this type of speech acts is quite expected because, from the beginning of his debate with the Imam (PBUH), he states that the aim behind his questions is to have proof that there is only one God. Accordingly, he would not explain or clarify anything.

8. Conclusions

According to the pragmatic analysis of the argumentation in this argumentative debate of Imam al-Ridha (PBUH), the following conclusions are revealed:

1. The results show that Eemeren et al. (2014) distribution of speech acts has great explanatory power to the extent that it can function properly across languages. This power comes as a result of finding all the four types of this distribution (i.e.assertives, directives, commissives, and usage declaratives)in the Arabic analyzed text.
2. It reveals that speech acts as distributed by Eemeren et al.,(2014) model of argumentation is an appropriate and useful tool for analyzing argumentative debates and accordingly, shows how the difference of opinions can be resolved.It also shows that speech acts are used in various arguments to deliver some standpoints (whether directly or indirectly), questions, explanations, and showing acceptance or non-acceptance for some purposes, among the most important is resolving a difference of opinions.

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