



The Theory of the Threefold Understanding of Religious Texts

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ABSTRACT

The analysis of religious texts in order to gain a correct and complete reading and understanding of them for the purpose of scientific theorizing and explaining precise rules and laws requires the use of interdisciplinary research methods appropriate to these texts in the field of textual studies. Religious scholars, emphasizing the issue that understanding Quranic verses and the hadiths of the Ahl al-Bayt (a.s.) requires its own logic and follows specific rules, have tried to recall this process by addressing topics such as: the method of understanding the text, hermeneutics, exegesis research, and jurisprudence of the hadith. However, it seems that until appropriate research methods for scientifically facing these texts are explained, it will not be possible to gain a correct reading of them and discover scientific rules. In this paper, it was tried to explain the triple model of text, content, and discourse analysis methods and to illustrate their application in the form of examples of religious texts in order to present the process of correct and comprehensive understanding of religious texts and to lay the groundwork for scientific theorizing from the extracted data. The examples presented are extracted from the author's research works using the aforementioned methods.

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Problem Statement

Among the issues that are considered in understanding religious texts and dealing with these texts is paying attention to linguistic and metalinguistic factors. "Linguistic factors" mean familiarity with vocabulary, lexical connotations, understanding text combinations, evidence governing the text, correct understanding of the text structure, style of expression, selection and arrangement of the text, and similar issues. "Metalinguistic factors" mean issues such as familiarity with the personality of the speaker, the personality of the narrators/translators, text validation, identification of the status of revelation, the reason for issuance, the space of issuance, the audience, the cultural-social environment governing the speaker and narrators, identification of similar verses, and the formation of the hadith family, each of which is effective in understanding the text and plays a very important role in presenting a correct reading of the text.

Religious texts, like other texts left over from the past, are part of a cultural-social environment, and the effort to understand them from beginning to end should not be limited to analyzing words or validating their documents, but should also address important issues, including linguistic and meta-linguistic elements related to them. These elements are like status parallels and reflect the social-historical-cultural conditions of the era in which the text was issued, and paying attention to them and using other human knowledge will ultimately lead to a correct and complete understanding of the text (Masoudi, 2005, p. 19).

Although sources related to religious studies emphasize the understanding of these sciences and attempts have been made to collect and analyze this historical and social information as much as possible using various methods (see Masoudi, 2009, pp. 76-178), there are still gaps in this field and the rules and logical, step-by-step process of understanding religious texts have not been explained completely and comprehensively. The necessity of emphasizing this issue is that without using appropriate methods as specialized

tools for textual research, it is not possible to comprehensively understand them and consequently, their rich content cannot be used in the direction of scientific theorizing.

The prerequisite for a correct and comprehensive understanding of religious texts in order to move towards scientific theorizing is to first understand who? About what? In what place? At what time? For what audience? And why? has stated the issue. Paying attention to these issues, which is the reverse process of forming and creating a text, is called "analysis" which is realized in different layers and levels. In this paper, an attempt has been made to present, with a methodological approach, a comprehensive model of the process of understanding religious texts in the three steps of understanding text, content and discourse using interdisciplinary research methods, which will definitely result in a move towards scientific theorizing from research findings. For this reason, it was tried in this research to express the different layers and levels of analyzing a text in the triple process of using the three research methods of "textual analysis", "content analysis" and "discourse analysis", each of which is used in a specific field of science.

1. Introduction to the "Textual Analysis" Method

Among the research methods that can be used in the field of textual studies is the "textual analysis" method, which analyzes a text into its main components and elements. Although textual analyses were initially used in literary fields, they were quickly transferred to other fields of humanities, and were especially used in relation to the sciences of the Quran and Hadith. For example, in the initial encounter with the text of Quranic verses and narrations, one can first analyze it textually without using historical assumptions, etc., and discover its linguistic elements and literary structure.

