

**Linguistic Analysis of the Arba'een
Pilgrimage Terminology: A Pragmatic Study
in the Light of Speech Act Theory**

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Abstract

This study applies Speech Act Theory, particularly Searle's taxonomy, to explore how language is used pragmatically by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage—an event rich in religious and cultural meaning. While prior research has overlooked the linguistic analysis of such expressions, this study addresses the gap by analyzing thirty commonly used statements gathered directly from Al-Mawakib organizers. These expressions, often emotionally and spiritually charged, aim to influence the recipient's response positively.

Furthermore, the study employs a mixed-methods approach, primarily qualitative descriptive analysis, supplemented by quantitative tools such as frequency counts and percentage analysis to enhance the credibility and robustness of the findings. It examines the frequency and function of five categories of speech acts: Expressives, Directives, Commissive, Assertives, and Declaratives.

The study proposes three hypotheses: (1) the terminology used by Al-Mawakib organizers reflects core religious and social values, such as generosity and hospitality; (2) expressive speech acts are the most dominant, while declaratives are the least; and (3) context plays a vital role in shaping the interpretation and multifunctionality of these utterances.

The findings of the analysis verified the three hypotheses as follows: (1) the terminology used by Al-Mawakib organizers indeed reflects key religious and social values, such as generosity and hospitality; (2) among the speech acts, the expressive category is the most frequently employed in addition to directive one, while the declarative category is the least frequent; and (3) the social and religious context plays a significant role in shaping the interpretation and function of these expressions, enabling

a single utterance to perform multiple speech acts simultaneously. Moreover, utilizing various categories of speech acts fosters persuasive communication between organizers and pilgrims, highlighting the integral role of language in such occasions.

Key words: Pragmatics, speech acts theory, linguistic analysis, Arba'een pilgrimage terminology.

INTRODUCTION

A. Problem of Study

Speech Act Theory, a fundamental aspect of pragmatics, investigates the acts executed through language, exceeding the literal interpretation of words (Searle, 1995). It clarifies the use of language not only for describing the surroundings but also for persuasion, commitment, emotional expression, and achieving communication goals, (Austin, 1962).

From this perspective, the Arba'een pilgrimage, a significant religious and social event, is characterized by the frequent use of specific terms and expressions employed by al-Mawakib organizers (Mawkib is a tent or place used to relax pilgrims; Al-Mawakib organizers are people who provide free services such as food, lodging, and medical aid to pilgrims of Imam Hussain during the Arba'een pilgrimage) that extend beyond ritual to influence collective identity, emotion, and interaction. Nevertheless, there is a lack of research that has investigated these expressions from a linguistic and pragmatic perspective, particularly in the context of Searle's Speech Act Theory. Therefore, this study aims to address this issue by examining and classifying these expressions according to Searle's taxonomy, as well as investigating the role of the context in shaping the function and the classification of these expressions.

B. Study Aims

The study aims to:

1. Investigate how religious and social values are represented in the terminology employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage.
2. Determine which categories of speech acts are most and least frequently in the terminology employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage.
3. Examine the impact of context on the interpreting of the terminology employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage and their categorization of speech acts, particularly when utterances serve several purposes within the discourse related to the Arba'een pilgrimage.

D. Study Questions

5. How does the terminology employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage correspond with their religious and social values during the the Arba'een pilgrimage?
6. Which categories of speech acts are most and least frequently utilized in the terminology used by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage?
7. How does the context affect the interpretation and categorization of speech acts within the terminology of the Arba'een pilgrimage?

E. Hypotheses

The study is hypothesized that:

1. The terminology used by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage reflects key religious and social values such as: generosity, hospitality, in addition to serving other communicative purposes.
2. The expressive category of speech acts is the most frequently employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'een pilgrimage, while the declarative category of speech acts is the least frequently employed.
3. The context of the Arba'een pilgrimage profoundly affects the utilization of specific terminology, resulting in the formation of utterances that may simultaneously encompass several types of speech acts.

D. Study Value

This study is valuable in that, it examines the terminology employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during Imam Hussain's pilgrimage from a linguistic perspective. The study emphasizes the advantages of Al-Mawakib organizers' utilization of spontaneous social and religious terminology in the fields of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Pragmatics

Brown and Miller (2013, p. 352) state that “pragmatics is understood to address the use of language in context.” It includes the acts performed by speakers and writers in their language use, as well as the inferences by which listeners and readers obtain a complex interpretation that transcends the literal written content, and the conventions that determent appropriateness in specific contexts, (Hattab, 2021).

