Article QR

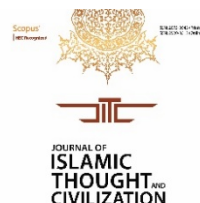|	
Title:	**Application of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Model to Quranic Verses Discussing Peaceful Dealing with Hypocrites**
Author (s):	Fathiyeh Fattahizadeh, Fereshteh Motamad Langrodi
Affiliation (s):	Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Alzahra University, Tehran
DOI:	https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.121.13
History:	Received: November 08, 2021, Revised: April 19, 2022, Accepted: May 05, 2022, Available Online: June 25, 2022
Citation:	Fattahizadeh, Fathiyeh, and Fereshteh Motamad Langrodi. "Application of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Model to Quranic Verses Discussing Peaceful Dealing with Hypocrites." *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 12, no. 1 (2022): 184−200. https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.121.13
Copyright:	© The Authors
Licensing:	This article is open access and is distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License
Conflict of Interest:	Author(s) declared no conflict of interest

Application of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Model to Qur'ānic Verses Discussing Peaceful Dealing with Hypocrites

Fathiyyeh Fattahizadeh[*]
Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences
Alzahra University, Tehran.

Fereshteh Motamed Langeroudi
Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences
Alzahra University, Tehran.

Abstract

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary research approach which declares that discourse is mutually related to social activities and power relations. This approach decodes the structure and hidden ideology of a text by describing and analyzing its language, context and current social and temporal situation. Some of the verses in the Holy Qur'ān that deal with hypocrisy discuss dealing with hypocrites peacefully and have a discursive structure. The present study examined these verses as an ideological discourse based on Fairclough's CDA to elucidate thematic verses' capacity in the process of meaning creation and open up new horizons for researchers to analyze the thematic verses. The results have revealed that, at the description level, discourse components such as the expressive value of words, active and imperative sentences, and modality in verses are closely tied to dealing with hypocrites peacefully. The situational context analysis at the interpretation level has revealed that the enunciation style of the verses' textual layer is fully compatible with the social and temporal conditions at the time of their revelation. Analysis at the explanation level demonstrated the depth of the Divine revelation about hypocrisy, suggesting that these verses aim to promote the hegemony of monotheism, trust in God, patience, piety, and forgiveness in the Islamic society in addition to peaceful coexistence.

Keywords: The Holy Qur'ān, Peaceful coexistence, Discourse analysis, Fairclough's approach, Ideology

Introduction

Society is composed of groups formed by co-dependent and interconnected people. The co-existence of communities, cultures, and religions is of special significance in the era of expanding communications. Peaceful coexistence means amicable interactions, adaptation, and harmony based on shared principles in the society. In this mode of human existence, people live together regardless of their different temperaments, beliefs, and social and cultural statuses. While preserving the intellectual foundations and principles of Islam, Islamic teachings promote peaceful coexistence owing to Islam's dignity-oriented view of human beings; for instance, peaceful coexistence with other religions and dissidents is a fundamental principle in the Islamic legislative system. Rejecting racist ideas,[1] focusing attention to shared principles with people of different faiths[2], institutionalizing the culture of cooperation,[3] and recognizing freedom of belief[4] demonstrate the importance of peaceful social coexistence in the Islamic theory.

---

[*]Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Fathiyyeh Fattahizadeh, Department of Qur'ān and Hadith Sciences, Alzahra University, Tehran at f_fattahizadeh@alzahra.ac.ir

[1]Al-Hujurat 49:13.
[2]Al-e-Imrān 3:64; Al-Ankabūt 29:46.
[3]Al-Maida 5:2.
[4]Al-Baqarah 2: 256; Al-An'am 6: 107.

An arena for peaceful coexistence is the logical debate with religious and intra-religious dissidents, including hypocrites. Hypocrites claim faith with their words and appearance, but are not true believers.[5] Dealing with hypocrisy is thus complicated due to its nature and features. It cannot be ignored, but cannot be dealt with aggressively either. The Holy Qurʾān describes the traits and behaviors of hypocrites, and also mentions the goals, and ways of dealing with hypocrites. Further, Islam recommends that Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*) and believers tolerate and interact with hypocrites peacefully. The Qurʾānic discourses are a rich set of discourses possessing various semantic layers with their practical and influential aspects reflected by linguistic methods. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a branch of general linguistics that views language as closely tied to society as well as its non-linguistic context. In addition to linguistic levels and the situational context, CDA emphasizes the collection of information from hidden and abstract layers, e.g., power relations and structure and ideological processes, for the formation of a text. In the current study, Fairclough's CDA Model has been adopted to see how the Holy Qurʾān deals with hypocrites and discourse analysis has been based on verses that advise peaceful dealing. This subject was chosen for the study because the principle of peaceful coexistence is a major topic in the interactions between the governments and the communities that help mitigate social tensions and improve human relations. The authors aim to answer the following questions by the CDA of relevant Qurʾānic verses:

- In Qur'ānic verses discussing dealing with hypocrites peacefully, how do the description, interpretation, and explanation levels of Fairclough's approach relate to the ideological concepts hidden in the text? In other words, how is the relationship between language and society represented in these verses?
- What are the most important ideological discourses in the Qur'ānic verses discussing dealing with hypocrisy peacefully?

2. Study Background

Owing to the interdisciplinary nature of this study, its background will be presented in two domains: CDA and Qurʾānic studies on dealing with dissidents peacefully. Various studies have been conducted on CDA so far, and several books, theses, and articles with different approaches to CDA have been published in both Persian and English. The main international publications on this subject include Critical Discourse Analysis, Language and Power, and Discourse and Social Change by Fairclough, and Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method by Jørgensen and Phillips. In Iran, the publications by Aghagolzadeh[1] are notable. In his Critical Discourse Analysis, Aghagolzadeh introduces the theory and practice of Fairclough's approach and discusses its application to journalistic and media texts. There are also numerous articles and theses using Fairclough's approach that are beyond the scope of this paper.

Various studies have also examined the Holy Qurʾān's and Prophet Muhammed's (*SAW*) interactions with dissidents. The authors of these works have mainly examined the historical and social aspects of Islam's dealing with dissidents. For instance, the Prophetic Mercy and *Jahiliyyah* Violence by Adak historically examines the Prophet's (*SAW*) dealing with dissidents. This work divides dissidents into three classes of polytheists, People of the Book, and hypocrites. Despite the first and second rich chapters, the chapter discussing hypocrites is brief, and only a small part is dedicated to this group. The author has listed hypocrites' actions and measures during the Medinan era briefly yet fully although he has not fully analyzed them.[6] The Prophet's (*SAW*) Sīra in Dealing with Dissidents in the Holy Qurʾān by Yazdi examines only this topic in the Holy Qurʾān based on

---

[5]Ibid., 2:8.

