



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**METADISCOURSE FEATURES IN CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC FRIDAY  
SERMONS IN ENGLISH**

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**FBMK 2019 48**



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FRIDAY SERMONS IN ENGLISH**

By

**ISRAA ISMAEEL MAHMOOD**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra  
Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts**

**July 2019**

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## DEDICATION

To My Beloved Parents, Brothers & Sisters  
To My Beloved Husband, My Sons & My Daughter



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in  
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts

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**July 2019**

**Chairman : Zalina Mohd Kasim, PhD**

**Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication**

In the Islamic society and even in the society at large, Friday sermon is an effective vehicle of shaping people behaviours and influencing their religious orientation. It is one of the strongest Islamic obligations which is hold weekly to disseminate and persuade people of certain ideology through preaching and teaching approaches. In Friday sermons, as a rhetorical religious genre, religious orators permanently try to convince the audience using different strategies and language devices such as metadiscourse. Metadiscourse is a rhetorical strategy used to obtain persuasive and communicative purposes as it helps writers (speakers) to engage their audience and guide their understanding of a text. To this end, the current study aimed at examining the status of the rhetorical devises of metadiscourse in the three themes (belief, practice, and spiritual) of Islamic Friday sermon delivered in English language. Put it in another way, to understand the engagement between the religious orators and the congregation in the language of the Friday sermon, this study intended to (i) inspect the types of metadiscourse markers and the extent to which metadiscourse markers are deployed in the Islamic Friday sermons; (ii) identify the functions of metadiscoures markers in the discourse of Friday sermons; and (iii) find out the distinction in the use of metadiscourse markers among the three themes of the selected sermons.

To achieve the aims of this study, Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse was adapted and the concordance MonoConc Pro 2.2 was used to analyse metadiscourse devices that were deployed by thirty orators in thirty English Friday sermons (10 per theme) selected purposively from different resources, such as *khutbahbank.org*, *MuslimMatters.org*, and the sermons delivered by the instructors of *Almaghrib institute*. The findings suggested that metadiscourse is prolific in the Islamic Friday sermons discourse and the orators relied on interactional markers more than interactive markers. Engagement markers were the most frequently used metadiscourse marker. In terms of the interactional category, transitions were the most commonly used marker. Endophoric marker was the least frequent deployment by the orators. In terms of metadiscourse functions, the persuasive and communicative aspects of metadiscourse effectively supported the sermonic discourse purposes. According to the findings, the dominant presence of metadiscourse is in the sermons of practice/action theme. This shows the vital role of metadiscourse features in the sermons of teaching nature.

A broader implication of this study is that it adds to the small number of linguistic investigations that have applied the model of metadiscourse to non-academic discourse. There are indications that the significant role of metadiscourse is not confined to academic and written discourses only and metadiscourse in non-academic and spoken discourse could help realise its potential as a systematic means of gaining insight into participant interaction. Such exhibition of metadiscourse markers in a new type of context Islamic Friday sermons will contribute to illustrate the potential of metadiscourse in non-academic spoken discourse. It is expected to give insights on how metadiscourse markers can be effectively used to construct a persuasive context whether in religious discourse or other discourses. Pedagogically, the findings of this study are expected to raise the awareness of the important use of metadiscourse in non-academic and spoken discourse among applied linguists and language teachers, as well as for teachers and researchers in theological schools for several courses such as public speaking.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sastera

**CIRI-CIRI WACANA META DALAM KHUTBAH JUMAAT ISLAMIK  
DALAM BAHASA INGGERIS KONTEMPORARI**

Oleh

**ISRAA ISMAEEL MAHMOOD**

**Julai 2019**

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Dalam masyarakat Islam dan bahkan dalam masyarakat umum, khutbah Jumaat adalah peranti yang berkesan untuk membentuk tingkah laku orang dan mempengaruhi orientasi keagamaan orang ramai. Ini adalah salah satu obligasi yang besar dalam Islam yang diadakan setiap minggu untuk menyebarkan dan meyakinkan orang ramai tentang ideologi tertentu melalui pendekatan dakwah dan pengajaran. Dalam khutbah Jumaat, sebagai genre retorik agama, pendakwah agama secara terus-menerus cuba meyakinkan penonton menggunakan strategi dan peranti bahasa yang berbeza seperti wacana meta. Wacana meta adalah strategi retorik yang digunakan untuk meningkatkan tahap persuasif dan tahap komunikasi kerana ia membantu penulis (pendakwah) untuk melibatkan penonton mereka dan membimbing pemahaman mereka tentang teks. Untuk tujuan ini, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji status peranti retorik wacana meta dalam tiga tema (kepercayaan, amalan, dan rohani) khutbah Jumaat Islam yang disampaikan dalam Bahasa Inggeris. Dalam kata lain, untuk memahami hubungan antara pendakwah agama dan jemaah dalam bahasa khutbah Jumaat, kajian ini bertujuan untuk (i) memeriksa jenis penanda wacana meta dan sejauh mana penanda wacana meta digunakan dalam Khutbah Jumaat Islam; (ii) mengenal pasti fungsi penanda wacana meta dalam wacana khutbah Jumaat; dan (iii) mengetahui

perbezaan dalam penggunaan penanda wacana meta antara tiga tema khutbah yang terpilih.