The purpose of textual analysis is to examine the linguistic structure and intertextual vocabulary of

the hadith and the way they are combined together in the form of sentences. Every language, in every period of its history, has its own vocabulary, morphological rules, and principles. Hadith, as a text, is no exception to this rule. Therefore, examining the textual words of the hadith in terms of what they mean? How are they placed together? What is the connection between them? Is there consistency between the words of the hadith text? Is the intertextual coherence of the hadith visible? Was it possible to express these words at the time mentioned? Could the hadith text have been developed at the time mentioned? Has the speaker of the hadith also used these words in his other hadiths? Were the audiences familiar with and understood these words? etc. are among the critical and interrogative questions in the field of textual analysis of hadith jurisprudence (Pakatchi, 2013, pp. 311-312).

The use of identifying keywords in a written or spoken text is based on the psychological principle that everyone uses words and messages in their communication and conversation with others that their mind is focused on and that are the main messages in the speaker's or writer's mind. The frequency of using a word or a message in a person's conversations and correspondence indicates that that message is in the highest levels of the speaker's or writer's mind and has received the most attention. Therefore, clarifying and re-emphasizing a point, and even using specific terms and repeating them, are very important, and each word has its own coefficient (or ratio).

One of the most important processes necessary to identify and discover the meanings of a text is to pay attention to the science of terminology and the linguistic aspects of words. This process, which is used as one of the principles and foundations of rationalism in discovering the meaning of the speaker, is also true for religious texts and has a special place and importance, especially for non-Arabic speakers. In the textual analysis method, which tends more towards "role-oriented linguistics", the text and its internal

components are examined and scrutinized in order to extract the meaning of the text from it. In examining words using the textual analysis method, two important steps must be taken:

Deriving the meanings of divine words and the words of the infallibles in accordance with the understanding of the era of revelation has always been one of the concerns of Quranic researchers, because many words have undergone semantic transformation and development throughout history and have lost their original meaning. It is wrong to deal with the verses of the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Imams (a. s.) without fully explaining their true meanings. Therefore, the use of linguistic studies, especially "etymology", is a new achievement that has come before Quranic researchers. This method is also considered one of the effective methods for correcting and refining the words of linguists.

Etymology is the science of the historical study of words and seeks to examine issues such as which linguistic family a word belongs to, which languages it has entered over time, and what changes have occurred in its structure (form) and meaning during these processual developments, and ultimately what its original and true meaning was? (Crystal, 1996, p.149).

The Latin term Etymon is derived from ancient Greek and means "the true meaning of a word" and in Arabic it is called "fiqh al-loghah" or "ilm al-asma" (See Pakatchi, 2008, p.125).

For example, the etymology of the word "Quran" in ancient languages shows that the root of this word undoubtedly came from the root "qara" (read) and not from "qaran", because this word was not used in the Semitic language at all in which has two meanings of "horn" or "hundreds of years" and cannot be related to the issue of collecting the verses of the Quran and reciting and reading them. The etymology of the word "qara" in the languages of the Semitic family shows that this word was previously used for reading the holy books, and the use of this term in the initial verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (See: Al-Muzamil: 1-5)

emphasizes that these revealed texts are a sacred and divine text and should be read like other holy books. Based on etymological studies, the oldest construction of the triad "qara'" is from the binary "qara" meaning "to call" and "calling", which could be the starting point of two chains of meaning formation:

a) Calling > inviting (to a party) > hosting / to host

b) Calling > reading / studying (a writing) > singing

Although the first chain has been used more in the Afro-Asiatic branch of languages, the second semantic chain has been found only in the North, Central and South Semitic language family, and especially in the Arabic language, which shows that it had a structure belonging to the same place. In addition, since the construction of the meaning of "singing" from the meaning of "studying and reading" was the product of the simultaneous occurrence of these two meanings during the reading of sacred texts, the basis has been provided for the construction of the word "Qaryana" to mean "the Holy Book" itself (See: Janipour and Izadi, 2013, pp. 21-39).

In the field of words, linguistic knowledge deals with the form and structural form of words and linguistic elements, and in the field of content, it deals with the meaning of words, which is called the science of "semantics". Semantics is one of the new methods in linguistic studies that attempts to extract the meaning hidden in the text and discover its semantic layers through the scientific study of meaning (Safavi, 2000, p. 19). For this reason, on the one hand, it decomposes a key concept into its inherent elements and components (semantic components) and on the other hand, it brings together each key concept with its surrounding concepts to present a complete picture of it.

