INTENTIONALITY AND ITS APPLICATIONS IN THE PAROLE OF IMAM SAJJAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM): SELECTIVE PHONOLOGICAL LEVEL.

[1]FATIMA MOHSEN ABD, [2]PROF. DR. HUSSEIN ALI ABD AL HUSSEIN AL-DAKHILI

[1,2] DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC LANGUAGE, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION FOR HUMAN SCIENCES, THI QAR, 64001 UNIVERSITY OF THI QAR.
EMAILS: fatimamohsenabdel@utq.edu.iq[1] dr.hassein.a.adbel@utq.edu.iq[2]

Abstract:

To discern the loci of beauty and creativity within a text, the speaker must explore its phonetic structures, given their significant importance. These structures harbour emotional and spiritual potentials, embodied through language and released as expressive musical sounds. Texts imbued with rhythmic patterns and musical chimes are not intended solely to display aesthetic beauty; rather, they convey additional meanings that reveal the speaker's intentionality in delivering a particular message to the audience. The aim is to achieve communicative interaction, influence the recipient, and persuade them. In addition to the aesthetic dimension created by these harmonious vocal modulations, their alignment with semantic meanings contributes to enhancing the psychological and spiritual interaction between speaker and listener.

This is evident in the discourse of Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him), particularly in his supplications, where he articulated his purposes through a range of vocal phenomena consistent with their contexts. These phonetic divisions coalesce and harmonise to produce varied meanings at times signifying humility and brokenness before Almighty God, and at other times extending the tone to convey longing and hope. Such qualities draw the listener's attention, as the Imam crafted them in a refined, sensitive style, distancing himself from ordinary speech, thereby causing his audience to be deeply affected and engaged with these aesthetic and artistic values.

Keywords: Phonetic level, rhythm, aesthetic interaction, intentional interaction

INTRODUCTION

The communicative process rests upon a well-known triad: sender, receiver, and message—structured upon a linguistic fabric whose aim is to achieve intentional meaning in speech. Thus, understanding the meaning of *intention* or *intentionality* is essential, given its central role in shaping communicative strategies that clarify the producer's purposes and pragmatic competence.

The Concept of Intentionality

Consulting Arabic lexicons reveals that *qaṣd* (intent) means "the straightness of a path… and *qaṣd*: to approach something. One says: *ṣadattuhu, qaṣadtu lahu, qaṣadtu ilayhi*" (Lisān al-ʿArab, Ibn Manẓūr, vol. 3, p. 353). Ibn Jinnī holds that "the root meaning of *qaṣd* and its usage in Arabic speech is determination, orientation, and moving toward something—whether on a straight or crooked path. This is its essential meaning, though in certain contexts it may be restricted to the straight path without deviation. Yet note: one may *intend injustice* as one may *intend justice*—thus determination and orientation apply to both."

Similarly, Ibn Fāris defines *qaṣd* as the act of approaching something or its core, or as an indication of compactness within a thing (*Maqāyīs al-Lugha*, vol. 5, p. 95). We thus find multiple meanings: straightness, approaching, justice, determination, and orientation, alongside Ibn Fāris's sense of compactness, where the word is dense with meanings expressing its referent. These semantic nuances form the basis for the terminological concept of *qaṣd*.

Technically, *qaṣd* denotes a deliberate orientation of the human will toward a particular intellectual position that entails two aspects—one reprehensible and the other commendable—thus allowing the term to carry both an apparent and a hidden meaning (*Al-Muʿjam al-Falsafī*, Jamil Ṣalībā, vol. 2, p. 193).

John Searle defines intentionality as "that property of many mental states and events by virtue of which they are directed at, or about, or of, objects and states of affairs in the world" (*John Searle's Theory of Intentionality: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*, Ṣalāḥ Ismāʿīl, p. 55). Thus, in Searle's view, intentionality is linked to certain mental states—such as fear, belief, wishing, desire, love, and hatred—where consciousness can be directed toward the external world (*Taḥlīl al-Khiṭāb al-Shiʿrī: Istrātījiyyat al-Tanāṣ*, Muḥammad Miftāḥ, p. 165).

From this, it becomes evident that intentionality is grounded in speech acts originating from the speaker's will to orient discourse toward a particular subject, arising from the interaction between mental states and the external world.

Within this framework, *intentional interaction* at the phonetic level constitutes a central axis. The phonetic phenomenon—or vocal signification—is one of the key elements that has preoccupied scholars and researchers. Uncovering sites of creativity and beauty in any literary text requires engaging with its phonetic structures, which rely on diverse vocal interactions to produce an aesthetic effect. Such interaction is achieved through the deployment of language, itself composed of sounds through which the speaker conveys intentions and meanings (Abū al-Fatḥ ʿUthmān ibn Jinnī, ed. Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Najjār, vol. 1, p. 33). These sounds thus serve as the primary catalyst for emotional and cognitive response in the listener.