Untuk mencapai matlamat kajian ini, model hubungan interpersonal wacana meta Hyland (2005) telah diadaptasi dan MonoConc Pro 2.2 penyesuaian digunakan untuk menganalisis peranti wacana meta yang digunakan oleh tiga puluh pemedato dalam tiga puluh khutbah Bahasa Inggeris Jumaat (10 untuk setiap tema) dipilih secara purposif dari sumber berbeza seperti khutbahbank.org, MuslimMatters.org, dan khutbah yang disampaikan oleh pengajar-pengajar di institut Almaghrib. Penemuan ini menunjukkan bahawa wacana meta adalah prolifik dalam wacana khutbah Jumaat Islam dan pemedato bergantung pada penanda interaksional lebih daripada penanda interaktif. Penanda ikatan adalah penanda yang tertinggi yang digunakan antara semua penanda wacana meta dan juga antara kategori interaksi.

Implikasi yang lebih luas dari kajian ini adalah bahawa ia menambah kepada sebilangan kecil kajian linguistik yang telah mengaplikasikan model metadiscourse untuk wacana bukan akademik. Terdapat tanda-tanda bahawa peranan penting metadiscourse tidak terhad kepada akademik dan ditulis discourses dan metdiscourse dalam wacana bukan akademik dan pertuturan dapat membantu merealisasikan potensinya sebagai satu cara yang sistematik untuk mendapat wawasan peserta interaksi. Di sebalik itu, peralihan adalah peranti yang paling biasa digunakan antara kategori-kategori peranti interaktif. Penanda endofora digunakan paling kerap oleh pemedato. Dari segi fungsi wacana meta, aspek persuasif dan komunikatif wacana meta berkesan menyokong tujuan ceramah khutbah. Menurut penemuan, kehadiran wacana meta dominan adalah dalam tema-tema amalan / tindakan khutbah. Ini menunjukkan peranan penting ciri wacana meta dalam khutbah berbentuk pengajaran. Kemunculan wacana meta dalam konteks jenis baru khutbah Jumaat akan menyumbang untuk menggambarkan potensi wacana meta dalam wacana yang bukan akademik. Ia dijangka memberi gambaran mengenai bagaimana penanda wacana meta dapat digunakan dengan berkesan untuk membina konteks persuasif sama ada dalam wacana agama atau wacana lain. Secara pedagogi, dapatan kajian ini dijangka dapat meningkatkan kesedaran penggunaan metadiscourse dalam pertuturan bukan akademik dan wacana antara bahan yang ahli bahasa gunaan dan guru bahasa gunaan, serta untuk guru-guru dan penyelidik- penyelidik di sekolah-sekolah teologi untuk kursus-kursus seperti pengucapan awam.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful**

Praise to be Allah who gave me strength, inspiration and prudence to bring this thesis to a close. Peace be upon his messenger Muhammad and his honourable family.

First and foremost, I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my supervisor, Zalina Mohd Kasim for the continuous help and encouragement, for her patience, motivation and huge knowledge, for her guidance throughout my research over the years. My huge thanks also go to my co-supervisor; Dr. Afida binti Mohamad Ali for all of her helps during this process.

My deepest thanks are extended to my sisters-in-law; Dr. Dunia Abdulkalek and Dr. Zeena Abdulkalek for their precious guidance and assistance they have given me. Special thanks and warmest gratitude are to my lovely parents, my brothers, my sisters, my sons and my daughter. I deeply appreciate my husband whose sincere support has inspired me and encouraged me throughout my study.

Finally, my sincere thanks go to all English Language Department staffs for their kindness and School of Graduate Studies at UPM for their support during my study.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MD	Metadiscourse
MDMs	Metadiscourse Markers
IFS	Islamic Friday Sermon
EIFS	English Islamic Friday Sermon
ptw	Per thousand words
Freq.	Frequency



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with presenting background information on the study. Then the notion of metadiscourse, Friday sermon, genre, and sermon as a genre are presented which form the initial conceptual framework of this study. After that, the statement of the problem, the objectives, the questions, the significance, and the limitations of the current study are presented respectively. Finally, the chapter ends with the list of the definitions of the key terms used in this study.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Friday sermon as an Islamic religious discourse is a formal public speech given by the preacher (*the khateeb*) during the mandatory act of worship held on Fridays at noon. Preaching is the principal purpose of the Friday sermon and the secondary purpose is teaching (Khader, 2017). It is also described as a useful means that can serve various communicative purposes such as “sociopolitical praxis, a public platform for a leader to give weekly statement, an occasion for religious people to listen to some words of wisdom, admonition and remembrance, occasion for propaganda, or familiar advice” (Tayob, 1999, p. 1). Moreover, Friday sermon has a significant role in calming down disturbances, averts division, restored calmness and diverted wars which people are willing to wage, as well as, it serves as an effective medium for educating people in a wide area of Islamic teaching (Abu Alyan, 2016, p. 327). Generally, it is delivered to mend social reality in the Muslims community in particular and in the larger society in general.