According to (Al-Seadi and Al-Husseini, 2022; Mohammed,2023), Pragmatics, a significant domain within linguistics, examines the meanings derived from a context in which communication occurs. It generally aims to facilitate communication through many forms, including speech, utterances, and both formal and informal conversation. In pragmatics, context and meaning are interdependent. It signifies that meaning cannot be conveyed without context.

Thus, context component is a crucial aspect for the accurate interpretation of speech, particularly in the realm of speech act theory. To fully understand the speech, it provides the necessary contextual information. Furthermore, by concentrating on the functioning of language within particular cultural or situational contexts, textual analysis elucidates the relationship between words and their environments, (Austin, 1962).

In other words, the focus on context facilitates more precise interpretations of communicative actions, thereby enhancing a comprehensive understanding of language operations in specific situations. As a result, to guarantee a thorough comprehension of the analysis, the researcher of this study integrates the context element into the division of speech acts study model.

B. Preview of Speech Acts Theory

Speech acts theory was initiated by J. L. Austin, who, in his foundational text (*How to Do Things with Words*, 1962), contested the conventional perception of language as solely descriptive. He contended that utterances can execute actions—such as stating “I apologize,” which actualizes the social act of apologizing (Austin, 1962). Searle (1969), in his work “Speech Acts,” advanced the theory by introducing the concept of illocutionary force, which denotes the communicative function of an utterance, including stating, demanding, or expressing an opinion, (Searle, 1969, pp. 23–24).

Trask (2007) defines speech acts as endeavors to accomplish something solely through verbal expression. Furthermore, speech acts enable us to fulfill several purposes, including making promises, formulating plans, posing questions, issuing orders or requests, providing advice and suggestions, making threats, and delivering directives.

From his point of view, Crystal (2008, p.446) states “Speech acts theory as a theory that examines the role of utterances regarding the behavior of the speaker and listener through social communication”.

C. Speech Acts Categories

The phrase “speech act” is predominantly used as a specific concept that refers to three distinct types of acts: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts (Cruse, 2011).

1. locutionary act: refers to the act of articulating a sequence of sounds or words to convey a meaningful linguistic expression
2. illocutionary act: is the act by which a speaker generates an utterance in order to convey their intended message to a recipient. “A speech act” is the most restrictive definition of an illocutionary act.

3. perlocutionary act: is the act of a speaker delivering a discourse with the intention of influencing the audience.

The concept of illocutionary force is introduced and developed by Searle (1969), which denotes not only the surface structure of an expression but also the action the speaker intends to perform through the utterance. It is, as Searle (1969, p. 69) elucidates, encompassed by the explicit linguistic form and the implicit associative meanings that are conveyed by specific words or expressions within the speech act framework.

It is crucial to recognize that the types of speech acts are not always mutually exclusive. A single utterance has the potential to incorporate components of multiple speech acts. For example, while a statement such as “It’s a beautiful day; wouldn’t it be nice to go for a walk?” may serve as both a directive (recommending an activity) and a representative (conveying information) (Yule, 1996).

Within the framework of speech act theory, illocutionary force is subdivided into five categories, assertive acts encompass actions such as stating, asserting, claiming, describing, hypothesizing, and recommending. Commissive acts encompass behaviors such as promising, swearing oaths, making pledges, issuing threats, and vowing. Declarative acts include blessings, firings, arrests, and marriages. Directive acts encompass demanding, inquiring, confronting, inviting, and ordering, among others. Expressives encompass speech acts such as assessments, greetings, apologies, and congratulations. In addition, illocutionary force serves to convey the speaker’s emotional disposition or mental status, (Tuckyta, Sujatna, and Mahdi, 2014).

Methodology

A. Study Approaches

The primary approach of the data analysis in this study is qualitative, which facilitates a thorough assessment and comprehension of the speech act categories in the analysed terminology. A more unbiased representation of the findings of the study can be achieved by analyzing and evaluating the data without any irrelevant influences. Johnston and Vanderstoep (2009) asserts that qualitative research yields narrative or literary representations of the topics being studied, whereas quantitative research delivers numerical data regarding the same topics. As a result, the study is also conducted statistically, with data represented numerically to facilitate its interpretation and findings. The mixed-methods approach strengthens the reliability of the findings and guarantees a balanced perspective between analytical depth and empirical evidence.