[6]Saber Adak, *Ignorant Violence: A New Approach to the Behavior of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) with the opposition* (Tehran: Kavir, 2010), 10.

interpretations. Based on the Qur'ānic verses, Yazdi divides hypocrites into two groups: Medinan hypocrites and Bedouin Arabs.[7]

Moreover, the thesis entitled the Prophet's (*SAW*) Sīra in Dealing with Hypocrites in the Holy Qur'ān and Hadith by Piri partly lists the Holy Qur'ān's and Prophet's dealing with hypocrites.[8] Among Persian articles, "Analyzing the Prophet's Political Sira with an Emphasis on Behavior towards Enemies" by Khanbeigi briefly discusses the same topic.[9] Razzaghi Mousavi's Tolerating the Dissidents and Fighting Antagonists in the Prophet's (*SAW*) Sīra focuses on tolerating infidels, polytheists, People of the Book, and hypocrites based on historical documents.[10]

The Prophet's dealing with hypocrites has also been examined by the Western authors. In Muhammad at Medina, W. Montgomery Watt allocated ten pages to the discussion of hypocrites. He examines hypocrites' activities during two five-year spans. The activities of Ibn Ubayy are the most prominent in the first span, but the author also addresses the behaviors of other hypocrites in the second span.[11] In the Development of Imāmī Shī'ī Doctrine of Jihād, Etan Kohlberg has discussed examples of hypocrisy and hypocrites in Shia doctrine.[12] "Peaceful Coexistence in Islam" (A Historical Study) examines peaceful coexistence in Islam in a general fashion. Moreover, "Peaceful Coexistence of Various Religious Groups in Islam; Some Examples from the History of Muslim Societies" explores the concept of peaceful interactions with other religions in Islam.

A review of literature shows the dearth of studies specifically examining the Holy Qur'ān's dealing with hypocrites peacefully. The current study is distinguished from the literature in that, in addition to recounting the Qur'anic verses that discuss peaceful dealing with hypocrites, it analyzes these verses based on Fairclough's CDA approach.

3. Theoretical framework

Humanities in general, and the Holy Qur'ān and *hadīth* studies in particular, are expanding subjects throughout the world. As such, a shared language is necessary for communicating with other researchers about these subjects, and novel text analysis methods can well serve this purpose. Conducting interdisciplinary studies is undoubtedly the same as using a global language without borders. By providing a large-scale analysis through the analysis of linguistic data, the situational context, and inter-discourse relationships, Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) greatly contributes to understanding and transferring deep meanings in Qur'anic verses.

According to Fairclough, discourse is a major form of social practice that reproduces or alters knowledge, identities, and social relations, including power relations, while also being shaped by other social practices and structures.[13] He regards two dimensions of discourse as central to any type of analysis: (1) A discursive event that serves as an example of the use of language, and (2) The orders of discourse, i.e., the totality of discursive forms (discourses and genres) used in a social

---

[7]Ali Muhammad Yazdi, *The Biography of the Prophet (PBUH) against the Opponents from the Language of the Qur'an* (Qom: Islamic Sciences and Culture Academy, 2014), 20.

[8]Hossein Piri, "Holy Prophet's conduct (sīrah) in the encounter with hypocrites in the Qur'ān and Hadīth," (Master diss, School of Humanities, Tarbiat Modarres University, 2001), 161.

[9]Hamzeh Khan Beigi, "Study and Analysis of the Political Life of the Prophet (PBUH) with Emphasis on dealing with Enemies," *Hablolmatin*, Vol. 6, (2014), 1-21.

[10]Qassem Razaghi Mousavi, "Tolerance with the Opposition and Fighting the Opposition in the Prophetic Life," *Journal of Marifat*, Vol. 86, (2004), 15-22.

[11]Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford, Oxford University, 1956), 180-181.

[12]Etan Kohlberg, "The Development of Imāmī Shī'ī Doctorine of Jihād," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. 126, No. 1, (1976), 64-86.

[13]Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 64.

institution or arena.[14] Therefore, in any order of discourse, there are specific discursive practices that produce, consume, or interpret the text and dialog.[15] Fairclough's CDA is composed of the three levels of description, interpretation, and explanation,[16] which, together, propose a framework for discourse analysis. This model is based on the idea that a text cannot be understood or analyzed in a vacuum; rather, it must be comprehended in relation to the networks of other texts and the social context.[17]
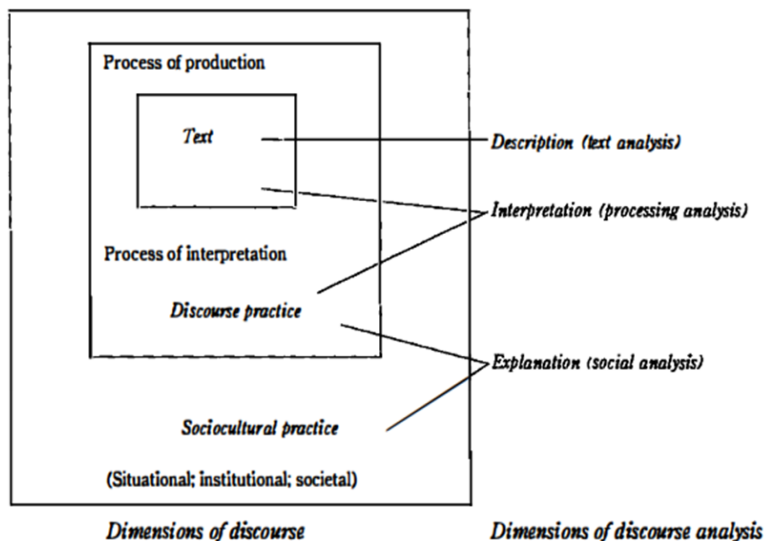

Figure 1. Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Model[18]

In Fairclough's three-layered model, any discursive event is regarded as a text, and the superficial features of the text are examined in the description level.[19] In addition to analyzing the linguistic structure, analysis encompasses the discourses involved in the generation and consumption of a text because the text, as a social act, is formed by these discourses. Accordingly, a text is not shaped in a vacuum; rather, it is influenced by the existing discourses, and the audience, actively but indirectly, determines its structure, content, and discourses.[20] Intertextuality and situational context are the fundamental elements of the interpretation level.