Although the service of Friday sermon is conducted in classical Arabic, typically the Islamic sermon is delivered in the language of the audience. This means, the communication is between the religious orator and people, not between people and God as it is in other types of religious discourse such as the five prayers. Therefore, the role of the religious language as a communicative tool is fundamental. Liddicoat (2014) affirms this view by noting that “Understanding the language is therefore central to the proper execution of any liturgical act as liturgical acts have an important propositional dimension” (p. 4).

In view of that, an effective communication can influence the minds of the listeners, particularly, the religious orientations. Onay (2004) supposes that there are three dimensions of the Islamic Friday sermons themes that affect the religious orientations of the audience: belief/thought, practice/attitude, and spiritual/emotion themes. He stated that the religious orientations of people can be observed and directed through the beliefs, attitudes and emotions that embedded in the sermon. Onay (2004) also asserted that discourse analysis has a crucial contribution to the construction of an effective message of Friday sermon, therefore, further studies should be conducted in this domain.

Discourse analysis, however, examines “the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used” (Paltridge, 2012, p. 2). This means, it considers the language in use, views the contribution of language to the communicative goals of people, examines the management of interaction between people and cultures, and reveals the beliefs and ideas beyond the language they use to communicate (Paltridge, 2012, p. 7). Johnstone (2002) stated that discourse analysis is concerned with the reflection of people’s understanding to the language and their responds in the world. In essence, discourse analysis suggests the way in which speakers draw their semantic purposes in a mass of information organised in a chain of sentences and the way in which hearers comprehend what they heard and the way in which they response according to their understanding (Aritz and Walker, 2010). Therefore, it can be said that discourse analysis can disclose the interpersonal aspects of language which is used to convey information.

With the growth of the discourse analysis, the meaning of interaction in written and spoken discourse becomes clearer especially when scholars recognise that language is used not only to convey information (propositional aspect), but is also used to organise the information as well as to engage the addressees to the discourse (non-propositional aspect). As pointed out by Hyland (2005) “a text has to talk to readers or hearers in ways that they find familiar and acceptable, which means that the process of comprehension and participation are not just a matter of informational clarity, but of the individual writer’s or speaker’s projection of a shared context” (p. 13-14). This interactional aspect (non-propositional aspect) of language is referred to as metadiscourse (MD). It is described by Hyland (2005) as a coherent set of elements and a rhetorical strategy used to obtain persuasion since it helps writers/speakers to engage their audience and guide their understanding of a text. He suggested that metadiscourse contributes to the persuasion appeals:

the rational appeals *logos* “the appeal to reason”; the credible appeals *ethos* “the personal appeal of one's character”; and the appeals *pathos* “the appeal to emotions” (Hyland, 2005, p. 64).

However, the concept of metadiscourse attracted the attention of many scholars in discourse analysis (Bunton, 1999; Crismore, 1989; Hyland, 1998, 2005; Vande-Kopple, 1985; Williams, 1981). Over the years, metadiscourse has been examined intensively in written discourse, particularly academic discourse. However, Mauranen (2010) has argued that its role is more significant in spoken discourse due to the great need for handling the spoken interaction in real time. In addition, Hyland (2017, p. 27) recently noted that the confining of metadiscourse boundaries, by concentrating mainly on academic written discourse, can reduce what makes it a powerful analytic device. Therefore, exploring metadiscourse in non-academic spoken discourse would exhibit its potential as systematic approach in people interaction.

Previous studies on Islamic Friday sermons tend to focus on the analysis of the generic structure of Friday sermon (Saddhono, 2010; Soepriatmadji, 2009), language variety and function (Hidayat, 1999), and thematic and content analysis (Albayrak, 2012; Errihani, 2011; Hashem, 2010; Onay, 2004; Samuri, Mohd Al Adib & Hopkins, 2017). Reviewing literature shows that to date no studies have been found which scrutinises the role of metadiscourse features in the genre of Friday sermon especially when interpersonal and persuasion appeals are fundamental when communicating with the audience. To understand the persuasive and communicative engagement between the religious orators and the congregation in English Islamic Friday sermons (EIFS, henceforth), this study intends to observe and examine the rhetorical features of metadiscourse.

## 1.2 Metadiscourse

The morphological structure of the term metadiscourse comprises of two units. The prefix meta originated from Greek means ‘beyond’, ‘behind’, ‘along with’, ‘among’ (Skeat, 1980). According to (Ädel, 2006, p. 213) the term meta is new in linguistics and it just appeared after 1920s. It's defined as “a level of language in which the signifiers of language become the signified” (Gombert, 1992, p. 1). While the broad term, discourse, has various meanings and definitions among which “integrates a whole palette of meanings” (Titscher et al., 1998). However, the term ‘metadiscourse’ was coined by Zellig Harris in

1959 to offer a way of understanding language in use, representing a writer's or speaker's attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text (Hyland, 2005, p. 3).