B. Study Model

In accordance with the aforementioned literature, the updated model is illustrated in the subsequent figure, which is intended to evaluate the gathered data in alignment with Searle's classification of speech acts. In addition, the researcher incorporates the context element into the study model, as context is a crucial aspect in the understanding of texts, especially within the domain of pragmatics. It seeks to elucidate the intended meaning of the expressions employed by Al-Mawakib organizers.

Phrase	Categories of Speech Acts	definition	Context
The Used expressions For the analysis	1. Assertive	The conceptual explanation of each category of speech acts	The actual Situation in which the utterance is Spoken
	2. Directives		
	3. Commissive		
	4. Expressive		
	5. Declarative		

Figure (1) elucidates the Updated Model of the Study

Data Analysis and Discussion

Al-Mawakib organizers actively participate in the Arba’een pilgrimage by providing a wide range of services to pilgrims who are travelling along the route to Karbala. As they define themselves as servants of Imam Hussein, they employ various expressions to describe their acts of service. The linguistic analysis of these expressions reveals that they can be classified into a variety of categories in accordance with Searle’s taxonomy of speech acts. The subsequent table presents and organizes the selected samples of these expressions, which are the data of the present study.

A. Data Collection

Lofland & Lofland assert that the primary data for qualitative research typically comprises collected words, actions, documents, and various forms of communication (1983:425). This study derives its data straight from the Al-Mawakib organizers visited by the researcher during the Arba’een pilgrimage, concentrating on the terminologies utilized in their service tasks. The survey will also encompass expressions gathered based on the researcher’s observations during her journey to Karbala for the Arba’een pilgrimage.

B. Data Analysis

The following table provides an analysis of the expressions used by Al-Mawakib organizers to illustrate their services to pilgrims of Imam Hussain. The researcher evaluates these expressions in accordance with Searle’s speech act theory. Declaratives, directives, expressives, commissives, and assertives are the five categories into which the theory divides speech acts. Consequently, the researcher determines that the expressions employed by Al-Mawakib organizers are consistent with these categories.

Note: The expressions examined in this table are derived from the Iraqi colloquial dialect, which is frequently employed by the organizers of the Arba’een pilgrimage. In order to facilitate the comprehension of the meanings for non-Arabic readers, the researcher has incorporated a distinct appendix (appendix A) at the end of this paper that contains approximate English translations, as a result of the cultural and linguistic specificity of the expressions.

Table (1) Presents the Analysis of the Study Data

N	Expressions	Types of Speech Acts	Definition	Context
1.	حياكم الله	Expressive	A phrase shows greetings	A phrase is typically used to welcome pilgrims
2.	وصلتوا ان شاء الله	Assertive	A phrase shows asserting	A phrase is recited for pilgrims as they traverse the road to Karbala, regardless of the fact that the road is still distant. This is done to alleviate the pilgrims' fatigue.
3.	عساكم ما تعبتو	Expressive	A phrase shows sympathy	A phrase is frequently used to ease the fatigue of pilgrims.
4.	تفضلو الزاد جاهز	Directives Commissive	A phrase shows inviting,	A phrase is expressed as an invitation to hospitality and is frequently said throughout the day due to the continuous provision of meal services. It also signifies a commitment to serve pilgrims.

5.	تفضلوا القهوة، شاي . حامض	Directives Commissive	Wards show inviting	They are stated to encourage pilgrims to take a break at the Mawakib, rather than merely taking in drinks.
6.	مبيت، حمام، صحيات	Directives Commissive	The words show inviting, and promise for hosting	Expressions articulated by Al-Mawakib organizes along the route to Karbala, expressing a call to welcome.
7.	اهلا بالمرزيات زينب	Expressive	A phrase shows sad greetings	A greeting used to welcome women pilgrims. It is intended to convey spiritual kindness, respect, and hospitality to the these pilgrims.
8.	علي وياكم زينب وياكم	Expressive	Expressions to motivation	In order to facilitate the pilgrims' lengthy journey, Al-Mawakib organizers employ motivating metaphors to encourage pilgrims to continue their walk