Explanation examines the relationship between discourse and the social context. According to Fairclough, this level aims to describe discourse as part of a social process,

---

[14]Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995a), 66.

[15]Marianne Jorgensen, Louise J. Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method,* "Three Model of Fairclough," Hadi Jalili (trans.), (Tehran: Nay Publications, 2018), 120.

[16]Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (New York: Longman Inc, 1989), 26.

[17]Louise J. Phillips, and W. Marianne Jørgensen, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method,* "Three-Dimensional Model of Fairclough," 123.

[18]See Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), 98.

[19]Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (Tehran: The Office for Development and Media Studies, 2000), 167.

[20]Ibid., 215.

examine how social structures determine the discourse, and how discourses reproduce (maintain or alter) these structures.[21]

4. Introducing the Corpus

Actions, traits, sayings, and claims made by hypocrites have been discussed in 81 verses and 17 surahs.[2] Most of the verses discussing hypocrisy appear in At-Tawbah and Al-Munafiqūn, describing the situation in Medina. All these surahs are Madani, except for Hūd and Al-Ankabūt, the Madani or Meccan nature of whose hypocrisy-related verses is disputed. The political, social, and economic conditions of the Muslims in Mecca could not arouse envy or promise any benefit to hypocrites, so they could not have acted hypocritically; thus, hypocrisy emerged after the Islamic government came to power; that is, after the Prophet's (*SAW*) hijra to Medina. Given the religious foundation of the Medina's government, hypocrisy was also transmitted to the domain of faith in that region.[22]

Some Qur'ānic verses that mention peaceful dealing with hypocrites are discussed below in order of the revelation of the surahs.[3]

Table 1. The Verses in Question

Sr. #	Verse	Hypocrites' Actions	The Qur'ān's Response and Interaction
1	If a lucky chance befalls you, it is evil unto them, and if disaster strikes you, they rejoice thereat. But if ye persevere and keep from evil their guile will never harm you. Lo! Allah is Surrounding what they do[23]	Profiteering from jihād	Having patience and piety
2	Lo! those of you who turned back on the day when the two hosts met, Satan alone it was who caused them to backslide, because of some of that which they have earned. Now Allah hath forgiven them. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Clement.[24]	Deserting jihād (The Battle of Uhud)	God's absolution and forgiveness
3	That Allah may reward the true men for their truth, and punish the hypocrites if He will, or relent toward them) if He will (. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful[25]	Hypocrites' interference	Acceptance of hypocrites' repentance

---

[21]Ibid., 245.

[22]Mahmoud Mahdavi Damghani, "Prophet Muhammad and Hypocrisy; "The Contexts of the Emergence of Hypocrisy in Mecca and Medina," *Historical Studies in Islam*, no. 1 (July 2009), 138.

[23]Al-e-Imrān 3:120.

[24]Ibid., 3:155.

[25]Al-Ahzab 33:24.

Sr. #	Verse	Hypocrites' Actions	The Qur'ān's Response and Interaction
4	And incline not to the disbelievers and the hypocrites. Disregard their noxious talk, and put thy trust in Allah. Allah is sufficient as Trustee[26]	Hypocrites' interference	Commanding the Prophet (*SAW*) to tolerate the hypocrites and trust God
5	Those are they; the secrets of whose hearts Allah knows. So, oppose them and admonish them, and address them in plain terms about their souls[27]	Hypocrites' profiteering	Commanding the Prophet (*SAW*) to ignore the hypocrites' actions and preach them
6	And they say: (It is) obedience; but when they have gone forth from thee a party of them spend the night in planning other than what thou sayest. Allah recordeth what they plan by night. So oppose them and put thy trust in Allah. Allah is sufficient as Trustee[28]	Hypocritical behaviors	Commanding the Prophet (*SAW*) to ignore the hypocrites' actions and trust God
7	They say: Surely, if we return to Al-Madinah the mightier will soon drive out the weaker; when might belongeth to Allah and to His messenger and to the believers; but the hypocrites know not[29]	Hypocrites' (Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy) false assumption of honor by holding themselves in high esteem and regarding the Prophet as inferior	Explaining the true origin of honor and the Prophet's (*SAW*) tolerance
8	And of them are those who vex the Prophet and say: He is only a hearer. Say: A hearer of good for you, who believeth in Allah and is true to the believers, and a mercy for such of you as believe. Those who vex the messenger of Allah, for them there is a painful doom[30]	Finding fault with the Prophet to violate his sanctity	Clarifying the Prophet's (*SAW*) mercy

---

[26]Ibid., 33:48.
[27]An-Nisa 4:63.
[28]An-Nisa 4:81.
[29]Al-Munafiqūn 63:8.
[30]At-Tawba 9:61.

5. Data Analysis

Here, these verses are analyzed at three levels of description, interpretation, and explanation, with an emphasis on discursive elements.

5.1. Description

At this stage, the text is examined apart from other texts, contexts, and social situations. At this level, Fairclough examines the textual structure and discourse on the surface level. He explores the experimental value of vocabulary, grammar, sentence formation, and logical relationships in the text.[31]

5.1.1. Expressive value of words

According to Fairclough, words with an expressive value represent the text producer's world knowledge and ideology.[32] These ideologically-driven verses promote coexistence with hypocrites and the establishment of peace among the Muslims. In "If ye persevere and keep from evil, their guile will never harm you. Lo! Allah is Surrounding what they do", the discourse domain of patience and piety is introduced with a precise epistemological view as the context necessary for peaceful dealing with hypocrites. Patience (*sabr*) means keeping one's ego from unpleasant affairs to comply with God's commands;[33] piety (*taqwa*) originates from *waqa*, meaning preventing, keeping, and protecting from harm.[34] The co-occurrence of the mention of patience and piety in this verse suggests the close tie between these two traits in proper interactions with others. In response to social issues, especially hypocrisy, the patient people avoid aggression and make efficient decisions. Patience and piety are the fundamental elements of social coexistence in this verse's discursive space, and are strengthened with the value-ridden phrases "their guile will never harm you" and "Allah surrounding (everything)" to persuade and strengthen the Muslims' faith.