It is noteworthy that **signification consists of two components**—the *signifier* and the *signified*—where meaning arises from the relationship between the material entity and its mental image, that is, between the word and its meaning (*al-Dalālah al-Ṣawtiyyah fī al-Lughah al-ʿArabiyyah*, Ṣāliḥ Salīm ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Fākhirī, p. 28).

This means that meanings and the semantic values of sounds are determined by the speaker, who positions them appropriately by the situational and contextual framework, and according to the purposes of both speaker and listener (*Dīnāmiyyat al-Naṣṣ: Taẓnīr wa-Injāz*, Muḥammad Miftāḥ, p. 63). These sounds and rhythms contribute to stimulating the listener's auditory aesthetic experience, as well as the associated psychological effects embodied in language and vocabulary. Words thus serve as the driving force for receiving and savoring beauty through the imagination, emotion, and imagery they carry and project before the listener's mind (*al-Uṣūl al-Fanniyyah li-l-Adab*, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ḥusayn, p. 17). The relationship between rhythm and aesthetic interaction is not defined solely by the audible words themselves, but rather by their capacity to "awaken the latent spiritual dimensions within the human self" (*Jaras al-Alfāẓ wa-Dalālatuhā fī al-Baḥth al-Balāghī wa-l-Naqdī ʿinda al-ʿArab*, Māhir Mahdī Hilāl, p. 310).

In light of the above, it becomes clear that speech derives its semantic power from its phonetic structure, as sounds acquire additional meanings beyond their other functions depending on the appropriate context. This grants discourse a persuasive dimension that serves the speaker's communicative purposes, while also engaging the listener's mind and emotions due to its psychological resonance.

Historically, the Arabs of antiquity possessed an innate appreciation for the beauty of sounds. They were careful to imbue speech with a musical timbre and an impactful auditory rhythm. This is most evident in their profound response to the Qurʾān, with its depth of meaning, verbal beauty, and vocal cadence, as well as in their reception of metrical, rhymed poetry, which delighted their ears and pleased their hearts. The melodious voice held a significant place in their aesthetic sensibilities, producing deep emotional engagement with its semantic content (*al-Ẓāhirah al-Jamāliyyah fī al-Qurʾān al-Karīm*, Nadhīr Ḥamdan, p. 187).

To achieve such rhythmic-phonetic interaction, language must be measured, exhibiting diverse verbal features that suit and harmonise with the meaning so that its resonance is both pleasing and effective (*al-Aslūb*, Aḥmad al-Shāyib, p. 66).

This is precisely what we find in the discourse of Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him), whose speech embodies all the phonetic features shaped by his refined, sensitive style. Because his literary expressions rise far above the commonplace speech of people, his audience was profoundly affected by their artistic and aesthetic value.

Among the phonetic techniques intentionally employed by Imam al-Sajjād are the following:

First: Repetition

Repetition is one of the most prominent elements at the phonetic level. It is defined as "the alternation and reiteration of words within the flow of expression so as to produce a musical rhythm intentionally sought by the poet or prose writer" (*Jaras al-Alfāẓ wa-Dalālatuhā fī al-Baḥth al-Balāghī wa-l-Naqdī ʿinda al-ʿArab*, Māhir Mahdī Hilāl, p. 239). The speaker may repeat a word or a phrase segment with the intent of emphasis—what is known as *referential repetition* (*Nasīj al-Naṣṣ*, al-Azhar al-Ranād, p. 119). Repetition thus emerges as a semantic-linguistic necessity that reveals the speaker's awareness and precision in lexical selection.

This feature is clearly present in the speech of Imam al-Sajjād, particularly in *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, where his discourse abounds with this aesthetic device. The interconnectedness of its parts produces a musical cadence that embodies the intended impact upon the listener.

Moreover, Imam al-Sajjād did not employ a single form of repetition but utilized it in varied forms and images. Among these is:

Letter repetition:

This form is widely present in his speech. Imam al-Sajjād carefully selected and distributed letters to achieve a precise phonetic effect, demonstrating his creative skill in profoundly influencing the listener. For example, in the passage:

"And he strove diligently in delivering Your message, burdened himself with calling to Your religion, busied himself with advising the people of Your summons, migrated to foreign lands, to a place distant from the station of his mount, the place of his step, the site of his birth, and the intimacy of his soul—seeking thereby to honour Your religion and seeking help against the disbelievers in You—until what he sought from Your enemies was secured to him, and what he planned for Your friends was completed for him. Then he rose against them, seeking

victory through Your assistance, and strengthening his weakness through Your help" (*al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, p. 33).