9.	(كو اكم الله يعطيكم القوة)	Expressive	An expression represents pray for the pilgrims	Pray words for the pilgrims, to inspiring them keeping on their path.
10.	(ما جورين اعظم الله اجرهم)	Expressive	An expression said for condolence	An expression conveys condolences on the day of Imam Hussein's martyrdom.
11.	يوجد خيمة للرجال. وخيمة للنساء	Directives and commissive	Expressions inform pilgrims to stop walking	The statements indicate to the pilgrims that there are designated areas for both women and men to rest and sleep.
12.	اتصال مجاني بزوار	Declaratives	A phrase said to inform people that there is a call for free	Some pilgrims of the Arbaeen pilgrimage occasionally lose their relatives and must call to remain in contact. So Al-Mawākib organizers offer free calling services.

17.	هنياكم بزوار هذا المسير	Expressive	To express wish\	Expressions of wishes indicate that the pilgrims receive Allah's reward on this journey.
16.	الله يتقبل خطواتكم	Expressive	To express pray for the visitors	expression uttered as a supplication for Allah to acknowledge the fatigue of the pilgrims
15.	مساج, علاج كل شي موجود لخدمتكم	Directives and commissive	Expressions of offering	Al-Mawākib organizers are in competition to offer a variety of services to pilgrims, and as a result, they request that the pilgrims stop and take rest.
14.	اروح فدوة لتراب اقدامكم	Expressive	Expressions reflect the feeling of respect and pride	Metaphorical expression represents self-sacrifice for the pilgrims
13.	اشرب ماء وانكر عطش الحسين	Directives	A phrase said to present offering	Expressions provide pilgrims with instructions to drink water and quench their thirst.

18.	والله ما تعبر ير اير اذا ما تاكل من زادنا	Commissive	Reflect threatening	A figurative expression that resembles a threat, yet fundamentally conveys a commitment to serve pilgrims.
19.	كل خيرنا من بركات الحسين	Assertives	Stating or asserting,	Expressions affirming that every virtue derives from the blessings of Imam Hussein.
20.	شاي عراقي، شاي ايراني	Directives	Reflect invitation	The expressions provide an invitation for assistance for two different nations of pilgrims.
21.	احنا خدام الحسين	Assertive	Reporting	An expression reflects pride and honor
22.	اشرب الماء واذكر عطش الحسين	Directives	requesting,	An phrase serves as a reminder for pilgrims to remember the offense against Imam Husain.
23.	اذا متشيكم الارض نشيكم على روسنا	Assertive	Acknowledge	An metaphorical expression reflects pride and honor
24.	عين غطه و عين فراش	Directives	An expression reflect invitation	Metaphorical expression extend an invitation to reside at Al- Mawkitib.

25.	الصلاة يزوار	Declaratives	An expression reflect announcement	The phrase signifies a summons for prayer.
26.	حياكم الله. البيت بيتكم يزوار	Expressive	An expression shows greetings	Metaphorical expressions employed by Al-Mawkik organizers when hosting pilgrims in their residence.
27.	اغاتي تفضلوا استرجعوا يمينه	Expressive	An expression shows greetings	The term اغاتي translates to "my sir" in English, conveying a greater level of respect for pilgrims.
28.	اشرب ماي وانكر الشهيد والعن يزيد	Directives	Reflect invitation	An expression that conveys sorrow and evoke the memory of the tragedy that occurred in Karbala.
29.	خدمتكم تاج على الراس	Assertive	Reporting	An expression of respect and honor
30.	استرجعوا يماي عيونني	Directives	Reflect invitation	A metaphorical expression of invitation that is consistently employed in Iraqi dialects

C. The Discussion

The total number of analyzed expressions in this study is thirty; however, the total number of speech acts is thirty-five. This is due to the fact that five of the expressions serve dual purposes, simultaneously fulfilling both directive and commissive functions. Therefore, it is imperative to consider each unique communicative function that an utterance fulfills, even when multiple acts are present within a single expression. As a result, a more accurate and nuanced appraisal of the speakers' communicative intentions is attained by calculating frequencies and percentages based on the total number of speech acts rather than merely on the utterances. This method guarantees that the multiple character of particular utterances is acknowledged, especially in contexts where religious, social, and emotional dimensions are closely linked, as seen in the discourse of Al-Mawakib organizers.