The discursive phrase "and punishes the hypocrites if He wills or accepts their repentance" emphasizes the necessity of openness in dealing with hypocrites. This approach is effective in inviting hypocrites to Islam and their return to true Islam. This phrase demonstrates God's utmost compassion and kindness, which allows even hypocrites to repent and return from their rebellion. Hypocrites who do not repent will be punished for their infidelity and hypocrisy, and those who repent will be forgiven.[35]

Verbal abuse was one of the offensive behaviors projected by the hypocrites towards the Prophet: "And among them are those who abuse the Prophet and say, 'He is an ear.'" Some hypocrites hurt the Prophet with their cursive words and claimed that he is an ear, supposing that the Prophet had to only listen to their words and take heed of their suggestions. By this bad-mouthing, they attempted to question the Prophet's guardianship and leadership and the dignity of his mission and prophethood. The repetition of the two visible nouns "*the Prophet*" and "*Rasoul Allah*" demonstrates that the verb "abuse" refers to a specific form of abuse (offending the Prophet's juridical personality). In response to this discourse by hypocrites, the

---

[31]Norman Fairclough**,** *Language and Power,* "Critical Discourse Analysis in Practice: Description," 26.

[32]Ibid., 119.

[33]Fakhreddin Torihi, *Majma al-Bahrayn*, s.v., "sabr," vol. 3 (Tehran: Mansouri, 1996), 358.

[34]Muhammad bin Mukarram Ibn Manzur, *Lisān al-Arab,* s.v., "waqa," vol. 15 (Beirut: Dar al-sadir, 1414 AH), 401.

[35]Abu Jaʾfar Muhammad ibn Jarir Tabari, *Jami' al-bayan fi tafsīr al-Qurʾān,* Al-Ahzāb 33:24 (Beirut: Dar al-Marefa, 1412 AH), Vol. 21, 94.

Holy Qur'ān states, "Say, '[It is] an ear of goodness for you". This phrase reiterates the hypocrites' abusive word ("ear") to highlight their action and argue that this trait of the Holy Prophet is better for themselves. In other words, being an ear of goodness is the Holy Prophet's universal trait. With his "great moral character" (Al-Qalam: 4) and universal "mercy" (Al-Anbiya: 107), the Holy Prophet listened to everyone (believer, infidel, or hypocrite); did not disgrace anyone; and did not reveal anyone's intents (except when necessary), and this kind of tolerance and lack of indifference on the part of the leader of the *ummah* towards his subordinates is goodness and mercy. In fact, protecting people's reputation and preventing tension and challenge benefits the society.

The words reliance (*tawakkul*) and disposer of affairs (*wakeel*) in "And rely upon Allah; and sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs" delegate the action to God, i.e., to submit affairs to, consent to, and trust in God.[36] "And rely upon Allah" means that the Holy Prophet must not feel independent in reacting to the hypocrites' abuse; rather, he must regard God as his disposer of affairs in this issue, and God is sufficient as the disposer of affairs.[37] "Sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs" is mentioned because reliance on God should not be mixed with reliance on other people.[38] Thus, when believers rely on God against hypocrites' guiles, they should not rely on anyone else.

Another discursive component is the imperative act "but do not harm them" which is an order for disregarding hypocrites' abuse.[39] To realize a value, the sender performs an action in the imperative form; that is, the command "do not harm [them]" is to prevent the Holy Prophet's energy from being wasted on dissidents' abusive actions. If he spends his active energies on these affairs, he has in fact achieved the enemy's goal, which is to occupy the Prophet's thoughts and waste his resources.

5.1.2. Modality

Modality refers to the speaker's degree of certainty in implying a statement, which is reflected in grammatical elements and expresses the speaker's overall intent or degree of adherence to a statement's truth, credibility, coercion, or yearning towards it.[40] Modality indicates a relationship not only between form and content, but also between content and role. Imperatives as a discursive structure can be found in the studied verses:

"...but do not harm them, and rely upon Allah..."
"...so turn away from them but admonish them and speak to them a far-reaching word."
"...so turn away from them and rely upon Allah..."
"...Say, '[It is] an ear of goodness for you'..."

The imperative structure shows relational and expressive modalities; in other words, in imperatives, the level of determinism and certainty of speech is increased, and the speaker speaks from a position of power. The imperative system thus shows the superior position of the Divine discourse and expresses the truth of the statements. These imperatives act as reminders for the Muslims in dealing with hypocrites; the first audience of the Holy Qur'ān and the person communicating the verses to people was Prophet Muhammad, and Qur'anic

---

[36]Muhammad bin Hassan Toosi, *Al-tebyan fī tafsir al-Qur'an,* Al-Ahzab 33: 48 (Beirut: Dar al-ahya al-turāth al-Araby (n.d.)) Vol. 5, 136; Fadhl bin Hasan Tabarsi, *Majma' al-bayan fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān,* Al-Ahzab 33: 48 (Tehran: Nasser Khosrow, 1993), Vol. 4, 846.

[37]Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai, *Al-Mizān fī Tafsir al-Qur'ān,* Al-Ahzāb 33: 48 (Qom: Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom Publications, 1417 AH), Vol. 16, 330.

[38]Muhammad Taqi Modarresi, *Man Huda al-Qur'ān,* Al-Ahzab 33: 48 (Tehran: Dar Muhibbi al-Hussain, 1419AH), Vol. 10, 289.

[39]Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir Tabari, *Jami' al-bayan fī tafsir al-Qur'an,* Al-Ahzab 33: 48, Vol. 22, 14.

[40]Mahmood Fotoohi Rudmajani, *Stylistics: Theories, Approaches, and Methods,* "Modality," (Tehran: Sokhan, 2011), 285.

imperatives are merely intended for communication and explanation to him. A command for relinquishing hypocrites' aims to prohibit their punishment.[41] According to a contemporary interpreter, the command for relinquishing hypocrites is wise wrath; that is, the Holy Prophet must communicate the Divine message to hypocrites but must not be affected by their behavior, mores, and speech.[42]

Emphasis is another ideological construct for persuasion, repeated in these verses. It indicates the decisiveness of the Divine discourse about peaceful dealing with hypocrites, which is institutionalized in the audience's mind through emphasis. In "Indeed, Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful", the word "indeed" and the nominal sentence that follows emphasize God's forgiveness and mercy, complementing the trend of persuading the audience and proving these Divine traits. The discursive structure "Indeed, Allah is encompassing of what they do" emphatically states that the hypocrites' guiles will not in any way harm Muslims, and God is encompassing of the enemies' actions. After the sentence "But Allah has already forgiven them" comes the word "indeed" and the nominal sentence, which leave no doubt about Divine forgiveness: "Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing". Here, the repetition of the word Allah along with forgiveness demonstrates the concept of repentance for the hypocrites.