A look at semantic studies in recent Quranic and Hadith research shows that this science, by providing systematic solutions for this type of research, in addition to providing a precise

definition of the concepts under study and explaining the position of that concept among other religious concepts, has succeeded in discovering new layers of a concept and has played a valuable role in deepening the meanings extracted from them. In the semantics of religious text words, the Bonn School semantic method is mainly used, which has a context-oriented approach and tries to give meaning to the word within the text and discover the figurative meaning used by the author. Examining the usage of the word in the text in question and identifying its co-occurring and substitute words are part of these efforts.

For example, the semantics of the word "power" in the Holy Quran shows that this word has a specific division and consists of wise and meaningful layers that are considered by the Holy Quran in two relationships with God and humanity, and a special and new meaning has been used from it. This word, from the root "qadara", is mentioned about 132 times, with different structures and is associated with the words knowledge, guidance, dignity, will, insight and victory. In addition, the words sultan, wilayah, qowwah, istita'a (affordability) and government are also synonymous with this word and is antonym to the words weakness and tyrant (Taghut).

2. Introduction to the "Content analysis" method

Following the attention paid to semiotics and non-verbal communication in linguistic and textual studies in the 1960s, the "content analysis" method, as the best combined quantitative and qualitative method, entered the field of scientific research by researchers. In this method, "quantity" and in general, the "quantitative perspective" to the text is considered the main key to solving the puzzle of text understanding, which paves the way for entering the field of qualitative analyses and provides a suitable platform for combined textual studies. "Lawrence Barden" points out in his

book "Content Analysis" that "content analysis is in fact an objective, principled, and quantitative research technique for interpreting and analyzing content, and the fundamental idea of content analysis is to place the components of a text (words, sentences, paragraphs, and the like in terms of units that are selected) into predetermined categories" (Barden, 1996, p. 29). Krippendorff also introduces a framework for using this method in his book "Fundamentals of Content Analysis Methodology" which has three prescriptive, analytical and methodological functions (Krippendorff, 1999, p. 31).

To better understand this method, it should be said that conventional social surveys are usually based on questionnaires, that is, what is analyzed by the researcher is the answers given to the questionnaire questions. However, in the content analysis method, the opposite is done and for this reason this technique is also called the "Inverse Questionnaire" technique. The questionnaire is unknown and the implicit goal is to find this questionnaire based on the answers that have been given in advance in news, papers and stories, or in other words, in this method, spoken documents are analyzed as if they are the answers to the questionnaire questions (Firozan, 1981, p. 211).

The "content analysis" method is one of the interdisciplinary research methods that can be used as a new tool to analyze religious texts, including the Holy Quran and Hadiths, and identify their evidence. However, in order to use this method, its theoretical literature must first be defined in accordance with the subject of religious texts, and finally its various techniques must be localized. Obviously, the issue of applying the research method and the localization process and its implementation regarding the research subject are of great importance, and if a researcher can properly implement and operationalize the intended method, he will undoubtedly achieve a deep understanding and pave the way for a major transformation in the field of Islamic studies, which will be further

attempted to explain the localization process and its application (See: Etrat Doost, 2023).

1.2 Application of the "Content Analysis" method in understanding religious texts

Regarding the technique selected for analyzing the content of religious texts, it should be said that after studying the various techniques of the content analysis method that have been introduced in various references (See: Holisti, 1994, pp. 47-93; Etrat Doost and Zahid, 2002, pp. 27-57), for such research, firstly, an inductive approach is proposed and secondly, the technique of "thematic content analysis" in the form of "open coding" with primary emphasis on "vocabulary" and secondary emphasis on the "expression format" of each theme is proposed. Emphasis on keywords, attention points, directions, themes, concepts, categories, expression formats and theoretical notes, is considered as an important part of the proposed process for analyzing thematic content in order to understand these texts, which will be explained more in the following.