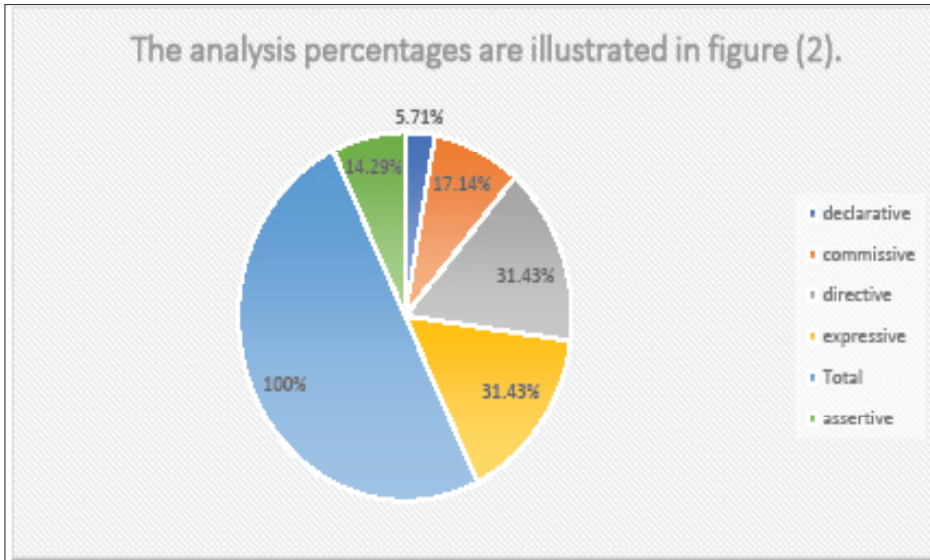


Figure (2) illustrates the analysis percentages

Method of Percentage Calculation

The following formula is employed to determine the percentage of each speech act category:

$$(\text{Frequency of the speech act} \div \text{Total number of speech acts}) \times 100$$

Consequently, the analysis indicates that expressive and directive acts are the most prevalent, each comprising approximately 31.43% of the total. The chart implies that the speakers convey profound spiritual and emotive feelings and endeavor to guide or influence the behavior of the pilgrims. On the other hand, commissive acts encompassing both independent and shared instances constitute 17.14%, indicating the speakers' intentions to perform future actions, such as serving pilgrims or performing religious obligations. Assertive acts (14.29%) exhibit a modest tendency to articulate facts or opinions, whereas declaratives are the least prevalent (5.71%). The application of declarative actions is often used to notify pilgrims of prayer times and other religious duties.

The study findings indicate that most of the used expressions are expressive, directive, and commissive, showing that Al-Mwakib organizers' religion and society are reflected in their Arba'een pilgrimage vocabulary. In this emphasis, Al-Mwakib organizers express their religious conviction, sorrow, mourning, hospitality, and generosity. The variety of speech actions employed demonstrates the impact of the emotional and religious context of the event, highlighting the speakers' profound commitment to their religious culture and social values.

Conclusions

This study reaches some conclusions, which are:

1. The first hypothesis of the study has been validated by the analysis of the expressions employed by Al-Mawakib organizers during the Arba'ee pilgrimage, which embodies essential religious and societal values, to enhance their services such as generosity, hospitality, in addition to serving other communicative purposes.
2. In addition, the second hypothesis is verified, as expressive speech acts exhibit the highest frequency among the utilized categories, accompanied by a significant occurrence of directive acts. Moreover, the second part of the hypothesis is verified by the observation that declarative speech acts occur with the least frequency comparing to other speech acts.
3. The function of expressions is significantly influenced by the social and religious context of the Arba'een pilgrimage, which enables even simple utterances to convey diverse meanings and execute multiple speech acts simultaneously. For instance, a statement may serve as both a directive, encouraging the recipient to take action, and a commissive, indicating a willingness to serve and provide hospitality. This conclusion aligns with the study's third hypothesis.
4. The study indicated that Al-Mawakib organizers utilize commissive speech acts as the second most common category, indicating their dedication and verbal pledges to aid pilgrims, rooted in religious and moral obligation. Although placed third, assertive speech acts communicate pride, honor, and emotional connection rather than reporting facts. This suggests that the communicative priorities of the Arba'een pilgrimage favor emotional, moral, and ceremonial expression above the exchange of merely facts. The least

category comes for declaratives, highlighting their function in announcing prayer times and denoting religious acts, which are crucial within the pilgrimage context.