5.1.3. Verb types
Table 2. Types of verbs and Sentences

Sentence	Present	Past	Imperative	Active	Passive	Conditional	Nominal	Verbal
Number	8	5	8	19	0	2	7	22

Based on this table, verbal, active, present-tense, and imperative sentences are the most frequent forms of expression in the studied verses. Verbal sentences denote revival, dynamism, and movement.[43] Present-tense verbal sentences therefore express an action that has continued from the past into the present and denote the continuity of hypocrisy at all times and places.

Active and passive sentences demonstrate the ideological load of the text in discourse analysis. Most active verbs refer to a known subject, i.e., the Holy Prophet, representing his centrality in dealing with hypocrites. The Divine discourse does not need to use passive sentences (an indirect way of speaking); rather, it uses active sentences because He is supported by the power and ideology governing the society.[44] In this way, the sender demonstrates His power and declares that He is not afraid of or ambivalent about expressing His meaning, which is fully compatible with the situational context of the revelation, i.e., Medina. The fact that the subject of the verbs is known greatly helps persuade the audience; when the Holy Prophet is directly commanded by God to adopt a tolerant manner towards the hypocrites, the Muslims feel obliged to adhere to this principle as well.

Numerous compositional verbs are used in the imperative form. The speaker (God, who is superior to the audience and the Prophet) provides direct commands about dealing with the hypocrites using imperatives.

5.2. Interpretation

---

[41]Mehdi Bazargan, *An Introduction to Freedom in Qur'ān* (Tehran: Qalam, 2009), 68.

[42]Abdollah Javadi Amoli, *Tasnim,* "An-Nisa 4: 63," (Qom: Isra, 2009), Vol. 19, 334.

[43]Mahmoud Akasheh,. *Luqa al-khatab al-Siyasi derasa luqawiyya tatbiqiyya fi dhu' nazariyya al-ittisal,* "al-jumla al-fi'liyya", (Egypt: Dar al-Nashr li al-jami'aat, 2005), 83.

[44]Akasheh,. *Luqa al-khatab al-siyasi derasa luqawiyya tatbiqiyya fi dhu' nazariyya al-ittisal*, "Al-mustawa al-sarfi al-af'al", 65.

At this level, the relationships among processes that help produce and understand the discourse are explained. At this step of CDA, Fairclough examines the situational context and orders of discourse.[45] The situational context of the verses, which is a vehicle for the formation of relationships between the discourse producers, as well as the psychological elements of the discourse actors that shape the verses, are examined in this step.

5.2.1. Situational context

There is a close link between the produced discourse and the social context surrounding it. According to Fairclough, the situational context of discourse must be examined based on the answer to the following questions: "What's going on?", "Who's involved?", "In what relations?", and "What's the role of language?".[46] The analysis of the verses is highly affected by the social conditions in which they were revealed. Overall, hypocrisy as a religious belief that afflicted the social and religious structure of Medina with sociopolitical schism and vulnerability dates back to 2 H. In 4-7 H, with the rise in the number of hypocrites, their true nature was disclosed by the Divine words. Dealing with the hypocrites is complicated; since they have apparently accepted the foundations of Islamic governance, they shall enjoy legal and religious benefits and rights. This is why the Holy Qur'ān's dealing with the hypocrites is cautious and gradual. Herein, the situational context of the studied verses is discussed.

Some verses of Al-'Imran discuss the Battle of Uhud (3AH).[47] Many Muslims deserted this battle to collect spoils. After realizing that the Holy Prophet was not killed, they did not directly return to him. God deals with these hypocrites peacefully and mercifully and gives them time to repent. In this way, He forgives the deserters.[48]

In 5 H, Medina Jews, Meccan polytheists, and hypocrites of the Islamic society united to attack Medina in the Battle of Ahzab (Khandaq). The hypocrites resorted to giving excuses in order to avoid digging trenches without the permission of the Prophet and returned to their families[49], or showed their hypocrisy by insulting the Muslims and their leader, criticized the Prophet's plans, called him and God liars, frightened the Muslims, and encouraged them to desert the battle.[50] Although the discourse of Islam and the Prophet himself were relatively powerful in 5 H, the Holy Qur'ān occasionally preaches peace in dealing with hypocrites and mentions that, if they repent, God is merciful and compassionate.[51] The Prophet likewise tolerates the infidels and hypocrites.[52]

Al-Munafiqun was revealed during the social evolutions of 6 H, after the Expedition of al-Muraysi', due to the conflict between an Immigrant and a Helper. The hypocrites found this situation appropriate for sedation. Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites, threatened the Prophet by saying, "Barefooted Qurayshis are honorable in our land. By God, if we, the honorable people of Medina [hypocrites and Jews] return to Medina, we will banish the inferiors [the Prophet and Muslims] from the city." His son and the Holy Prophet's friends asked the Prophet to punish him for this blasphemy. Still, the Holy Prophet dealt this incident with tolerance and mercy. By reducing

---

[45]Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change,* 237.

[46]Norman Fairclough**,** *Language and Power,* 146.

[47]Al-e-Imrān 03:121-171.

[48]Al-Imran 3:155; Muhammad bin Umar Waqidi, *Al-Maghazi* (Beirut: Al-Alamy Institute, 1409AH), Vol. 1, 290-292.

[49]Abdelmalik Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sira al-Nabawiuua* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'arif, n.d.), Vol. 2, 216.

[50]Al-Ahzāb 33:12-13.

[51]Al-Ahzāb 33:24.

[52]Al-Ahzāb 33:48.

tension and declaring what true honor is, the Qur´anic discourse confirms the hypocrites' lack of awareness about the true meaning of honor.[53]

In 9 H, the Holy Prophet invited the Muslims to unite against the Romans' threat and travel to Tabuk, but some Muslims were reluctant and disorganized.[54] There were two groups of hypocrites in the Battle of Tabuk; one group pretended to help, but tried to harm the Muslims during the battle in different ways. The other group stayed in Medina, conspired, and practically opposed Islam[55] by building the Masjid al-Dirār[56] and blemishing the Holy Prophet's personality.[57] Hypocrisy in this battle was mostly driven by the Prophet's presence in the society and the increasing political power of Islam, which conflicted with the hypocrites' material and spiritual values. With their weak and hypocritical beliefs, the hypocrites could not regard *jihad* and martyrdom as a virtue; rather, they weighed issues with their worldly and materialistic scales.