The term metadiscourse was used in text structure studies. Several definitions were proposed for the term metadiscourse by many authors among which are: "Writing about writing" (Williams, 1981, p. 212), "discourse about discourse" (Vande-Kopple, 1985, p. 83) and "discoursing about the discourse" (Crismore, 1984). According to Hyland (2005), metadiscourse refers to the linguistic devices used by the writer to organize a discourse or express his/her opinion about the content or the reader. In other words, metadiscourse is "the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meaning in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (2005, p. 37). Metadiscourse is divided by Hyland into two groups: Interactive and Interactional. Interactive is subdivided into transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and code-glosses, whereas interactional is subdivided into hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers and self-mentions (2005).

On the other hand, the persuasive function of metadiscourse in a text was sufficiently discussed and proven (see Hyland, 1998, 2005; Mauranen, 1993; Dafouz, 2003). Hyland (2005) has referred to the relationship between metadiscourse and persuasion by describing metadiscourse as a rhetorical strategy used to obtain persuasion because it allows speakers and writers to plan their thoughts and interests into a text and to improve their propositions considering possible readers' perceptions (Hyland, 2005, p. 63). According to Hyland (2005), "metadiscourse pursues persuasive objectives, since it helps writers to engage their audience, signal relationships, apprise readers of varying certainty and guide their understanding of a text". He (2005, p. 63) sees that metadiscourse contributes to the three persuasion appeals:

- (i) When metadiscourse connects thoughts and arguments, then it supports rational appeals (*logos*);
- (ii) When metadiscourse deals with speaker's capability, authority and proficiency, then it promotes credibility appeals (*ethos*);
- (iii) When it concerns with the characteristics of the audience or the audience's point of view then it relates to affective appeals (*pathos*).



Hyland has linked the notion of metadiscourse with genre's construction. He explains that metadiscourse is a linguistic feature of any context and it can help promote how the writers/speakers' purposes, expectations about their readers/listeners, and interactions they make with them can be expressed through language choices. Thus, the differences in the use of metadiscourse affect the variation in the genre types (internally or in relation to other genres) (2005, p. 88-89).

To sum up, metadiscourse is more than connecting the parts of text together. It is an effective factor associating a text to its context, considering the needs, perceptions, knowledge and circumstances of readers/listeners (Hyland, 2005, p. 41). Thus, metadiscourse represents part of the message that the speaker intends to convey in a coherent and persuasive way.

### 1.3 Friday Sermon

According to recent studies, Friday sermon or *khutbah al-jumu'ah* (in Arabic) is viewed as "a one-way communication through which the religion's authority tells the audiences what to think and what to believe; in the process, the preacher appropriately addresses particular audience in order to make them identify with the message, talking within a specific storyline in which a certain normative order is projected" (Mellor and Rinnawi, 2016). Another view sees Friday sermon as a means not only for spreading religious beliefs but it can act as a political tool. In this sense Jones (2012, p. 1) defines Friday sermon as "one of the principal media through which religious discourses were applied and played out in a concrete modern sociopolitical, rather than a cosmogonic context".

However, in Islamic religion, Friday sermon is described as a long prayer of praise. Worshiping Allah SWT and following the prophet is the heart of it. It is delivered during every Friday prayer in a mosque building from a pulpit which holds a special place across worldwide Muslim communities. It is an obligatory ritual conducted in the mosque where worshipers listen to a short sermon delivered by the religious orator (*the Imam*) of the mosque. The main purpose of Friday sermon is to disseminate the Islamic principles and usually the message of Friday sermon includes the idea of that Allah SWT saves the one who obey Him and stay away from evil things. In addition, Friday sermon seeks to educate Muslims on many social and moral issues (Khader, 2017).

Friday sermon typically comprises of two participants. The first participant is the congregation who represent the members of Muslim community. The congregation's role in the Friday sermon event is to listen carefully as they are forbidden to speak during the delivery of the sermon. The second participant is the orator (*khateeb*), the person who delivers the sermon. He should be well-informed of Islamic knowledge, eloquent, able to convey the message of sermon, and equipped himself with a communicative system to achieve the aims of his speech (Soepriatmadji, 2009). Orators usually deliver Friday sermon in the language of the community, meaning, it is preached in Arabic in Middle East, Indonesian in Indonesia, English in America, and so on.