Here, Imam al-Sajjād employs letter repetition—specifically the letter *sīn*—with effortless fluidity, in harmony with the text's context. The *sīn*, as is well known, is a voiceless fricative that conveys softness, cohesion, stability, and continuity (*Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Ḥurūf al-ʿArabiyyah wa-Maʿānīhā*, Ḥasan ʿAbbās, p. 111). It appears in words such as *masqaṭ, raʾsihi, maʾnas, nafsihi, istinṣāran, istatabba, istattama, mustaftiḥan*. The sound flows smoothly into the listener's ear without disturbance, imparting calmness. Furthermore, it conveys an element of persistence, consistent with the semantic content of the text, which narrates the Prophet's (peace be upon him and his family) tireless missionary effort, migration, and continuous labour in spreading the faith—where the repeated *sīn* mirrors the gradual, sustained pace of his long reformist journey.

The recurrence of *sīn* in these religiously significant words also adds a spiritual dimension, blending insistence with rhythmic beauty, thereby intensifying emotional receptivity and opening the way for deep psychological and affective influence.

Thus, Imam al-Sajjād successfully achieves intentional interaction through this pattern of phonetic repetition—not merely as an aesthetic form, but as a semantic component integrated with meaning, contributing to the persuasive force of his discourse.

Likewise, **Imam al-Sajjād** (peace be upon him) also drew upon other elements of his speech to harness the *musical potential of letters* to achieve aesthetic and semantic purposes simultaneously. One example of this type of repetition is evident in his words:

"O Reliever of distress, O Remover of grief, O Most Merciful of this world and the Hereafter and Most Compassionate towards them both, bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, relieve my distress, and remove my grief" (*al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, p. 164; for additional examples of letter repetition, see *al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, pp. 35, 58, 87).

A close reading of this literary passage reveals Imam al-Sajjād's deliberate repetition of the letter *mīm*. This letter combines both politeness and softness and connotes both contraction and expansion (*Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Ḥurūf al-ʿArabiyyah wa-Maʿānīhā*, Ḥasan ʿAbbās, p. 72). The repetition of *mīm* here is in harmony with the text's meaning, reflecting the emotional state of supplication that oscillates between constriction and relief—*al-hamm* (distress), *al-ghamm* (grief), *hammī* (my distress), *ghammī* (my grief)—in contrast with *fārij* (reliever), *kāshif* (remover), *afrīj* (relieve), and *akshif* (remove).

Through this, Imam al-Sajjād demonstrates his mastery in using this technique to embody the interplay between personal hardship and divine mercy. This constitutes *intentional phonetic interaction*, affirming the speaker's purposeful design to draw attention and intensify meaning.

Moreover, reflection on this passage reveals that the Imam also employs other rhetorical devices, such as the *vocative particle* (*yā fārij*), the use of the *active participle* (*fārij, kāshif*), and the direct imperative (*afrīj, akshif*). Together with repetition, these elements reinforce the emotional impact of the words upon the listener. The Imam's use of such devices, alongside repetition, clearly stems from his deliberate communicative strategy to influence the audience—his primary objective in this discourse.

Word Repetition

Given the central role of the word within the general context of the sentence, its repetition amplifies its importance. Repetition also carries significant musical value, as it enhances the ability of words to convey the intended meaning from speaker to audience.

A survey of Imam al-Sajjād's literary works reveals an abundance of this type of repetition, producing a melodious harmony that complements the intended discourse and leaves a profound impact upon the listener. An example of this is found in his words:

"And You are the Doer of whatever You will; You punish whomever You will as You will, however You will; and You show mercy to whomever You will as You will, however You will" (*Biḥār al-Anwār*, al-ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, vol. 98, p. 85).

Here, the repeated word *tashāʾ* ("You will") appears seven times, each instance carrying a distinct semantic nuance. This form of repetition generates both phonetic and semantic gradation, resembling a *ḥijāzī scale* that progresses through the themes of divine power, justice, mercy, and the comprehensiveness of God's will. This progression creates in the listener's mind a powerful rhythm—alternating between severity and awe, and between softness and reassurance.

Careful analysis reveals that Imam al-Sajjād assigns word repetition a rhetorical and communicative function, producing intentional phonetic interaction in his discourse. In doing so, repetition becomes a persuasive tool that resonates with both the auditory and emotional faculties of the audience, whether they are listeners or readers.

It is noteworthy that this form of repetition does not occur arbitrarily or in ordinary contexts but appears in carefully chosen passages designed to harmonise with the overarching event or theme for which the text was composed. Such passages exhibit rhythmic intonation consistent with the diction and lexical choices. This is apparent in his words:

"O Forbearing, O Generous, O Living, O Sustainer, O Forgiver of sins, O Accepter of repentance, O Great in beneficence, O Described with kindness, where is Your beautiful concealment? Where is Your near relief? Where

is Your swift aid? Where is Your vast mercy? Where are Your noble gifts? Where are Your gracious bestowals? Where are Your sublime acts? Where is Your great bounty? Where is Your immense favour? Where is Your ancient kindness? Where is Your generosity, O Generous? By You, and by Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad— peace be upon them—deliver me; and by him, and by them, and by Your mercy—save me" (*al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, p. 76).