Based on the situational context and the order of revelation, as the sociopolitical power of Islam increased, the hypocrites further demonstrated their hypocrisy. This interference peaked in the Battle of Tabuk, where they practically conspired against the Holy Prophet. Still, the overall policy of the Qur´anic discourse and the Holy Prophet's behavior during his ten years in Medina emphasize peaceful dealing (tolerance of) with hypocrisy and hypocrites, even though the Muslim society demanded that he (and it was indeed possible for the Prophet) to react more forcefully. The Prophet's dealing with Abd-Allah ibn Ubayy (who did not accompany him in battles and criticized him) is evidence of this claim. This interaction shows that tolerance is a tool for realizing unity despite plurality. An undeniable aspect of Islamic society is the virtue of altruistic relationships and benevolence for others, regardless of their beliefs.

5.2.2. Psychological Element

The creator of the discourse, i.e., God, better represents His ideology by discussing the psychological dimension of hypocrites' existence. The Qur'ānic discourse expresses hypocrites' actions and states as they exist in the audience's schematic model and experience (with the audience being the people), so that a deep connection can be made between the ideology of the hypocrites' discourse and the Muslims' dealing with them by creating the required relational action in the audience. Also, the expression of the hypocrites' psychological states is an objective subject for the audience, as they constantly encounter these states in the hypocrites and can easily understand them. This objective expression contributes to the persuasive tone of the discourse.

Owing to their malevolent spirit, the hypocrites felt bad when the Muslims achieved any degree of welfare or when anything good, even insignificant, happened to them. Alternatively, the problems and disasters afflicting Muslims elated the hypocrites. Meanwhile, God invites the faithful Muslim to endurance and self-control against such behaviors, and believers must therefore seek God's help to deal with their enemies' guiles.[58]

An-Nisa verse 81 discloses the true identity of those who have feigned Islam and full submission to the Holy Prophet (*SAW*) but have gathered to think, plot, and conspire hypocritically after leaving the Holy Prophet. Nevertheless, God is aware of the hypocrites' night time plots,

---

[53]Al-Munafiqūn 63:8; Muhammad bin Umar Waqidi, *Al-Maghazi*, Vol. 2, 420.

[54]Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat al-Kubra,* vol. 2, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1990), 165.

[55]Muhammad bin Umar Waqidi, *Al-Maghazi*, Vol. 3, 1004.

[56]At-Tawbah 9:107-110.

[57]Ibid., 9: 61.

[58]Al- Imran 3:120; Mahmoud Ibn Omar Zamakhshari, *Kushaf an haqa'eq ghawamiz al-tanzil,* s.v., "Al- Imran 3: 120", Vol. 1, 408.

conspiracies, and plans, and records them all ("But Allah records what they plan by night"), while also commanding the Holy Prophet to refrain from their punishment and to trust Him.

5.3. Explanation

The final layer of Fairclough's CDA involves a deeper step that discloses the hidden aspects of the text and the reason for its generation. This level helps explore the power relations that have affected the formation of the discourse and answers the fundamental question, "Does the discourse sustain or change the existing power relations?"[59]

The sociopolitical conditions of the studied era in Medina are significant in the history of Islam. The Divine discourse and the Holy Prophet were at the height of power after the Conquest of Mecca, which marginalized the infidels and hegemonized the Qurʾānic discourse. This victory was faced with opposition. Some dissidents feigned Islam to maintain their status but secretly tried to harm Islam, turning hypocrisy into the main intra-discursive otherness for the Muslims. Despite the hypocrites' provocations, the Holy Prophet (*SAW*) first abode by the principle of tolerance and peaceful coexistence to maintain social unity. The way out of the crisis of Islamic extremism and radicalism in the Islamic world is to deny monopoly and adopt religious tolerance. Tolerance is an approach to peace and peaceful coexistence. Tolerance allows people to behave peacefully despite their disagreement and conflict with a given view.[60] As a social virtue and political principle, tolerance promotes peaceful coexistence among people and groups who have different views and live differently in the same society.[61] The general policy of the Holy Prophet (*SAW*) towards hypocrites was tolerance as far as possible and refraining from punishment.[62] When hypocrites taunted the Holy Prophet (*SAW*) and called him an "ear" that accepted any word, the Qur'ānic discourse raised no tension, called the Prophet's (*SAW*) acceptance a form of goodness, and stressed his mercy.[63]

Preaching is another peaceful interaction in the Divine discourse and the Prophet's *sunna* against the hypocrites' words and pretexts. The Prophet must not completely ignore and leave hypocrites to their own devices; rather, he shall be in charge of preaching and guiding hypocrites towards God and informing them of their errors. This method of speaking can prove fruitful when the 'best dialectics' is used, as mentioned in verse 125 of An-Nahl ("and argue with them in a way that is best").

Eloquence is another technique for peaceful coexistence with hypocrites. Now that different sects have emerged in the world, the eloquence of speech and holding one's tongue can help prevent hypocrites' practical conspiracies and avoid social malice in different arenas, especially politics.

In the final analysis, the Holy Qur'ān's and the Holy Prophet's (*SAW*) dealing with hypocrites can be explained in two spheres: (1) The hypocrites' behaviors towards the Holy Prophet, and (2) Their seditions against Islam and the Islamic society. The Holy Qur'ān's and the Holy Prophet's

---

[59]Norman Fairclough, "Critical Discourse Analysis in Practice: Interpretation, Explanation and the Position of the Analyst," in *Language and Power* (New York: Longman Group Limited, 2000), 166.

[60]David Heyd, *Toleration (*Tehran: Research Institute of Strategic Studies Publications, 2005), 34.

[61]Anna Elisabetta Galeotti, "Do We Need Toleration as a Moral Virtue?" *Res publica*, No. 7 (2001), 273. DOI: 10.1023/A:1012217012310

[62]An-Nisa 4:63, 81; Al-Munafiqūn 63:8.

[63]Mahmoud Alusi, *Rooh al-Maany fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Azim,* s.v. *"At-Tawbah 9:61"* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1415 AH), Vol. 5, 316; Ibrahim Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'ān,* s.v. "At-Tawbah 9: 61" (Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq, 1412AH), Vol. 3, 1670.

(*SAW*) reaction against the first type was driven by forgiveness and tolerance, and the Holy Prophet's mercy and compassion were extended to everyone, including the hypocrites. This discourse, which suggests mercy, lack of violence, and lack of tension, is a preventive measure to minimize defensive behaviors in society and is efficient in promoting Islam. In this way, the Holy Prophet's (*SAW*) flexible discourse with hypocrites is formulated such that it can serve the final goal –that is, promoting Islam.