### 1.3.1 Brief History of Friday Sermon

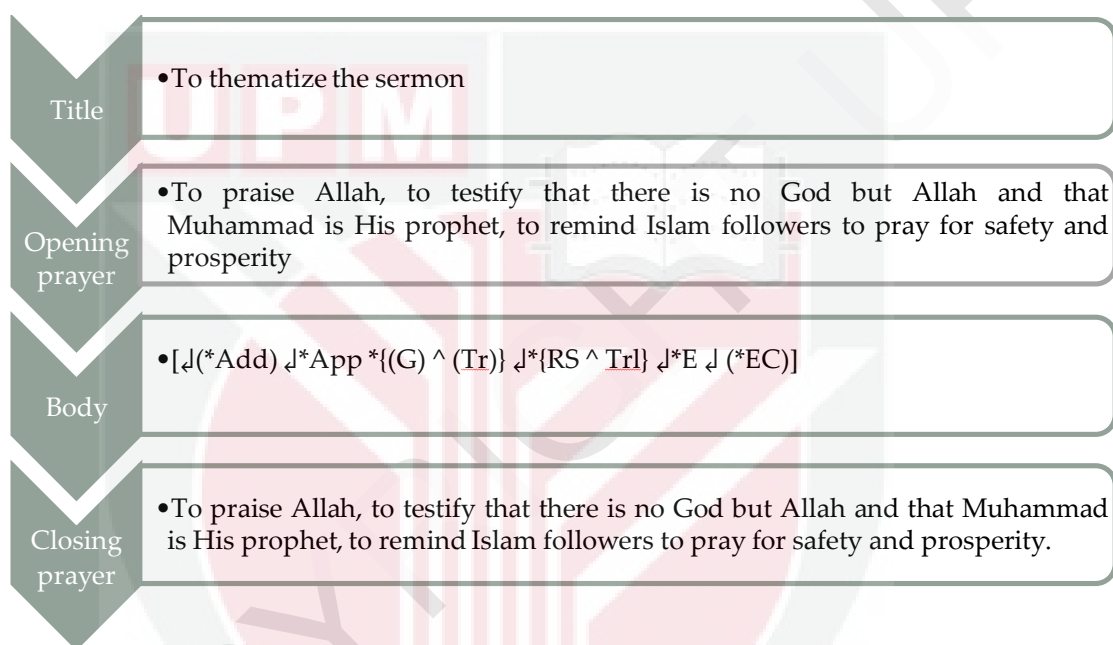
Long before Islam, the tradition of oral communication was indispensable in the Arabic society. Prophets used preaching (eloquent speech) as a rhetorical tool to call people and asked them to obey Allah SWT. Friday sermon holds a prominent position during the Prophet Muhammad's life. The prophet used to teach his companions the principles of Islam and its Sharia through the sermon, and gave them orders and prohibitions in his sermon when he came across them. One famous example is the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage sermon known as 'The Last Sermon'. He usually starts the sermon with the phrase '*amma ba'ad*' which means '*Now then*' followed by '*all praise to Allah*' then he says '*ashahada*', in which he witnesses upon the faith to Islam which is the first of the Islamic pillars, '*I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah*'.

Some researchers such as Gaffney (1994), described the status of the sermon during the prophet's life as being concerned with the ethnography of Islamic preaching when he stated that "sermons during the prophet's own lifetime represent a special case insofar as these occasions came to be included in the Sira or the authoritative biographical compilations. Similarly, accounts from the first few generations immediately following his death also contain abundant references to the contents of preaching" (p. 119). Over time, Caliphs in Islamic states used to ask officials to read sermons on their behalf in order to display the sovereignty of the caliph and the state (Albayrak, 2012). To date, Friday sermon still plays a vital role in uniting the community as it reflects the power of religion and politics in the same time.



### 1.3.2 The Structure of Friday Sermon

Friday sermon has a distinctive structure which involves two parts, namely the first sermon and the second sermon. Soepriatmadji's (2009) study of the sermon observes the actual structure of the sermon's texts. Based on Halliday and Hasan's (1989, p. 64) notion of Generic Structure Potential, the total range of obligatory and optional elements of the actual structure of the sermon genre was determined. The structure potential of the genre of sermon includes specific ordered elements as following:



**Figure 1.1 : The generic structure potential of Islamic Friday sermon** (Soepriatmadji, 2009)

The elements of optionality in sequence of a sermon were represented by a linear description  $[\downarrow(*\text{Add}) \downarrow * \text{App} * \{(G) \wedge (\text{Tr})\} \downarrow * \{\text{RS} \wedge \text{Trl}\} \downarrow * \text{E} \downarrow (*\text{EC})]$  and the following is a brief way of reading it:

- (i) Address (Add) (if there is any) it either comes before Appeal (App) or after it.
- (ii) Appeal followed by Gambit (G) (if there is any) followed by Transition (Tr) (if there is any).
- (iii) The curly brackets indicate that both Gambit (G) and Transition (Tr) are fixed in order. Similarly is for Relation to Scripture (RS) and Translation (Trl)

- (iv) Explanation (E) comes after or before RS ^ Trl and it may followed by Evaluative comment (EC) or not.
- (v) The brackets refer to optionality, the asterisk refers to unordered, and the square arrow refers to iteration.

An example of how the orator employs Friday sermon's elements in the discourse of Friday sermon is provided by (Abu Alyan, 2016). It starts with the orator presenting *the title* of his message. Then, he *opens* the first sermon by praising and glorifying Allah, sending prayer upon the prophet, reciting some verses of Quran reminding the congregation to fear Allah and to follow His orders and the tradition of the prophet. After that, the orator presents *the content* of the sermon which is supported with data, facts, quotation from the holy Quran and Hadith (a collection of the Prophet's sayings and deeds). Then he concludes the first sermon by summarizing the significant points of his message. It is followed by *closing* which consists of invocations and prayers. Then, the orator stops for a break of two to four minutes in which he reminds the audience to ask Allah for forgiveness and to repent for the sins that they might have committed. After that, he stands again and reviews the main points mentioned before and links them with the second sermon that might contain just some closing remarks. Finally, and before calling for the Friday prayer, the orator ends with appealing to Allah and the audience responds by saying Amen.