This passage constitutes a complete example of Imam al-Sajjād's strategic use of repetition to fulfil diverse communicative aims, addressing the audience at both intellectual and emotional levels. The repetition of the vocative particle *yā* serves not merely as verbal emphasis, but as an expression of heartfelt urgency, born from the supplicant's intense need for God. The text also contains another form of repetition—the interrogative particle *ayna* ("where"), which conveys emotional insistence and mirrors the states of anxiety, distress, and longing for relief.

Although the speaker is fully aware of God's attributes and capabilities, his questioning here manifests the tension and earnestness of the petitioner, seeking the outpouring of divine mercy. This deliberate design is aimed at evoking feelings of need and hope, persuading the audience of the gravity of the situation and the sincerity of the speaker's emotional engagement.

This successive repetition of vocatives and interrogatives captures attention, prevents monotony or inattention, and directs the recipient's mind toward each of the divine attributes mentioned. It becomes evident in this text that Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) demonstrated remarkable precision in distributing repetition—carefully selected to achieve harmony between the text and the accompanying sounds, which aligned with the semantic implications of various words and letters. This interplay generated a recurring auditory rhythm that stirred the listener's emotions, delighted the ear, and firmly embedded the intended meaning in the mind. Such repetition also fostered immediate psychological engagement, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the discourse in addition to the faith-based message the Imam sought to convey and to which his audience responded.

An examination of this and similar instances of repetition in the Imam's texts reveals that it is not merely a superficial reiteration. Rather, it carries an aesthetic dimension alongside intentional and semantic aims directed toward the recipient. This is equally evident in his words: *"O Allah, guard me with Your protection, preserve me with Your preservation, shelter me with Your shelter, and grant me pilgrimage to Your Sacred House in our year and in every year"* (Bihār al-Anwār, al-Majlisī, vol. 98, p. 84).

In this supplication, Imam al-Sajjad employs repetition as a refined artistic technique that merges the beauty of rhythmic sound with the depth of intentional meaning. The density of the text emerges through the repeated pairing of verbs with their verbal nouns in a sequential and uniform rhythm, reinforcing and fixing the meaning. As is his custom, the Imam appeals to human emotion and manifests his reliance upon God, rendering the supplication an expression of complete trust and submission.

Additionally, the repetition of the word ʿām (year) in his phrase *"in our year and in every year"* denotes temporal expansion and continuity, seeking the encompassing mercy of God across all times rather than within a fixed temporal frame. This lends the text both rhythmic and emotional resonance, fully in harmony with the supplication's purpose.

Thus, the Imam utilizes repetition as a communicative device designed for intentional auditory interaction, aiming to produce an emotional and spiritual effect that persuades the listener and embeds the meanings within their inner consciousness. This is achieved through an intense emotional flow, enriched with rhythm and harmonious sound, thereby reinforcing faith-based concepts in a devotional-argumentative style that draws the listener into active engagement with the supplication throughout all temporal dimensions—past and present.

Sentence Repetition

Sentence or phrase repetition is among the most significant forms of reiteration, as it mirrors the content of the repeated statement and adds tonal balance, imparting aesthetic quality to the text. It is also one of the most prominent features ensuring the coherence and harmony of a composition, suggesting a cyclical movement wherein the words recur without the meaning becoming redundant (Bihār al-Anwār, al-Majlisī, vol. 98, p. 86).

A close reading of Imam al-Sajjad's supplications—the subject of this study—reveals his deliberate and frequent use of sentence repetition to evoke emotional and spiritual impact in which audience engagement becomes an integral element. One instance is his saying:

"O Lord, send blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, the chosen, the selected, the honoured, the brought-near—Your best blessings. Bless him with Your most complete blessings, have mercy upon him with Your most enduring mercy. O Lord, send blessings upon Muhammad and his family—blessings of purity, for which there is none purer; blessings of growth, for which there is none greater; blessings of satisfaction, for which there is none above them. O Lord, send blessings upon Muhammad and his family—blessings that please him and increase his pleasure; blessings that please You and increase Your pleasure with him; blessings for which You are not pleased for him except by them, and for which You see none else worthy. O Lord, send blessings upon Muhammad and his family—blessings that surpass Your good pleasure, that are bound with Your eternity, and that never cease, just as Your words never cease. O Lord, send blessings upon Muhammad and his family— blessings that encompass the prayers of Your angels, Your prophets, Your messengers, and Your obedient servants;

that include the prayers of Your human and jinn worshippers and those who respond to You; and that gather the prayers of all whom You have created and brought forth from the kinds of Your creation…" (Stylistics and Discourse Analysis, Munḏir ʿIyāshī, p. 84).