1.1.2 Segmenting the text into content sentences

Based on the fact that each sentence has its own message or idea that is independent of other sentences in the text, the text of a hadith can be segmented into multiple sentences. In general, the following criteria have been introduced for segmenting the text into sentences, and the criterion proposed by the author in order to localize the content analysis method for understanding religious texts is the third criterion:

- a)** The "literary structure" of the text, considering the formation of the sentence from the structure of the adjective and subject in noun sentences or verb and subject and object in verb sentences.
- b)** The "rhetorical structure" of the text, considering where the speaker or author of the text himself completed and discontinued the sentence.

c) The "content structure" of the text, considering that each sentence has a specific content or message that, despite its connection with other sentences in the text, can also be expressed independently.

It is also suggested that in order to make optimal use of the research results, all the hadiths of an Imam or a topic should be compiled and segmented in appropriate specialized software such as "EXCEL" or "MAXQDA" and use the features of these software. It should be noted that today, several specialized software has been designed for text analysis, each of which has specific capabilities and is selected according to the topic and scope of the research.

2.1.2 Extraction of main keywords

Each sentence has one or more main keywords, the extraction of which is very important for measuring the quantitative frequency of their use in understanding the literature used by the speaker. The information in this section is directly related to the first stage of the "text" understanding process and complements each other's results in a round-trip operation. For this reason, despite the simple appearance of this stage, accuracy in extracting keywords and measuring their quantitative frequency is very important and will reveal important results at the end of the research.

Quantitative analyses are the entrance to qualitative analyses, so the results of quantitative and frequency charts are non-frequency indicators that allow the researcher to draw inferences from the text. Studying the set of key words used in a Surah or a collection of hadiths of one of the Imams (a. s.) and measuring their frequency clearly shows what the main topic of the text was and what issues were most emphasized (See: Janipour, 2012, pp. 45-70).

2.1.3 Coding and discovering themes

After the text is segmented into multiple sentences based on the criterion of "content structure", the main idea and message of the sentence that comes to the mind of the audience

according to the rule of "تبادر contextuality" is mentioned as a short news sentence as the main "theme" of the sentence. In some research method books, this action is interpreted as "labeling" or "coding", while it should be noted that there are two types of coding in the content analysis method that are selected based on the main research approach:

a) "Packed coding": This means that the analyst uses fixed phrases and patterns specified by others to analyze the text and select themes. This type of coding is selected when adopting an "deductive" approach that aims to identify and code only those that are similar to and opposite to those patterns based on a set of specific predetermined information. Most of the research conducted in the analysis of educational texts in schools or literary criticism of works has been with a deductive approach and packed coding, and for this reason, a quantitative perspective prevails in them.

b) "Open coding": This means that the analyst uses innovative titles and phrases to analyze the text and select themes, and records everything he or she has taken from the text. This type of coding is chosen when adopting an "inductive" approach, which aims to study the text without any presuppositions - which is actually a kind of "conscious disregard". Most of the interpretive and reflective research in the field of religious texts or the phenomenology of historical and social events has been with this approach and open coding, and for this reason, a qualitative perspective prevails in them.

For this reason, it is also recommended to use an inductive and open coding approach to analyze the content of religious texts, so that we can achieve a deep understanding of the text by a consciously disregard. This technique seems to be more in agreement with the Quranic basis of the "principle of contemplating" in the verse "A blessed Book We have revealed to you, that you may contemplate on its verses and that those of understanding may remember" (p. 29) and also the method proposed by the Imams (a.s.) for

understanding religious texts in the hadith "That is the Quran, so recite it, and it will not recite it to you" (Kulaini, 1707 AH, vol. 1, p. 61). For example, in examining the prayers of Imam Reza (AS) using the method of content analysis, which have been collected in a book called "comprehensive Razaviyeh Sahifa". A noteworthy point in this list is that the request for the destruction of the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and the request to be gathered with the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) are two of the most important prayers of that Imam (AS), which shows that he tried to point out the high and important position of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in the Islamic society in the form of a prayer and at the same time emphasize the fight with their enemies (See: Janipour and Sarvari Majd, 2014, pp. 53-79).