5. This study largely employs a qualitative method, concentrating on the classification and interpretation of expressions utilized during the Arba'een pilgrimage, but also integrating quantitative features through frequency analysis and percentages. This mixed-method approach enhances the study by integrating profound pragmatic insights with quantifiable data, so providing a more thorough comprehension of speech act utilization in this context.
6. The utilization of Arba'een pilgrimage terminology enhanced communication efficacy among Al-Mawakib organizers and the pilgrims. A variety usage of speech acts (e.g., combining directives with expressives or commissives) facilitate speakers in inviting, assisting, and guiding pilgrims with respect and appreciation, in addition to increasing persuasiveness.

Suggestion for Future Research

The researcher proposes a potential area of further investigation: the examination of the language of Hussein elegies (Latmiyyat) from linguistic and pragmatic perspectives. This could elucidate their functions within specific cultural and religious contexts, the use of language to promote emotion and solidarity, and the role of these expressions in fostering social cohesion and shaping identity.

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Appendix A: English translations of analyzed Expressions

The expressions included in this appendix are derived from the Iraqi colloquial dialect, specifically as they are used by the organizers and participants of the Arba'een pilgrimage processions. The cultural and religious context of the event is profoundly ingrained in these expressions. Although certain expressions may be difficult to translate directly due to their cultural specificity, the researcher has endeavored to provide the most accurate English equivalents of the expressions.

N	Expressions	Translation
1.	حياكم الله	Allah welcomes you
2.	وصلتوا ان شاء الله	You are almost there, inshallah
3.	عساكم ما تعبئو	We hope you are not tired,
4.	تفضلوا الزاد جاهز	Please, help yourselves, the meal is prepared
5.	تفضلوا القهوة , شاي . حامض	Please, help yourselves with coffe, tea and lemonade

6.	مبيت, حمام, صحيات	Place to stay in, restrooms
7.	اهلا بالمعزيات زينب	Welcome, to mourners of Zainab
8.	علي وياكم زينب وياكم	May imam Ali accompanies you May Zainab accompanies you
9.	كواكم الله (الله يعطيكم القوة)	May Allah strengthens you
10.	مأجورين (عظم الله اجركم)	May Allah rewards you for your effort
11.	يوجد خيمة للرجال. وخيمة للنساء	There is a resting place for women and men
12.	اتصال مجاني يزوار	Free phone call, pilgrims
13.	اشرب ماء واذكر عطش الحسين	Drink and remember imam Husain thirst
14.	اروح فدوة لتراب اقدامكم	We would offer ourselves as a sacrifice for the dust of your feet.
15.	مساج. علاج كل شي موجود لخدمتكم	Free massage; all services are available for you.
16.	الله يتقبل خطواتكم	May Allah rewards you for your steps
17.	هنيا لكم يزوار هذا المسير	How fortunate you are for the steps you undertake.
18.	والله ما تعبر يزائر اذا ما تاكل من زادنا	I guarantee you that you will not depart without a meal.

19.	كل خيرنا من بركات الحسين	Imam Husain is the source of all of these favours.
20.	شاي عراقي، شاي إيراني	Iraqi tea, Irani tea
22.	احنا خدام الحسين	We are Husain' s servants
23.	خدمتكم شرف النا يزوار	Your Serving is our honor
24.	عين غطه وعين فراش	(Cover eye and bed eye) We are at your aid.
25.	الصلاة يزوار	Prayer time, pilgrims
26.	البيت بينكم يزوار	Please regard this as your residence.
27.	اغاتي تفضلوا استريحوا يمه	My dear, Please come in and rest here
28.	اشرب ماي واذكر الشهيد والعن يزيد	As you consume water, reflect on the sacrifice of Imam Hussain and condemn Yazid.
29.	خدمتكم تاج على الراس	Serving you is "a crown on our head" (is an honor)
30.	استريحوا يماي عيوني	Rest here, our dear
31.	اذا متشيلكم الأرض تشيلكم على روسنا	You are profoundly valued; if the earth cannot contain you, we shall honourably bear you up.