A reflective reader finds that the Imam employs repetition as an aesthetic instrument, repeating the devotional phrase *"O Lord, send blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad"* eight times. This clearly carries both semantic and rhythmic significance: semantically, the repetition underscores the continuous emphasis on the centrality of the Prophet and his family, reinforcing love and faith in the heart of the supplicant and audience, and cementing the pivotal role of the Muhammadan message in their consciousness. On the rhythmic level, the repetition produces a harmonious resonance that deeply moves the listener, reflecting an intrinsic unity between signifier and signified, where sound converges with the devotional sentiment of supplication and intercession.

Thus, Imam al-Sajjad successfully realises his aims through this carefully constructed interplay of sound and meaning. In his discourse, repetition is not mere verbal duplication; it is an intentional communicative strategy. Beyond its musical quality, it creates a composed and measured rhythm that serves the recipient, fulfilling multiple functions: arousing emotional sensitivity, intensifying engagement, and firmly anchoring the intended meaning in the mind.

If we return to the definition of repetition as a focus on a "sensitive point in the phrase that reveals the speaker's particular concern with it" (Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, pp. 138–140), we find this principle vividly present in Imam al-Sajjad's use of repetition to highlight the importance of the reiterated expression and its implications—aiming thereby to convey his intent to the recipient. One example is his saying:

"To You belongs the praise a praise enduring with Your eternity; to You belongs the praise a praise everlasting through Your blessing; to You belongs the praise—a praise commensurate with Your acts; to You belongs the praise—a praise that surpasses Your good pleasure; to You belongs the praise—a praise joined with the praise of every praiser; and thanks which every thanker falls short of rendering." (Contemporary Poetic Issues, Nāzik al-Malāʾika, p. 242).

A reader of this Sajjādian text observes that the Imam employs repetition here with refined artistry and complete mastery, displaying precision in selecting and distributing the repeated phrases in an internally musical arrangement that lends the text a pleasing rhythmic resonance that captivates hearts and enchants ears. This is evident in his repetition of the phrase *"To You belongs the praise—a praise"* five times in a meticulously measured rhythmic pattern, enhancing the auditory and interactive impact on the recipient. Furthermore, the Imam's linguistic mastery is apparent in his ability to vary the semantic scope and content of this phrase in each occurrence, thereby reinforcing the significance of praise, revealing the depth of faith within the audience, and generating an ascending emotional effect.

Moreover, the phrase *"and thanks which every thanker falls short of rendering"* adds a musical and aesthetic dimension that soothes the soul, while also carrying a semantic implication that suggests the speaker's ongoing attitude of praise, glorification, and gratitude toward God. This expression of thanks further contributes to the continuity of the auditory presence within the text. Accordingly, the recipient of this literary discourse perceives that its construction is marked by a profound persuasive intent.

The use of repetition in the speech of Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) was not confined to these examples alone; rather, it appears in numerous other texts which, to avoid undue length, cannot all be cited here (Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, p. 138).

Second: Paronomasia (Jinās)

Paronomasia constitutes one of the key devices through which the musical resonance of a word is realised. Consequently, speakers and authors—of any form of discourse—are often keen, even insistent on employing it in literary texts, owing to the musical richness it imparts, as well as its capacity to capture the recipient's attention and stimulate their sensory and emotional engagement (cf. Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, pp. 40, 136, 137).

Paronomasia occurs between two words when "the two expressions are harmonious in sound and when the relationship between their meanings is favourably received by the intellect, without the link between them being far-fetched" (*Asrār al-Balāgha*, al-Jurjānī, p. 116).

This rhetorical device appears in the speech of Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) for the musical and internal harmony it generates, which leaves a profound impact on his audience. His speech contains various forms of paronomasia, among them *complete paronomasia* (al-jinās al-tām), which is one of its most precise types, occurring between two identical words that agree "in the kinds, numbers, forms, and sequence of letters" (*Al-Talkhīṣ fī ʿUlūm al-Balāgha*, al-Qazwīnī, p. 388).

An example is his saying: *"He made you the key to a newly occurring month for a newly occurring matter."* In this literary text, the Imam employs complete paronomasia with the deliberate aim of influencing the listener through rhythm and meaning. In the first instance, the word *ḥādith* denotes something new, whereas in the second, it refers to an event taking place. The use of paronomasia here lends the text an additional phonetic layer, enhancing its internal rhythm through harmonious sound that prepares the listener to receive the meaning with eagerness and emotional readiness.

From this, it is clear that the Imam (peace be upon him) succeeded in realizing his communicative purpose through two interconnected levels: the semantic, and the phonetic—linking depth of meaning with auditory effect. This interplay grants the text rhetorical force that captures the listener's attention.