2.1.4 Discovering the focal points of each sentence

Although each sentence naturally has a main message and content, since the subject of research in the field of Islamic sciences is the text of religious texts of the Quran and Hadiths, which were issued by wise theologians, knowledgeable about all the needs of humanity and aware of the principle of universality of the religion of Islam, it is possible that beyond the main content, other messages or ideas can be extracted from the sentence that come to the human mind as a result of establishing a connection with the text and practicing reading them. A hadith can also have multiple themes, the sum of which expresses the totality of the environment that governs the hadith. In the proposed content analysis method for understanding religious texts, this ability has been added that other themes of the text can be recorded in a separate column under the title of "attention point" or "sub-themes" and taken into account in the final analysis of the text (See: Hosseini Zadeh, 2016, p. 87).

2.1.5 Discovering and explaining the direction of sentences

Upon discovering the content and attention points of each sentence, in the next step we must identify and explain the type of "direction" of these texts

with the field of the principles and branches of Islam. The necessity of this step is because the set of Islamic teachings expressed in religious texts must, rationally and logically, be in line with one of the topics of the principles of religion (monotheism, prophecy, imamate, justice, resurrection) or branches of religion and, as a sub-branch of those topics, they should discuss a topic in that field. In the meantime, the presentation of ethical and mystical topics also has its special place, which has been explained in some studies (See: Janipour, 2011, p. 138).

For example, in historical and hadith sources, three different texts are mentioned as the Ghadir Sermon, which differ in some themes and phrases. Although several documentary and textual studies have been conducted on them, there is still ambiguity as to which of these texts is the original Ghadir Sermon. For this reason, a study using the content analysis method has examined the stratification of these three texts, and finally, the relationship between these texts and their hidden layers has been identified.

Another of the numerous results of this research has been the identification of the direction of these three texts in order to prove the longitudinal relationship between these texts. All these sermons ultimately have three main directions: explaining monotheistic beliefs, explaining the position of prophecy, and explaining the position of Imamate in Islamic society. It seems that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) intended to make people understand in this sermon that the prerequisite for believing in God and the divine prophets is accepting the guardianship of Imam Ali (PBUH), and these principles are connected to each other in a chain. The issue of getting confession from the people, which is very evident in these texts, is also in this direction and is an attempt to explain the knowledge that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is teaching and expressing. In addition, the attempt to explain the legitimacy and general acceptability of Imam Ali (PBUH) to the people and warning them to respect the position and dignity of Imam Ali (PBUH) is in this direction, and form other main themes of these sermons that

are all in line with the three directions of monotheism, prophecy, and Imamate (See: Itrat Doost and Qahari, 2022, pp. 25-54).

2.1.6 Recording theoretical transcripts

One of the most important actions of the analyst during interrogative reading and text analysis, which plays an important role in drawing conclusions from qualitative and descriptive analyses, is recording the questions and notable points of each hadith as "theoretical transcripts". The purpose of this action is to record the questions, points, and initial descriptive analyses that came to the analyst's mind during the analysis process and, although they have not been proven, can ultimately be a guide for the researcher in qualitative analyses. Paying attention to these points brings critical thinking in understanding hadiths and paves the way for serious discussions in this regard (See: Janipour, 2015, pp. 250-265).

2.1.7 Reviewing and taxonomy themes

After completing the coding process and extracting themes and attention points, and before classifying the research findings, it is necessary to review all the written themes again. "Reviewing themes" means taxonomy common and related themes in order to: a) unify the titles, and b) organize them under each other as main themes and sub-themes. In the first stage, it is tried to edit the written literature of the themes under the same and similar titles. Therefore, we may have to revise them again in some cases to improve the structure of the themes. In the second stage, it is tried to taxonomy the themes under each other in the form of a tree diagram, so that the main and general themes can be distinguished from the sub-themes and minor themes.

2.1.8. Classification of themes and discovery of categories

"Classification" is the act of dividing and organizing a certain set of objects that leads to a comprehensive grouping into equivalent categories that also mutually prevent each other from entering and are, so to speak,

comprehensive and preventative of each other. The most important difference between the two stages of "taxonomy" and "classification" is that in the taxonomy stage, themes extracted from a specific part of text were organized and arranged under each other as main and sub-themes, but in the classification stage, firstly; only the main themes are considered and an effort is made to identify the causal relationship between them and the type of relationship they have with each other, and secondly; by combining some main themes that have a common relationship with each other, a term or phrase called "category" is produced, which in fact, expresses the main and fundamental nature of the hadith text.

