

The Problem of Selective Interpretation in Exegetical Works and Methodological Standards to Limit It

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Abstract

This study is concerned with examining the issue of selectivity and its serious effects on interpretive corpora. The authors of these corpora sought, through its application, to achieve certain goals that are characterized by bias and a departure from objectivity. Those who adopt the selective approach tend to choose and select evidence based on prior considerations set by the interpreter to align with their sectarian, doctrinal, or political objectives. This means that the practitioner of the selective approach views the Qur'anic verses and the surrounding contexts with a one-sided perspective, which leads to a deviation from the intended purpose of the Qur'anic verses, with their primary concern being to support their own opinion without regard for the divine intent.

Keywords: Standards, Methodology, Phenomenon, Selectivity, Impact, Exegetical Works.

Introduction:

The selective approach represents fertile ground for those with deviant tendencies in interpretation, as it promotes their views and intellectual and doctrinal constructs by granting them legitimacy through the employment of Qur'anic texts to achieve this goal. The danger of selectivity goes hand in hand with the interpretive process since the death of the Noble Messenger (PBUH) and the emergence of doctrinal divisions among Muslims. This danger intensified with the evolution of the interpretive process, embedding its roots deeply in most exegetical works. Initially, the selective approach was characterized by clarity, making it easier to uncover. However, with the intellectual and cultural expansion into other philosophies and traditions, interpretive works emerged that applied selectivity in more subtle ways. The proponents of deviant tendencies seem to forget that the Qur'an is a book that no falsehood can approach from before it or behind it, as it is divine revelation and a wise text. The Qur'an itself established the foundational principles of objective interpretation by linking ambiguous verses to clear, unequivocal ones. Selectivity stands as one of the greatest challenges facing the interpretive process, being among the most difficult and dangerous, as it impacts the objective understanding of Qur'anic texts. To curb or minimize this phenomenon, it is essential to adhere to several methodological standards that ensure the interpretive process remains free from such tendencies and methods of selective reasoning.

Research Problem: This study aims to uncover the most significant methodological standards to limit or reduce the phenomenon of selectivity, ensuring their validity as methodological criteria.

Research Objective: The study seeks to establish balance and integration in the interpretive process while promoting objectivity on two levels: ethically, in the interpreter's interaction with others, and practically, in dealing with Qur'anic verses or interpretive evidence. Additionally, the study aims to develop methodological standards that can mitigate or, at the very least, reduce the phenomenon of selectivity in exegetical works.

Research Plan

- Chapter One: The Conceptual Dimension of the Term "Selectivity."

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- Chapter Two: Methodological Standards to Limit the Phenomenon of Selectivity.
 - Section One: Adopting Objectivity.
 - Section Two: Applying an Integrated (Comprehensive) Method in Interpretation.
 - Section Three: Mastery of Interpretive Principles.
 - Section Four: Mastery of Interpretive Rules.
 - Research Findings.

Chapter One: The Conceptual Dimension of the Term "Selectivity"

Section One: Selectivity in Linguistic Usage

Through my investigation and inquiry into linguistic dictionaries regarding the linguistic usage of the term "**selectivity**" (الانتقائية), the research found that all lexicographers agree on a single meaning for "**selectivity**", which is "**choice**". Al-Farahidi stated: (*Naqa, Naqā*): "Naqā" (to purify) means to purify something, and **Naqāwah** refers to the best part of what has been selected from something. **Intiqā'** (selection) means refinement, and *I selected something* means I chose its finest part. (Al-Azhari, 2001)

Section Two: Selectivity in Terminological Usage

Technically, the term *selectivity* (الانتقائية) is based on several sources, and has been found to include various meanings, including:

1. **Selectivity**: A philosophy that *reconciles* different philosophies by discarding their conflicting elements and retaining only those that are harmonious and consistent. (Ibn Faris, 1979/1399 AH)
2. **Selectivity as Elitism**: A philosophical approach that selects the best aspects from various philosophies or those that align with each other, while ignoring contradictions and incompatibilities. (Al-Hafni, 200/1420 AH).
3. **Selectivity**: A tendency to *choose* elements from various schools of thought and combine them into a single doctrine. (Abdul-Nour, 1984)
4. **Selectivity**: An intellectual (reconciliatory) tendency in philosophy and politics that seeks to merge different schools of thought and opinions, even if they are not intrinsically consistent. (Omar, 2008/1429 AH).
5. **Selectivity**: The act of collecting reconcilable propositions from different systems, creating a structure based on contradictory compositions while disregarding irreconcilable elements. (Al-Kayyali, (n.d.).
6. **Selectivity**: The concept of *reconciliation* by discovering a higher perspective that unites propositions presented as contradictory. Creative selectivity lies in gathering major ideas developed across generations and blending them into a cohesive whole. (Lalande, 2001)

Insights from the Definitions:

1. Selectivity oscillates between three primary meanings:

- **Choice or Selection** (اختيار/اصطفاء).
 - **Reconciliation or Harmonization** (التوفيق/المؤالفة).
 - **Fabrication or Arbitrary Combination** (التلفيق).
2. Through the definitions 1 and 2, selectivity implies *reconciliation and harmonization* between selected ideas or philosophies deemed the best due to their compatibility. This process involves discarding contradictory elements.
 3. It appears from the other definitions (the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth) that selectivity means reconciliation between conflicting and differing elements. However, in reality, this is a significant overextension, as there is a vast difference between what these definitions imply and the concept of compatibility. The apparent meaning of these definitions suggests that selectivity involves an arbitrary combination of conflicting and fundamentally different elements. This concept is entirely distinct from the notion of reconciliation or compatibility. In this context, it is necessary to point out that the word "wafaq" (reconcile) in linguistic dictionaries means: "Anything that aligns in agreement on a single accord... You say, 'I reconciled with someone on a matter,' meaning we agreed upon it together." (Al-Azhari, 2001/1422 AH). It is clear from the linguistic meaning that reconciliation (التوفيق) does not occur between conflicting or differing elements but rather between harmonious ones. Accordingly, the research concludes that what aligns with the definitions provided is the concept of **Fabrication** (التلفيق) rather than reconciliation (التوفيق). Dr. Lutfi Allah Khoja clarifies the terminological difference between reconciliation (التوفيق) and **Fabrication** (التلفيق) as follows: Reconciliation (التوفيق): "An attempt to bring together two differing elements, provided that it is possible because they are based on similar or closely related foundations." **Fabrication** (التلفيق): "An attempt to bring together two differing elements that can never be united due to their complete incompatibility and fundamental divergence." (<https://www.al-madina.com/article.>)

Linguistically, *selectivity* refers to *choosing or selecting the best*. Technically, however, it involves an additional stage of *harmonization* among selected elements. This harmonization can manifest in two forms:

- **Reconciliatory Selectivity**:: Harmonization among compatible elements.
 - **Fabricative Selectivity**: Arbitrary harmonization among incompatible or conflicting elements.
- 5- Based on the previous terminological definitions, selectivity inevitably involves *fabrication*. Even when it claims reconciliation among compatible elements, the act of excluding conflicting components and concealing differences constitutes a form of fabrication. Observing the characteristics of fabrication confirms that selectivity practices it, at least to some extent.

Characteristics of Selectivity

The characteristics of selectivity can be summarized as follows:

- a. Selectivity begins with a predetermined stance or perspective, influencing its approach and outcomes.
- b. It involves choosing elements deemed suitable or aligned with its goals and objectives.
- c. Selectivity seeks to combine and reconcile the chosen elements under the pretext of establishing ideological or doctrinal unity.

- d. It deliberately obscures differences and intentionally hides divergent or incompatible elements to maintain a facade of coherence.
- e. Selectivity is characterized by hesitation, reliance on tricks, and verbal cleverness, presenting itself as polished and refined in outward appearance only. (Ziyada, 1997)

Chapter Two: Selective Criteria to Limit the Phenomenon of Selectivity

Section One: Adopting Objectivity

Objectivity is one of the most crucial methodological criteria for safeguarding the interpretive process from bias and selectivity. It encompasses three primary concepts:

1. **Objectivity as Opposed to Subjectivity and Bias:** In this sense, objectivity refers to integrity and honesty in research.
2. **Objectivity as Starting from the Subject (External Reality):** Here, objectivity involves initiating research by addressing the *subject*, the external reality, and then engaging with the Quran to seek its perspective. This approach entails a dialogical process where the interpreter poses questions, and the Quran provides answers, aiming to uncover the Quranic stance on the topic under discussion.
3. The term "objectivity" (الموضوعية) refers to what is attributed to the subject. It involves the interpreter selecting a specific topic, gathering the verses related to that topic, interpreting them, and attempting to derive a Qur'anic theory concerning that subject. (Baqir, n.d)

With these three concepts of objectivity, it is possible to limit or reduce the phenomenon of selectivity. Based on the first meaning, objectivity regulates subjectivity and bias, which are prominent features and effective tools of selectivity. Here, objectivity refers to: rational and sound thinking, the ability to approach matters impartially, free from extremism, bias, or subjective and external influences. As stated: *"The depth of objectivity in the Qur'an can only be approached by an objective researcher. An objective researcher remains so only by abandoning environmental influences and emotional impurities... When this is achieved, objectivity is realized."* (Al-Saghir, n.d)

From the perspective of the second meaning of objectivity, it can help curb blind imitation, which is one of the consequences of selectivity. The goal of objectivity is to reach a Qur'anic perspective on a particular topic, steering clear of the extremism of selectivity toward one side or opinion. As for the third meaning of objectivity, it addresses the limitation inherent in the selective approach. Objectivity offers a comprehensive understanding of the studied subject, whereas selectivity presents an incomplete and distorted interpretation, far removed from the true meaning of the text. Given that this sense of objectivity refers to the thematic method as opposed to the fragmentary method in interpretation, it is essential to highlight the fundamental difference between the selective approach and the fragmentary method in Quranic exegesis. While both involve partial handling of Quranic verses, the selective approach disregards other verses, avoids referencing them, or interprets them to suit personal agendas. On the other hand, the fragmentary method "utilizes other verses in the same context, as well as hadiths and narrations. However, this utilization aims to uncover the literal meaning of the verse under discussion. The goal at every stage of this interpretation is to understand the meaning of the specific verse the interpreter is addressing, using all available means. This goal is fragmentary, as it focuses on understanding a particular part of the Quranic text without often extending beyond that." In contrast, the selective approach's purpose in isolating and fragmenting verses resembles an exclusion of other verses or evidence that contradicts the interpreter's inclinations.

Since selectivity means excluding or favoring one position, evidence, or direction based on personal or institutional interests, it leads to the neglect of other important aspects that may significantly impact the issue

under discussion. Therefore, the function of objectivity as a standard principle leads to a more balanced view in addressing all the different aspects related to a particular matter, without bias toward any side. Objectivity also ensures fairness and credibility, in contrast to the illusion of selectivity and bias.

The Second Requirement: Using the Integrated (Comprehensive) Approach in The Interpretation

This approach refers to "utilizing specific tools and sources in Quranic interpretation, which can clarify the meaning and intention of a verse and lead to well-defined conclusions." (Al-Asfahani, n.d)

The process of interpretation (exegesis "Tafsir) originated from the early days of Islam, with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) being the primary source of this explanation, as the Quran refers to him as an interpreter. Allah says: "وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ" And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad) the Dhikr [reminder and the advice (i.e. the Qur'ân)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought" (Anahl Surah 16:44). The Imams of the Ahl Al-Bayt (peace be upon them) then continued this divine role, as the process of exegesis was not limited to a specific group. Therefore, some of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) took on the task of interpretation, relying on two sources: what they knew from the Prophet and additional linguistic and poetic evidence. This continued with those who came after them, and the circle of sources for interpretation expanded. Sayyid Al-Tabatabai says: "The first generation of Muslim interpreters consisted of a group of the companions (excluding Ali, peace be upon him), such as Ibn Abbas, Abdullah ibn Umar, Ubayy, and others who took care of this matter. The research at that time did not go beyond explaining the literary aspects and the occasions of revelation of the verses, with little use of one verse to support another, and minimal interpretation through narrations from the Prophet (PBUH)." (Al-Tabatabai, n.d)