#### 1.4 The Notion of Genre

People use genre to facilitate discourse processing and to monitor communication (De Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981). Similarly, Martin (1985, p. 250) suggests that genres are equally social, proposing that:

"how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them . . . The term genre is used . . . to embrace each of the linguistically realized activities which comprise so much of our culture . . . [Genre] represents at an abstract level the verbal strategies used to accomplish social purposes of many kinds."

Swales (1990) explains that genres have typically particular vocabulary of their own which serve the notion of discourse community. In turn, a discourse community has some expertise in the domain to which genre belongs. The

notion is explained further and elaborated by Swales (1990) when he described genre as:

“a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constraints choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of genre... narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action.”

In 1993, Bhatia developed Swales' notion of genre. Bhatia draws the boundaries for the term 'genre' by determining its rule and conventions. Bhatia (1993, p. 13) defined genre as:

“Genre is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalized with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognized purpose(s)”

However, both Swales (1985) and Bhatia (1993) suggest that genres link socio-cultural and psycholinguistic features of text-construction and interpretation with linguistic perception. Later, Freedman and Medway (1994, p. 1) highlight the expansion of genre notion to cover rhetorical studies; they claim that genre is “a recognition of regularities in discourse types with a broader social and cultural understanding of language in use”. However, Halmari and Virtanen (2005, p. 11) simplify the notion of genre, defining it as “a class of communicative events with a common set of communicative goals shared by members of a given discourse community”.

## 1.5 Sermon as a Genre

According to the definition of genre proposed by Bhatia (1993) in the previous section, Friday sermon fulfils the characteristics of genre in the four areas. Firstly, Friday sermon is a communicative act that has a set of communicative purposes which are specified by the orators of the mosque in which it regularly occurs. Secondly, a sermon has constraints on their allowable contributions in terms of their form, intent, positioning, and the value of their function. In other words, the orator must adapt particular standard practices within the frame of the sermon as a genre, even if he has the ability to use the linguistic resources in any way he likes. Thirdly, the expert members of the community often exploit these constraints to obtain private intentions within the boundaries of socially recognised purposes. Fourthly, most often a sermon is a highly structured and conventionalized communicative event. Orators are basically equipped with the knowledge of the communicative goals of their religious community, as well as, the structure of the genre which they formulate weekly.

However, all genres display different patterns of similarity in terms of content, structure, audience, and style. Hyland (2004) describes genre as grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations. To conclude, identifying the Friday sermon as a genre influences the way we understand its discourse. As Bhatia puts it, “a study of the typical and conventional textual features of any genre-specific text in an attempt to identify pedagogically utilizable form-function correlation” (Cheong, 1999, p. 46).

## 1.6 Statement of the Problem

Religious discourse has been at the vanguard of academic and public interest of researchers and scholars for many years. In Kohnen's (2010, p. 523) words, “an analysis of religious discourse offers the possibility of creating a fascinating and continuous picture of the development of pragmatic phenomena across centuries”. Ellwood (2013, p. 186) also refers to the influential role and the potent authority that religion has in a society as he describes it as a powerful tool of social control. Moreover, Wijzen (2013, as cited in Kim, 2016, p. 58) encourages scholars to take the advantage of discourse analysis in the discourse of religions. Wijzen suggests that discourse analysis possibly offers a useful opportunity in reducing the distance between theoretical and scientific methods to religious studies, as well as, it encourages

scholars in religious schools to take the advantages of establishing multidisciplinary studies by combining discourse analysis into religious discourse. In turn, the language of religious discourse can be an element affecting language construction in the non-religious field (Liddicoat, 2014).

Although there is an awareness of the importance of discourse analysis in religious discourse (Kohnen, 2010; Liddicoat, 2014; Wijsen, 2013 as cited in Kim, 2016), still studies on the language of religious discourse are insufficient. Wuthnow (1992, p. 60) referring to the deficiency in the studies of religious discourse, stated "We even have frequency counts of the kinds of themes that are expressed on religious television shows or in religious books. But on religious discourse *as discourse* we have virtually nothing". This view has also been raised in recent years, particularly, on religious discourse in English language, as Kohnen (2010, p. 523) argued that the scarcity in the linguistic literature especially historical pragmatic study is one of the main obstacles for an overview of the domain of religious discourse in English language. These difficulties led to the deficiency even in contemporary religious discourse studies (Muhleisen, 2007, p. 485, as cited in Kohnen, 2010, p. 523).