This stage is of great importance because by changing each of the main themes from one category to another, a large volume of coded hadith themes and texts are transferred to that new category and, in a way, receive a new nature. Therefore, at this stage, it should be very careful whether the category selected as the main category has the ability to tolerate and accept a large volume of coded themes under it or not? And whether, in the continuation of the qualitative and descriptive analysis, we can claim that that part of the themes lies under that category or not? This action ultimately led to the creation of a thematic collection of hadiths, and the most important function of using the content analysis method is to understand the vast volume of scattered hadith information from the Imams (a.s.).

For example, the classification of the all of themes extracted from the content analysis of the correspondence between Imam Ali (AS) and Muaviyah shows that the category of "advice" has the highest frequency in the Imam's speech, which indicates his great emphasis on this issue. The first hypothesis derived from this result is that Imam Ali (AS) considered the best solution and response to Muaviyah's nonsense and rebellion and his reformation to be advise him. A brief look at the table of citations of these advices (See: Janipour, 2011, p. 128) shows that ethical issues were very important to Imam Ali (AS) and

in his political relations with Muaviah, he emphasized ethics and observance of Islamic ethics more than any other issue. For example, in a letter addressed to Muaviah, he says: "Wake up from your sleep of neglect and return to your Creator, and stop doing this and prepare yourself for what has been revealed to you! So, for what will meet you, get ready and do not let the devil to do whatever he wants to do with you. (Manqari, 1991, p. 88; Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1996, vol. 3, p. 410).

2.1.9. Descriptive analysis and presenting theories (theorizing)

Finally, upon completing all the stages of analysis, a qualitative or descriptive analysis can be conducted and theories can be presented regarding the research findings. In fact, these nine matters show the application of the content analysis method and the researcher's performance in Quranic and Hadith research, which this paper attempted to briefly introduce and localize.

For example, among the descriptive analyses resulting from the content analysis method is the discovery of the structure and system governing a set of texts. As a result of classifying themes and categories, it is possible for the analyst to discover and explain the structure governing those texts. For example, the classification of all themes and categories extracted from the content analysis of a total of 32 letters -each of which refers to a specific topic and raises different issues- of Imam Ali (AS) to Muaviah during his 4-year govern indicates the fact that these letters were written based on a specific order and pursued a main goal, the diagram of which is as follows.

As can be seen, this structure represents a series of arguments that Imam Ali (AS) presented in response to Muaviah's accusations and criticisms. He initially tried to present his acceptance as the leader and ruler of the Islamic community by presenting arguments about the generality of people's allegiance to him, and then he tried to present his legitimacy for this responsibility by presenting evidence and

documents from the Quran and Sunnah. In the third stage, he explained the issue of killing Uthman by presenting various arguments and argued that he was innocent in this incident and that Muaviah was guilty. Finally, by presenting other arguments, he denied the rule of an individual like Muaviah over the Islamic community and considered the true nature of his war with Muaviah to be a war of truth and falsehood, and thus explained the truth of the Battle of Siffin (See: Janipour, 1390, pp. 113-120).

3. Introducing the "discourse analysis" method

One of the most important methods of metatextual criticism, which begins its journey from the text and then, by utilizing numerous social-environmental propositions, attempts to provide a deep understanding of the text, is the "Discourse Analysis" method, which seems to be an appropriate and usable method for understanding and criticizing religious texts, as texts recorded in the context of specific historical-social conditions. Since discourse is formed in the process of social flows and by utilizing various linguistic and meta-linguistic methods, and in a specific temporal and spatial context, therefore, in every period, era, society and for every social and political stage, there is a specific discourse that reflects the structural and ideological characteristics that govern the individual and society (See: Fairclough, 1379, p. 8; Van Dijke, 1382, p. 27).

Although the discourse analysis covers numerous and different scientific fields and branches, since one of the most important issues related to these disciplines is spoken language and systematic studies of the structure, function and process of producing speech and writing and the meanings of words, therefore, "text", as the most external and tangible manifestation of discourse systems, is of great importance (Sojudi, 2008, p. 177).