The hypocrites' aim to conspire and abolish the Islamic system and violate social security, which are considered goals that fall beyond the limits of the strategic policy of coexistence with hypocrisy, when these actions threatened the Islamic society, the Divine discourse and the Holy Prophet reacted strongly to them.[64] The Holy Qur'ān, therefore, approves defensive measures against intriguing expressions of belief, e.g., the Demolition of Masjid al-Dirār. In other words, collective interest determines the boundaries of tolerating the hypocrites, although even these reactions are examples of the divine mercy in punishing criminals: "When infidels or hypocrites are stricken by the Divine wrath, this wrath is commanded by God's mercy. God's mercy is pre-eminent, and His wrath comes only after His mercy. Thus, the geometry of the world is formed by God's mercy, and with this merciful trait, He decides who must be punished in what region so that others can have a just, acceptable, and God-pleasing life."[65]

The Qur´anic discourse is a set of numerous semantic layers, and this trait lays the groundwork for the discovery of deep layers within the verses. The pragmatics of the Qur´ānic discourse reveals that in terms of peaceful dealing with hypocrites, God raises the ideology of monotheism, trusting God, patience, and piety. The core ideology of the verses is an invitation and effort to re-produce the Divine power relations (monotheism), which is constantly repeated in the verses by different phrases in order to hegemonize the concept. The assumption of the rival discourse is based on the pretense of belief to usurp power and legitimacy, as if God is unaware of this pretense. While preaching tolerance, the Divine discourse uses the hypocrites' behavior to elucidate its ideology. Hypocrites assume that honor only belongs to the materialistic world; what they do not know is that this aspect of honor is changeable and mortal; the true origin of honor is faith, achieved by the love of God and adherence to His commands.[66] Honor is felt when the Holy Prophet and the Muslims realize their connection to the infinite source of power and honor –that is, God. When this sense permeates society and politics, a powerful and honorable society is formed.

Trusting God is another discursive element in the verses that has a practical and mandatory nature and strengthens the ideology of monotheism. The holy Prophet's and the Muslims' tolerance of and endurance against hypocrites' conspiracies originate from their trust in God. Thus, God commands the Holy Prophet to trust Him because when affairs are delegated to God, hypocrites' conspiracies will fail as God is omnipresent and omniscient. "And He is with them [in His knowledge] when they spend the night in such as He does not accept of speech,"[67] and whenever He wishes, he can thwart their plans. Trust in God can promote Divine support and sense of power against clandestine ideas, and is the reason behind the endurance and victory of Islam.

Patience, piety, and forgiveness are the discourse-building elements of tolerance. God invites the Muslims to tolerate malice, be pious, and adhere to the Divine commands. This is especially significant in sociopolitical issues when dealing with other nations, and is a method to alleviate tension. Accordingly, with endurance and self-control, the Muslims will be protected against

---

[64] Al-Tawbah 9:73; 107-110.

[65] Abdollah Javadi Amoli. *Tasnim,* s.v., "An-Nisa 4: 63," Vol. 19, 339.

[66] Al-Munafiqūn 63:8.

[67] An-Nisa 4:108.

enemies' evil plots and can thus enjoy a thriving society, large population, and functioning economy with powerful, free, and independent people.
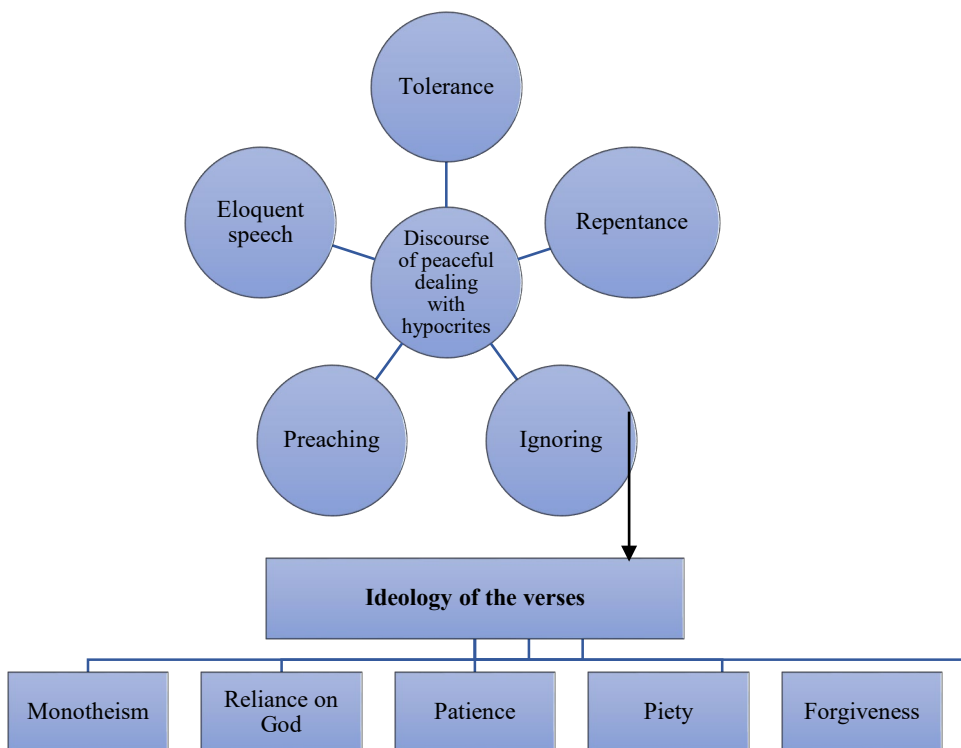

Figure 2. The pattern of Discourse of peaceful dealing with hypocrites

6. Conclusion

Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) Model, which promotes analysis from the level of description to interpretation and explanation (i.e., linking a text to the society in the discursive context and power), helps access the hidden semantic layers of any text. Examining our corpus by Fairclough's CDA model revealed that, at the description level, ideological constructs such as expressive value-ridden words, modality, active verbs, and imperatives were used to communicate the idea of peaceful dealing with hypocrites. The situational context analysis at the interpretation level showed that the enunciation style in the textual layer of the verses is fully compatible with the social and temporal conditions of the time of their revelation in Medina. As Islam had risen to power in Medina, the Divine discourse used imperative statements and active sentences to manifest its power. It also regarded tolerant behavior as the key to executing the different plans delegated to the Holy Prophet (*SAW*). By deliberating about the psychology behind the actions of the discourse players (hypocrites), the verses occasionally offer a new representation of the hypocrites' raison d'etre, so that the Muslims would not turn to violence against them.