With respect to Islamic religious discourse, Friday sermon is one of the most prominent types of Islamic religious discourse which has a crucial impact on Muslim community. However, although Friday sermon addresses and directs Muslims in particular, its message of mending social reality spreads out to the larger society (Hashem, 2010, p. 49). The significance of the event of the Friday sermon as a social control device makes it valuable and worth pursuing.

Over the years, a number of studies have been conducted on Friday sermons discourse delivered in various languages. For example, Al-Omar (2006) has examined the discursual problems in Arabic Friday sermons while Onay (2004) has analyzed Turkish Friday sermons' content through the three themes of Friday sermon (belief, practice, and spiritual themes). Several studies have also been done on Friday sermons delivered in Indonesian language, many of which scrutinised the structure of the sermons (Hidayat, 1999; Ma'ruf, 1999; Saddhono, K., 2010; Hadisaputra, 2005; Saddhono and Soepomo, 2014).

To date, however, studies on discourse analysis of Islamic Friday sermons delivered in English language seem to have received less attention from the linguists. So far, very few studies dealt with the discourse of English Islamic



Friday sermon (EIFS). Albayrak (2012) has analyzed Friday sermons delivered in Australia. By adapting Onay's (2004) themes format (beliefs, practice, and spiritual themes), Albayrak (2012) examined the sermons content through the three themes. Soepriatmadji's (2009) study also dealt with English sermons prepared by the Islamic religious council of Singapore. The researcher conducted a genre analysis to understand the communication system of a sermon text. These studies added to the knowledge of understanding the themes and the structure of Friday sermons.

Although a religious orator uses rhetorical language to achieve the Friday sermon purposes and to affect people's religious orientations, the review of literature showed that no investigation has been made on the performance of these rhetorical devices in EIFS, especially the ones that address sermon's communicative and persuasive purposes. Metadiscourse is one of those resources which are described by Hyland (2005) as a coherent set of elements that help the speaker/writer to engage his audience and guide their understanding to the discourse.

In other respects, metadiscourse is "a highly influential and productive concept in the study of spoken and written texts" (Hyland, 2017, p. 22). It has been studied in different texts and contexts by many scholars. For example, Hyland (1998) investigated MDMs in company annual reports, Bunton (1999) in post graduate dissertations and Hyland and Tse (2004) in academic writing. Metadiscourse features have been also examined in different disciplines and languages, for example by (Blagojevic, 2004; Dahl, 2004). Metadiscourse has also been explored in social genres such as in book reviews (Junqueira and Cortes, 2014), in Online headlines (Yazdani and Hadi Salehi, 2016), oral public speeches (Yipei and Lingling, 2013), and many other genres. Where discourse of preaching is concerned, Boggel (2009) has studied metadiscourse in English Christian texts of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Another study was conducted by Malmström (2016) who investigated the use of metadiscourse in contemporary Christian preaching manuscripts as a form of social and communicative engagement.

However, contemporary linguistic studies in Islamic discourse have not shown a comparable interest in studying metadiscourse resources as cohesive and persuasive devices. In other words, we do not have sufficient knowledge about how metadiscourse may be contributing to orators' addressing their persuasive goals. So, it is problematic that we hardly know anything about how orators exploit metadiscourse, especially when interpersonal and

persuasion appeals are fundamental for communicating with audience. Therefore, the deficiency of linguistic research into metadiscourse elements in Islamic religious discourse particularly 'Friday sermon' is one of the key factors that necessitate this study. Besides that, the exhibition of the potential of metadiscourse markers in a new type of context 'Islamic religious discourse' would contribute to illustrate the potential of metadiscourse in non-academic spoken discourse, as Hyland (2017, p. 27) has referred to:

“Although more recent work has branched into less well-trodden areas of academia, such as essays, theses and book reviews, and into business and mass communication genres, there is a serious danger that the approach might remain too closely associated with the description of a limited range of text type and fail to realise its potential as a systematic means of gaining insight into participant interaction more generally”

Thus, the present study sheds some lights on the use and the distribution of metadiscourse markers in the genre of English Islamic Friday sermon. In addition, this study hypothesise that sermon's theme might affect the occurrence and types of MDMs. This hypothesis is based on the view of some researches, such as the study of Adam (2017) who analyzed persuasion in religious discourse, particularly, Christian sermons. Adam (2017) focused only on a single theme of sermons in order to form a representative selection of sermons. Some researchers also support the idea of the theme's choice in English workplace texts influences meanings of an interpersonal nature (Thompson, 1994, 1996; Fries, 1995; berry, 1996; Davies, 1997). Therefore, to establish a representative corpus and make it thematically comparable, the present study aims to identify the effect of sermon's theme on the distribution of metadiscourse marker. Simply put, this research is carried out to reveal the status of the rhetorical devises of MD in the three different themes stated by Onay (2004) (belief, practice and spiritual themes of sermon). It raises the awareness of the orator about how to use MDMs appropriately to make the discourse meaningful, understandable, organized, coherent and persuasive. Furthermore, this study will be added to the few studies that have been made on metadiscourse in religious discourse.