Among the methods of text analysis, the discourse analysis method attempts to address the issue of "texture" and the temporal and spatial contexts of text production, and by recognizing and applying extralinguistic implications such as familiarity with the personality of the speaker and his thoughts, the historical, social, cultural and geographical situation of the author, as well as interlinguistic implications such as superficial and underlying meanings of the text, ultimately discover the relationship between the text, the context and the author (Bullock & Stallybrass, 1981, p. 175).

Since in this paper we are only looking to introduce the application of these methods in text criticism and understanding, we will skip the definitions and directly explain the operation of implementing this method (Macmillan, 2006, p 72).

3.1 Application of the "Discourse Analysis" method in understanding religious texts

Various methods have been proposed for discourse analysis of a text. The "Fairclough" method (1995), the "Van Dijke" method (1997), and the "Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe" method (1985) are among the most important of these methods, each of which has a specific approach. However, Dr. Hassan Bashir is one of the contemporary scholars who has explained in his works a new method called the "Practicle Discourse Analysis Method " or "PADAM", which is a method of understanding the text, context, and metatext and tries to represent a kind of objectivity in the text, like quantitative analyses, and distance himself from subjective analyses. In the introduction to his book, he writes: "The Padam method, which this author proposes to get out of the forms of subjectivism and to use subjectivity and objectivity in a proportionate manner to understand more meanings and to develop a specific process for carrying out all the stages related to the analysis

of media texts, is one of the simplest and most practical methods of discourse analysis" (Bashir, 2013, Vol. 1, p. 10).

He believes: "What has been written so far about the method of discourse analysis has operational ambiguity. The analyses that have been published more or less so far indicate a great deal of generalization and personal perceptions, one of the reasons for which is the possibility of completely different analyses of a text by different people using the same common methods. Of course, it must be accepted that the nature of discourse analysis is fluidity and difference that can exist in the analysis of different people. But a kind of reasonable validity and reliability must also be ensured in this regard. Graduality in thinking, perceptions based on a kind of rational order that is based on the text and metatext during analysis, and ultimately linking the meanings obtained from the text and metatext in an analytical process, is what "Padam" is trying to do (Bashir, 2013, Vol. 3, pp. 11-12).

Since religious texts are mainly presented to determine or explain a religious duty, their meaning is to a large extent explicit and obvious, because otherwise they could not be the source of action despite their ambiguity. Paying attention to this important point indicates that in the analysis of narrative texts, semantic fluidity does not exist to a large extent and there is no possibility of the analyst reading the text independently because the narrative text is produced in the context of legislating specific rulings, on a specific topic, for specific audiences and by a specific Imam, which constitute the contexts and environment for understanding the text and its intertextuality. For this reason, the author believes that the operational method of discourse analysis (PADAM) is more suitable for entering the environment of jurisprudence of the Quran and Hadith. In this method, five levels have been determined for analyzing texts.

3.1.1 Discovering the structural environment

In the first stage of linguistic structures, grammatical relations and effective rhetorical

factors of the text are considered. Therefore, identifying co-occurring and substitute words in the text is initially of particular importance because linguistic structure is strongly influenced by environmental and temporal conditions. Therefore, by identifying common linguistic structures and comparing them with each other, one can find out the identical time or conditions of their issuance. This is the concern that has led some scholars in the field of linguistics to use the discourse analysis method in understanding the text.

3.1.2 Discovery of semantic space

In the second stage, attention is paid to the superficial and underlying meaning. This meaning is not only hidden in the appearance and interior of words and sentences, but also in the components and overall meaning of the text. This space reflects the directions of the text to achieve discursive goals and explains a kind of context that is considered as the "context for creating a narrative". This entry certainly requires religious understanding in addition to having religious knowledge because without having them, one cannot become familiar with the true meaning and concept of the text. In this section, the identity of the text and its semantic layers are analyzed, in such a way that the meanings developed and identified from words and sentences over time and the process of moving from primary to secondary meaning are identified and ultimately the perspective of meanings in the discursive space is drawn. Certainly, understanding this space requires empathy between the current human and the human being in the historical period of the text's issuance.