"After the death of the Noble Prophet (PBUH), theological interpretative schools emerged, following the interaction of Muslims with the different sects from the nations of the lands conquered by the Muslims. Based on these directions, each sect of Muslims, such as the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites, interpreted the Quran according to their own views and beliefs." (Al-Tabatabai, n.d)

"After these stages, new methods of interpretation began to emerge, led by those with various specializations. After the Greek philosophy was translated into Arabic at the end of the first century of Hijra, intellectual research spread among the Muslims. 'Sufism emerged alongside the spread of philosophical inquiry, with people tending to seek religious knowledge through spiritual struggle and mental exercises, rather than verbal and intellectual research.' (Al-Ridh'ai, n.d). This led to the development of the esoteric (symbolic) method of interpretation. Meanwhile, the scholars of Hadith remained focused on the narrational approach, which cares about religious phenomena without delving into anything except the words in their literary aspects." (Al-Tabatabai, n.d)

Muhammad Ali Al-Ridh'ai presented several reasons for the emergence of diversity in interpretative directions and methodologies. (Al-Ridh'ai, n.d). These reasons are:

1. **The nature of the Quran:** It was revealed that it contains a set of verses that are interconnected, meaning that some verses explain and clarify others. This led to the development of the methodology of interpreting the Quran with the Quran itself.
2. **The Quranic command:** It is mentioned in the Holy Quran that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) is the one who clarifies and interprets the Quran. Allah says: "وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ" And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad) the Dhikr [reminder and the advice (i.e. the Qur'ân)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought" (Anahl Surah 16:44). Thus, the words of the Prophet (PBUH) became a

source of authority and interpretation for the Quran, and this divine command led to the emergence of the narrational or historical methodology in interpretation.

3. **The beliefs and opinions of the interpreters:** After the emergence of various sects and schools of thought, such as the Shia and Sunni, and the formation of theological schools, each sect and school sought to interpret the Quranic verses in a way that would support their own beliefs and opinions. This led to the emergence of theological trends in Quranic interpretation.
4. **The introduction of ideas and sciences from non-Muslims into the Islamic world:** After the spread of the translation movement of Greek and Persian books, the influence of this movement extended, leading to the development of philosophical and scientific approaches to Quranic interpretation.
5. **The difference in sources and tools of interpretation:** The differences in interpretative approaches arise from the sources relied upon in interpretation. Those who rely more on reason tend to follow the rational methodology, while those who primarily depend on narrations tend to follow the narrational or apparent approach.
6. **Modern trends in interpretation:** These are considered one of the influential factors in the emergence of various interpretative approaches. The needs and necessities of time and place for the interpreter require diversity in the methodology followed, in order to provide solutions to contemporary issues. (Al-Ridh'ai, n.d)

The comprehensive methodology is: "The approach that benefits from all accepted methodologies, such as the methodology of interpreting the Quran with the Quran, the narrational methodology, the scientific methodology, the allusive methodology, and the rational methodology, in order to clarify the intended meaning of the verses in a complete manner from all perspectives." (Al-Ridh'ai, n.d)

The valid interpretation is the one that utilizes these methodologies in their appropriate contexts. Some verses may not have a narration to interpret them or a scientific allusion to clarify them, so the various methodologies can be used as needed, depending on the context of the verse being studied. The core principle of the comprehensive methodology is to consider the approach and the evidence. It does not rely on just one methodology; rather, any valid and correct methodology that can lead to the intended meaning of the text should be employed by the interpreter.

One of the methods of selectivity is when the interpreter adopts a single, isolated approach to reinforce their opinions. It is well-known that no single source comprehensively addresses all Qur'anic verses in interpretation. Therefore, adhering to a single method leads to shortcomings in performance and deviation from the truth. For instance, restricting oneself to the literalist approach causes the selective interpreter to become rigidly attached to certain phenomena that align with their inclinations. Some of these phenomena lead to assertions of anthropomorphism and corporealism. Clinging to such interpretations inevitably disrupts doctrine and results in speaking about the divine in ways that are irrational. Similarly, extreme reliance on the rationalist approach while disregarding the literal meanings of the Qur'an and related narrations leads the interpreter to arbitrarily reinterpret Qur'anic verses. By relying on the comprehensive methodology in interpretation, balance can be achieved between the various interpretive approaches, avoiding extremism towards one methodology over another. Quranic texts are understood through other clarifying texts, explanatory narrations, linguistic allusions, historical contexts, and more. The comprehensive methodology (inclusive) is "another expression of interpretation by the considered contextual evidence, whether this evidence is rational and definitive or transmitted." (Al-Ridh'ai, n.d)