## 1.7 Purpose and Scope of the Study

The language of sermon is a religious language which has its own rhetorical structures as it employs many markers of public speaking (Crystal, 1970). It also comprises linguistic features which usually are deployed to serve its communicative purposes of the sermon, as well as, to serve the persuasive approaches of the language to achieve these purposes. According to Hyland (2005) metadiscourse is the collective meaning of language's functions which are used to inform, persuade, entertain or only engage an audience (p. 14). In addition, metadiscourse elements are the aspects of a text which explicitly organize a discourse or the speaker's stance towards either its content or listeners. Therefore, to make the discourse of the sermon organized and persuasive; an orator needs to master how to use those elements correctly and effectively.

Thus, concerning the fundamental role of metadiscourse in constructing a cohesive and persuasive religious discourse, this study has been made to find out how religious orators use metadiscourse resources in sermons. Thirty Islamic Friday sermons delivered in English language were selected to be analyzed. To do so, the first aim of this study is to investigate the occurrence of metadiscourse markers used in the genre of the EIFS. As for the second aim, this study intends to identify the communicative functions of metadiscourse markers in the context used by the orators. In this sense, Hyland (2005, p. 24) has illustrated that "analysts must always examine each item individually to determine its function" and that should be done due to the potential multi-functionality of each metadiscourse marker. The third aim is to identify the similarities and differences of the occurrences of metadiscourse among the three themes of sermons (belief/ thought, action/ practice, and spiritual/ emotion). In sum, this study aimed at the following:

1. Investigating the occurrence of metadiscourse markers used in the genre of English Islamic Friday sermons (EIFS).
2. Identifying the functions of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in the context used by the religious orators.
3. Finding out the similarities and the differences of the occurrence of MDMs across the three themes dimension of Islamic Friday sermons (belief, practice, and spiritual theme).



## 1.8 Research Questions

The study is expected to answer the following questions:

- 1- To what extent the religious orators use metadiscourse markers in the selected EIFS?
- 2- What are the functions of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers used in the selected EIFS?
- 3- How are the three themes of EIFS (Belief/ thought, Action/ practice, and Emotion/ spiritual) similar or different in terms of the occurrence of metadiscourse markers used?

## 1.9 Significance of the Study

Religion and language are the two main identity-makers of a community or a group of people as some sociologists and anthropologists claimed (Ghosh, 1999). In some religious discourses, such as Islamic Friday sermon, an eloquent language is used to influence people's minds and attitudes. To achieve their purposes, religious orators use different strategies and language devices, such as metadiscourse.

In line, metadiscourse is a rhetorical strategy used to obtain persuasion since it helps writers to engage their audience and guide their understanding of a text (Hyland, 2005, p. 63). It is also described as a tool for "facilitating communication, supporting a writer's position, and building the relationship with an audience" (Hyland and Tse, 2004, p. 159). However, Mauranen (2010) refers to the significant role of metadiscourse in spoken language explaining that "the need to manage spoken interaction in real time" is more in spoken discourse than written ones. Therefore, it is hoped that, examining the role of metadiscourse markers in the genre of Friday sermon will add to the few studies which tackled the problem of studying metadiscourse markers in spoken and non-academic discourse. Moreover, this study is expected to give insights on how metadiscourse markers can be effectively used to construct a persuasive context whether in religious discourse or other discourses. Furthermore, the findings will serve as an input not only for applied linguists and language teachers, but also for teachers and researchers in theological schools for several courses such as public speaking. It gives meaningful hints to the students of religious schools about how to use metadiscourse features in formulating the sermon.

## 1.10 Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The first is that the genre under investigation in this study was limited to the Islamic Friday sermon, particularly the Friday sermons that were delivered in English language in western communities to international audience. In addition, this study specifically focused on the contemporary sermons, since in the past Islamic Friday sermons were rarely delivered in English language.

Moreover, it was beyond the scope of the study to support the analysis of metadiscourse function with interview data collected from the orators who delivered the selected sermons. Yet, due to the limitation of time and the far distance between the researcher and the orators, interviewing the orators was impractical. Therefore, the current study was limited to analysing the role of metadiscourse in the Friday sermons by leaning towards a quantitative analysis.

## 1.11 Definition of the Key Terms

**Discourse:** ‘a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit such as a sermon, argument, joke, or narrative’ (Crystal, 1992)

**Genre:** “a class of communicative events with a common set of communicative goals shared by members of a given discourse community” (Halmari and Virtanen, 2005, p. 11)

**Metadiscourse:** as cited in (Hyland 2005, p. 37) “the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meaning in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community.

**Friday sermon:** Linguistically the meaning of Friday sermon is “the improvised speech through which the articulate speakers talks with the masses to convince them” (Mustafa et al., 2004)

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## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Mahmood, Israa Ismaeel, & Kasim, Zalina Mohd (2019). Interpersonal Metadiscursive Features in Contemporary Islamic Friday Sermon. *3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, Vol 25(1), pp. 85 – 99.

Kasim, Zalina mohd & Mahmood, Israa Ismaeel. *Hedges and boosters in English Islamic Friday sermon (EIFS)*. Presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia International Conference on Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. August 2018.







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