3.1.3 Discovery of the communicative space

In the third stage, the intertextual relationships between the structure and meaning in the text and external structures and meanings are examined. Discovering these relationships is perhaps the most important stage to consider in the discourse analysis of hadith. Since the intertextualities within and outside the text explain the various contexts of why, how, and what the discourse is

created, the "structural space" explains the discourse language, the "semantic space" outlines the discourse direction, and the "communicative space" also determines the spirit of the discourse, which explains the overall situation and the conditions governing the creation of that discourse. This relationship is mainly in three forms: completely related and connected, completely unrelated and disconnected, or relatively related. Through their analysis process, we can learn about the misprinting, inappropriate segmentation of the hadith, the possibility of forging the hadith, or the epenthesis (insertion) of several hadith texts into each other.

3.1.4 Discovery of discourse space

In the fourth stage, the historical conditions and active hegemonies in society, which are the most important effective elements in creating the discourse of hadiths, are studied. These conditions determine the discursive approach of narrative texts. This space, beyond the specific narrative discourse, represents a discourse that is a function of the ruling power in various scientific, intellectual, interactive and conflictual aspects. Therefore, the discursive space represents a context for the necessity of proposing different narratives that can be presented in such a space.

Obviously, discovering the relationships between a narrative and other aligned narratives determined for analysis can be very influential in understanding the discursive space and is of great importance in the final analysis. In fact, the researcher assumes that the narrative text is not an independent text in the sense of having a semantic break with other narratives. Narration, means a part of religious texts that has a "textual scope" or "textual process" which "appears semantically" in different times, places, conditions and situations and is manifested in the form of words with a specific linguistic structure. Obviously, this unified textual identity is rooted in the unified identity of the Islamic religion. Therefore, despite apparent and structural differences between the narrations of the Imams

(a. s.), they have a unified metadiscursive space, as stated in the prayers: "All of you are one light".

3.1.5 Discovery of the metadiscursive space

In the fifth stage, the relationship between the discursive space and the narrative discourse should be discovered at the synchronous and in time (ad-temporal) levels. This space, rather than paying attention to the synchronous level of discourse, pays attention to the ad-temporal level, in other words, to the process of discourse evolution in different eras. This space outlines the different conditions for the emergence of different narrative discourses in different eras, the discovery of which greatly helps in understanding other narrations of that Imam (a. s.) or other Imams (a.s.). When the discursive relations of a narration are examined with similar discourses of other narrations, and finally the resulting metadiscourse is studied with other metadiscourses of religious texts. With such an approach, in fact, we are faced with a kind of "semantic expansion" of the text and not "different readings of the text".

Since in this study we do not intend to talk only about its method and processes and are more interested in its application in the field of jurisprudence of hadith, we will limit ourselves to this minimum and refer readers to the original references (See: Bashir, 2013, vol. 1, pp. 5-20; Bashir, 2014, pp. 102-150).

Conclusions

In this paper it was tried to firstly explain the necessity of using appropriate interdisciplinary research methods in a combined manner to understand religious texts, and thereby open a new window to this important and valuable source. Secondly, since the methods introduced each have different techniques and approaches, the localization of these methods in the field of understanding religious texts was addressed and their application was outlined using various examples. Thirdly, an attempt was made to

explain the model of the three-step process of understanding religious texts in order to develop the groundwork for presenting new theories and hypotheses and moving towards theorizing in the field of various sciences. The research findings indicated that:

1. Using the "text analysis" method, an attempt is made to identify the main elements and components of religious texts and to accurately understand and explain the main terms. Etymology of words and semantics of terms are two important steps of this method.
2. Using the "content analysis" method, an attempt is made to identify the main themes, attention points and directions of the text and to obtain the main categories of the text by their taxonomy so that the structure governing the text can be finally explained. The nine processes of implementing this method in accordance with the understanding of religious texts were explained in the main text of the paper.
3. Using the "discourse analysis" method, an attempt is made to identify the relationship between the text and other similar and coherent texts, as well as other competing and parallel flows and the historical-social conditions of text production were identified so that we can answer the six questions of understanding the text and ultimately achieve a deep understanding of religious texts. Discovering the structural, semantic, communicative, discursive and metadiscursive spaces constitute the most important steps of the method proposed by the author in this paper.

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