It is worth noting that, as our survey of Imam al-Sajjad's discourse reveals, complete paronomasia is relatively rare in his speech compared to other forms, which will be examined and exemplified later. This can be explained by the Imam's tendency to favour words with profound meaning and implication, avoiding the artificiality that sometimes arises from excessive verbal ornamentation. Overuse of complete paronomasia, despite its effective aesthetic presence, can distract the audience from the essence of the expression.

Another type of paronomasia used by Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) is *incomplete paronomasia* (al-jinās al-nāqiṣ), which occurs "when two words agree in letters and vowels but differ in the number of letters" (Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, p. 120). This variation results in a reduction in one of the two words, hence the term *incomplete*.

We find an example in his words: *"Complete for us the abundant blessings and avert from us the disliked afflictions"* (*Fann al-Jinās*, ʿAlī al-Jadandī, p. 95). The reader of this text recognises the Imam's skill and precision in selecting these phonetic forms for their musical resonance, which draws in both reader and listener. Here, the variation in paronomasia produces a beautifully balanced sound pattern between *al-niʿam* (blessings) and *al-niqam* (afflictions). Beyond the auditory elegance, there is a deliberate semantic progression—from requesting the perfection and increase of blessings to seeking the removal and prevention of afflictions—reflecting intentional coordination between word and meaning to achieve the desired effect upon the recipient.

Thus, in this text, the Imam combines semantic force with phonetic symmetry, resulting in a rhetorical structure that captivates the audience and elicits their response.

Among the manifestations of this type of *jinās* (paronomasia) is what Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) expressed in his words: *"O He whose lights of sanctity are delightful to the eyes of His lovers, and whose dazzling radiance is pleasing to the hearts of His knowers"* (al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, p. 191).

A careful reader of the Imam's literary texts will perceive in them a concentrated aesthetic creativity—hardly surprising, given that the author of these discourses was a jurist, scholar, and eloquent rhetorician. We observe that he (peace be upon him) frequently employs multiple stylistic devices within a single text without compromising its intended meaning. In fact, he imparts additional beauty and elegance to his compositions.

In this instance, we find the presence of incomplete *jinās* between the words *rā'iqah* ("delightful") and *shā'iqah* ("pleasing"), alongside *majāz ʿaqlī* (logical metaphor) and spiritual imagery. This combination produces a rhythm that captivates the audience, stimulates reflection, and evokes longing to know God. Here, the Imam's intentionality becomes apparent in distinguishing between the lover (*muḥibb*) and the knower (*ʿārif*) and in conveying their shared perception of divine beauty. This, in turn, reinforces the devotional and aesthetic purpose of the text, allowing the audience to experience a contemplative and interactive engagement with both the speaker and the discourse.

This type of *jinās* in the Imam's speech (peace be upon him) is not confined to this example but appears in other instances as well (al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, p. 195).

The Imam's rhetorical intentionality is also evident in his use of another variety, known as *jinās al-muḍāraʿa* (approximate paronomasia), which occurs when two words correspond in their letters and share points of articulation (e.g., al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya, pp. 78, 92, 159, 194, 198, 200, 201, 202).

An example appears in his words: *"O He whose treasuries are not exhausted by requests, and whose wisdom is not altered by means"* (al-Rawḍ al-Murīʿ fī Ṣināʿat al-Badīʿ, Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī al-ʿAdadī, pp. 164–165). Here, Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) employs *jinās al-muḍāraʿa* to create phonetic harmony between the terms *masā'il* ("requests") and *wasā'il* ("means"), differing only in the letters *mīm* and *wāw*. These two letters are phonetically proximate; both are articulated at the lips. This sound correspondence produces a rhythmic musicality that pleases the listener's ear.

On the semantic level, the *jinās* conveys that God's bounty is inexhaustible regardless of how many ask, and that the means of His wisdom cannot be altered, for they originate from divine knowledge. Thus, despite the brevity of the utterance, it carries profound meaning, semantic coherence, and sonic rhythm, fostering audience engagement, heightening auditory appreciation, and amplifying emotional resonance.

It is noteworthy that Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) did not rely on a single type of *jinās* to fulfil the communicative purpose of his speech; rather, he drew on multiple forms to generate intentional interaction through the sound effects produced by these paronomastic devices. Among these is *jinās ishtiqāqī* (derivational paronomasia), in which the correspondence arises not from identical wording but from shared lexical roots. That is, both words derive from the same root while differing in morphological structure (Aḥmad Zarqa, *Asrār al-Ḥurūf*, p. 86; Māhir Mahdī Hilāl, *Jaras al-Alfāẓ wa-Dalālatuhā fī al-Baḥth al-Balāghī wa-al-Naqdī*, p. 255).