Overall, the findings revealed that different methods used by the Holy Qur'ān when discussing peaceful dealing with the hypocrites are influenced by the sociopolitical conditions of the time and

the hypocrites' ideas. Depending on the situation, the Divine discourse commands tolerance, forgiveness, penance, preaching, eloquence, or relinquishing hypocrites from punishment.

The Holy Qur'ān emphasizes the importance of tolerating hypocrites while ensuring that the social interests are protected, in areas that do not lead to the hypocrites' dominance. Therefore, a tolerant behavior does not mean that one agrees with hypocrites; rather, it promotes peaceful life in the society. Nevertheless, this flexibility in the Divine discourse and the Holy Prophet's (*SAW*) discourse does not prevent decisiveness when it is necessary; whenever Divine rules and limits were violated and the foundations of the Islamic system were threatened, the Holy Prophet (*SAW*) decisively reacted. While confirming peaceful coexistence, these verses reproduce the monotheistic idea, trust in God, patience, and piety to repudiate hypocrites' ideology (i.e., hiding their true nature).

Patience in tolerating malice, and piety in following Divine commands, especially in sociopolitical affairs pertaining to outsiders, greatly help thwart their measures. Moreover, tolerance of hypocrites' self-assertions and protecting their reputation benefit the Islamic society. According to the Holy Qur'ān, evil should always be addressed with goodness,[68] because doing so may turn one's competitor and enemy into an intimate friend.[69] The fact that Qur'ānic verses refer to the Holy Prophet (*SAW*) as an ear of goodness that listens to everyone and protects everyone's reputation benefits the Islamic society, since it minimizes tension.

Notes: Here, order of revelation refers to the order of revelation of the Qur'ānic verses as mentioned in the hadiths.[70]

Conflict of Interest

Author(s) declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

Funding Details

Bibliography

Adak, Saber. *Ignorant Violence: A New Approach to the behavior of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) with the Opposition*. Tehran: Kavir, 2010.

Akasheh, Mahmoud. *Luqa al-khatab al-siyasi derasa luqawiyya tatbiqiyya fi dhu' nazariyya al-ittisal*. Egypt: Dar al-nashr li al-jami'aat, 2005.

Alusi, Mahmoud. *Rooh al-Maany fi tafsir al-Qur'ān al-Azim.* Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1415 AH.

Bazargan, Mahdi. *An Introduction to Freedom in the Qur'ān.* Tehran: Qalam, 2009.

Fairclough, Norman. *Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York: Longman Group Limited, 2000.

__. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

__. *Language and Power*. New York: Longman Inc., 1989.

__. *Media Discourse. London*: Edward Arnold, 1995a.

__. *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman, 1995b.

Fotoohi Rudmajani, Mahmoud. *Stylistics: Theories, Approaches, and Methods*. Tehran: Sokhan, 2011.

---

[68]Al-Mu'minun 23:96; Ar-Ra'd 13:22

[69]Fussilat 41:34.

[70]Muhammad Hadi Marefat, *Al-tamhid fi ulum al-Qur'ān,* (Qom: Al-Tamhid, 1428 AH), Vol. 1, 135.

Galeotti, Anna Elisabetta. "Do We Need Toleration as a Moral Virtue?." *Res Publica*, no. 7, (2001): 273-292. DOI: 10.1023/A:1012217012310.

Heyd, David. *Toleration: An Elusive Virtue.* Research Institute of Strategic Studies Publications, 2005.

Ibn Hisham, Abdulmalik. *Al-Sira al-Nabawiuua.* Beirut: Dar al-Ma'arif. (n.d.).

Ibn Manzoor, Muhammad bin Mukarram. *Lisan al-Arab.* Beirut: Dar al-Sadir, 1414 AH.

Ibn Sa'd, Muhammad. *Tabaqat al-Kubra.* Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1990.

Javadi Amoli, Abdollah. *Tasnim.* Qom: Isra, 2009.

Khan Beigi, Hamzeh. "Study and Analysis of the Political Life of the Prophet (PBUH) with Emphasis on Dealing with Enemies." *Hablolmatin*, Vol. 6, 2014.

Kohlberg, Etan. "The Development of Imāmī Shīʻī Doctorine of Jihad." *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. 126, no. 1, 1976.

Mahdavi Damqani, Mahmoud. "Prophet Muhammad and Hypocrisy". *Historical Studies in Islam,* no. 1, (July 2009): 134-151.

Marefat, Muhammad Hadi. *Al-Tamhid fi olum al-Qur'ān.* Qom: Al-Tamhid, 1428 AH.

Modarresi, Muhammad Taqi. *Man, Huda al-Qur'ān.* Tehran: Dar Muhibbi al-Hussain, 1419 AH.

Phillips, Louise J., and Marianne W. Jørgensen. "Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method." Hadi Jalili (trans.) Tehran: Nay Publications, 2018.

Piri, Hossein. *Holy Prophet's (SAW) Conduct (sīrah) in the Encounter with Hypocrites in the Qur'ān and Hadith*, Master dissertation for Science Degree in Qur'ān and Hadith, School of Humanities, Iran: Tarbiat Modarres University, 2001.

Razaghi Mousavi, Qassem. "Tolerance with the Opposition and Fighting the Opposition in the Prophetic Life", *Journal of Marifat*, Vol. 86, 2004.

Sayyed Qutb, Ibrahim. *Fi Zilal al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq, 1412 AH.

Tabatabai, Mohammad Hossein. *Al-mizan fi tafsir al-Qur'ān* (vol. 5). Qom: Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom Publications, 1417 AH.

Tabarsi, Fadhl Ibn Hasan. *Majma' al-bayan fi tafsir al-Qur'ān*. Tehran: Nasser Khosrow, 1993.

Tabari, Abu Jafar Muhammad Ibn Jarir. *Jami' al-bayan fi tafsir al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dar al-Mar'efa, 1412 AH.

Toosi, Muhammad Ibn Hassan. *Al-tebyan fi tafsir al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dar al-Ahya al-Turath al-Araby, (n.d.).

Torihi, Fakhreddin. *Majma al-bahrayn.* Tehran: Mortazavi Bookstore, 1996.

Waqidi, Muhammad bin Umar. *Al-Maghazi.* Beirut: Al-Alami Institute, 1409 AH.

Watt, Montgomery. *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford, Oxford University, 1956.

Yazdi, Ali Muhammad. *The Biography of the Prophet (PBUH) Against the Opponents from the Language of the Qur'ān*, Qom: Islamic Sciences and Culture Academy, 2014.

Zamakhshari, Mahmoud Ibn Omar. *Kushaf an haqa'eq ghawamiz al-Tanzil*. Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Araby, 1407 AH.