One example appears in his words: *"My God, I praise You, and You are worthy of praise"* (al-Rawḍ al-Murīʿ fī Ṣināʿat al-Badīʿ, p. 167). The Imam (peace be upon him) skilfully crafts this statement as a model of intentional aesthetic expression, employing the terms *aḥmaduka* ("I praise You") and *al-ḥamd* ("praise"), both derived from the root *ḥ-m-d*. This derivational link generates a sonic resonance with varied metrical patterns, directing the audience's attention toward the concept and significance of praise as concentrated in the discourse.

This example illustrates the Imam's ability to combine brevity, semantic strength, and purposeful communication, thereby producing a complete literary composition capable of exerting a direct influence on the listener's emotions and encouraging engagement with its meaning on devotional, aesthetic, and intellectual levels.

Another example of *jinās ishtiqāqī* in his speech (peace be upon him) is found in his words:

"O Allah, I ask Your forgiveness for every vow I have vowed, every promise I have made, and every covenant I have pledged, yet failed to fulfil." (*Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, p. 159)

An attentive reading of this supplication from *Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya* reveals the profound rhetorical and phonetic depth embodied by Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) in his employment of aesthetic devices to serve the intended function—repentance, confession, and supplication. The text combines both the verbal noun and its corresponding verb, thereby producing *jinas ishtiqāqī* (derivational paronomasia), which imparts a consistent rhythmic cadence characterised by lexical parallelism: *nadhartu nadharan* (a vow I vowed), *waʿadtu waʿdan* (a promise I promised), *ʿāhadtu ʿahdan* (a covenant I covenanted). This structure intensifies the sense of guilt, particularly after the explicit acknowledgement of failing to fulfil these commitments. Here, the Imam's intentionality is manifest through his evocation of feelings of shortcoming and the desire for divine forgiveness.

In this text, we also observe the interplay between phonetic units and the syntactic structure, creating a distribution that harmonises with the context. This synthesis deepens the psychological impact and lends the supplication a contemplative and reverent tone.

3. Rhyme (*Sajʿ*)

Sajʿ is regarded as one of the most prominent rhetorical devices that enhance the aesthetic dimension of discourse. Beyond its ornamental role, it constitutes a major phonetic technique due to its pleasing tonal quality. It is defined as "the balanced arrangement of speech segments" (*Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, p. 175). *Sajʿ* relies directly on terminal sound patterns at the ends of sentences (*Al-Mathal al-Sāʾir fī Adab al-Kātib wa-l-Shāʾir*, Ibn al-Athīr, p. 193), thereby producing a distinctive rhythm that yields a musical pleasure for the listener.

The Arabs of antiquity recognised *sajʿ* and frequently employed it in their prose, considering it an art form, especially in prayers and supplications, because of its capacity to move the hearts of the devout. Its frequent appearance in the Qur'an owes to its resonant sound, which addresses the human conscience (*Jadaliyyat al-Afrād wa-l-Tarkīb fī al-Naqd al-ʿArabī al-Qadīm*, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, p. 147).

When examining the speech of Imam al-Sajjād—the subject of this study—we find that his style mirrors that of the Qur'an, extending beyond linguistic and rhetorical aspects to encompass intellectual, cultural, and doctrinal dimensions. His mastery of *sajʿ* is not merely an aesthetic choice; rather, it serves to engage the listener's emotions and foster spiritual receptivity.

An illustrative example appears in his words:

"In You I seek refuge, O Possessor of pardon and satisfaction, from injustice and aggression, from the changes of time, the recurrence of sorrows, the sudden blows of fate, and from the end of life before preparation and provision." (*Al-Nathr al-Fannī fī al-Qarn al-Rābiʿ ʿAshar*, Zakī Mubārak, vol. 1, p. 66)

In this passage, Imam al-Sajjād employs *parallel sajʿ*, the most common form in his supplications, in which the terminal words agree in both meter and rhyme (*Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, p. 174). The recurring terminal sounds (*al-riḍwān / al-ʿudwān / al-zamān / al-aḥzān / al-ḥadathān*) create a unified rhythmic structure. The resultant musical resonance enhances the text's aesthetic appeal, imparting a natural chant-like quality that deeply moves the listener.

Furthermore, the Imam does not use *sajʿ* solely for ornamental beauty or verbal embellishment; rather, he employs it to intensify the tone of urgent supplication, expressing total and absolute dependence upon God. Each successive phrase builds upon the preceding one, layering anxiety, fear, and entreaty, thereby generating a dynamic relationship between speaker and audience. Consequently, the *sajʿ* structure fulfils both its aesthetic and intentional expressive functions, achieving a powerful textual rhythm that produces profound emotional engagement.

Despite its deliberate construction, the Imam's use of rhythm remains spontaneous and unforced, flowing naturally to the heart before reaching the intellect.

This stylistic quality is further exemplified in one of his admonitions:
"Indeed, God did not create you in vain, nor did He leave you without purpose. He has made Himself known to you, sent His Messenger to you, and revealed His Book to you, containing His lawful and unlawful, His proofs and parables." (*Al-Īḍāḥ fī ʿUlūm al-Balāgha*, al-Qazwīnī, p. 296)

A close reading of this and other passages reveals that Imam al-Sajjād integrates semantic and phonetic beauty, crafting sentences and structures in harmony with their context. In this instance, he employs *terminal sajʿ* (*sajʿ muṭarraf*), where phrases end with the same letter but differ in meter (*Biḥār al-Anwār*, al-ʿAllāma al-Majlisī, vol. 78, p. 131): *nafsihi wa-rasūlihi, ḥalālihi wa-ḥarāmihi, ḥujajihi wa-amthālihi*. The variation in rhythmic weights enriches the auditory texture, holding the listener's attention and guiding them toward the intended meanings.

Here, the Imam conveys a profound doctrinal and moral message—that humanity was created with a purpose, not in vain—prompting reflection on the meaning of existence and the necessity of adherence to divine law, prophethood, and scripture. His use of *sajʿ* thus serves to reinforce his message and intensify meaning through

linguistic and rhetorical beauty. The rhythmic endings, with their musical resonance, amplify the effect, deepening and solidifying the bond between speaker and audience.

Moreover, Imam al-Sajjād at times employs *beaded sajʿ* (*sajʿ murassaʿ*), where the corresponding phrases match in both meter and rhyme (*Al-Īḍāḥ fī ʿUlūm al-Balāgha*, al-Qazwīnī, p. 296). For instance: "Grant that the soundness of our hearts be in remembering Your greatness, and the freedom of our bodies be in thanking Your blessing." (*Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, p. 40)

Here, the Imam's rhetorical precision aims to influence the listener through phonetic parallelism. The symmetrical structure of the clauses (*salāmat qulūbinā fī dhikr ʿaẓamatika / farāgh abdāninā fī shukr niʿmatika*) produces a musical harmony that reflects the formal beauty of the discourse while reinforcing its semantic depth. The effect is to instil in the audience a consciousness of worship, purification of the heart, and dedication of all faculties to the service and obedience of God.

From this, we discern that Imam al-Sajjād, through his rhetorical mastery and refined style, and by employing sound patterns imbued with musical intonation, succeeds in conveying and firmly implanting his devotional message in the hearts and minds of his audience.

In other literary passages, we find Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) touching the hearts of his listeners on numerous occasions through melodious chimes and graceful tonal modulations, in a style that blends grandeur with sweetness. An example of this appears in his words: **"And You have enjoined therein the fast and encouraged therein the night prayer."** (*Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, p. 128).

A careful reading of this Sajjādian text reveals that it represents a refined artistic model of *sajʿ muṣarraʿ* (rhymed and metrical prose) in his discourse. The segmentation of the clauses plays a significant role here, bringing the passage closer to poetic structure without altering its prose nature. This harmony and correspondence generate a melodious rhythm that deepens its impact on the soul and enhances its intentional persuasive effect.

From a semantic perspective, it is evident that the Imam sought to convey his message by highlighting two pillars of worship in the month of Ramadan—prayer and fasting. He thus employed phonetic rhythm to serve his communicative purpose in delivering this devotional and instructive lesson. This use of *sajʿ* was not merely for aesthetic ornamentation but functioned as an effective communicative tool that contributed to conveying the intended meaning to the recipient's mind and heart.

The Imam's use of *sajʿ* was not limited to these examples alone; rather, he employed it in many other passages, too numerous to mention here so as to avoid unnecessary length (*Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, p. 191).

CONCLUSION

From all the foregoing, we conclude that Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) succeeded in reaching his audience through literary texts replete with diverse phonetic techniques, forming a coherent rhetorical fabric rich in artistic and affective significance. These techniques, imbued with beauty and rhythm, stimulated the listener's emotions and drew them toward spiritual receptivity.

The Imam's employment of these phonetic phenomena was not limited to adorning the text but was intentionally used as purposeful communicative means aimed at persuasion and influencing the audience—whether listeners or readers—eliciting psychological and spiritual response.

We also observe that Imam al-Sajjād's use of these techniques—such as repetition, paronomasia (*jinās*), and *sajʿ*, among others not enumerated here—was a deliberate act of rhetorical awareness. He succeeded in harnessing them with deep eloquence, achieving a union of beauty and impact.

It thus becomes clear that the interplay between the phonetic and semantic levels plays a substantial and direct role in realizing the intended communicative strategy and in manifesting the loci of beauty within it, in addition to the lofty values and noble principles embodied in his discourse.

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