From the above, it can be concluded that the integrated methodology is an effective criterion for limiting or reducing the risk of selectivity, bias, and the tendency to lean towards a specific direction over others. It helps in seeing the full picture of the issue at hand by benefiting from various accepted knowledge and approaches. It is particularly useful in addressing complex issues such as matters of creed, providing a comprehensive view of such topics. These issues cannot be adequately addressed using a single, isolated methodology. Therefore, the integrated methodology is essential not only to limit selectivity but also as a necessity to face complex challenges.

The Third Requirement: Mastery of Interpretative Fundamentals

The term "fundamentals" (أصول) is derived from the word "origin" (أصل) and has several meanings in the linguistic dictionaries: (Al-Haydary, n.d)

1. **The bottom of something:** As al-Farahidi stated, "The origin is the bottom of everything." (Ibn Faris, 1979)
2. **The foundation of something:** "Its foundation upon which it stands; the foundation of a wall is its origin." (Al-Farahidi, 2003)
3. **That upon which something else depends and to which it is related.** (Al-Zubeidi, n.d)
4. **The beginning of something:** "The origin of a thing is that from which it starts. For example, the origin of man is dust, and the origin of a wall is stone, as it starts with stone and bricks." (Al-Askari, 2020)

The common meaning among these definitions, according to Mustafa, is: "That upon which something is built, whether it is a physical object, plant, animal, or in abstract concepts, or in sciences. For example, the origin of a wall, the origin of a tree, the origin of man, the origin of knowledge, and so on." (Al-Mustfawi, n.d)

In technical terms, the concept of "fundamentals" in the field of interpretation is not far from the linguistic meaning. Al-Jurjani defined it as: "That which is built upon by others and is not built upon by anything else. The foundation is that whose ruling is established by itself." (Al-Jurjani, n.d)

This definition represents the general concept of foundations. However, in defining interpretative foundations as a specific term in the field of interpretation, there is disagreement among scholars and researchers. Some equate foundations with rules, stating that interpretative foundations are: "A set of rules and principles that explain to the interpreter the methods for extracting the secrets of this wise book, according to human capacity." (Al-Akk, 1986). Some have defined the foundations of interpretation as: "The science that clarifies the methods followed by early interpreters in extracting the secrets of the Quran." However, this definition is inaccurate as it confuses the function of methods and foundations. (Al-Roumi, 2010). Others have presented a broader concept of interpretative foundations, which includes the rules, principles, and conditions that must be met by the interpreter: "The rules and principles upon which the science of interpretation is based, encompassing the conditions and ethics required of the interpreter, the rules and methods of interpretation, and other related aspects." It can be said that the foundations of interpretation are: "A set of principles and structures from which the interpreter begins before engaging in the process of interpretation. These are a collection of essentials upon which interpretive rules are built, regulating the process of interpretation and helping to understand the will of Allah." (Al-Askari, 2020). The most likely and appropriate definition among the previously mentioned ones is the last one, as it is based on sound terminological foundations, free from methodological and terminological confusion between concepts and other structures. The interpretive fundamentals are considered essential prerequisites for understanding the text. "The interpreter directly accepts them without the need for proof. Instead, they are accepted before entering the process of interpretation and are accepted as mental acceptances,

and the interpreter is inherently familiar with them." (Al-Ridha'i, n.d). They are also among the most important criteria that limit the phenomenon of selectivity. Selectivity serves a limited viewpoint, deliberately neglecting the interpretive foundations that are essential for understanding and interpreting the Quran. Some of these essential foundations include:

First: The Quran is Divine Revelation

This principle means that the content of the Quran, both in its words and meanings, is from Allah, the Almighty. This is clearly stated in several verses of the Quran, such as: "وَإِنَّهُ لَنَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ" "Indeed, this is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds" (Al-Shura'a Surah 26:192-195). "تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ" This is the Revelation sent down from the Lord of the 'Ālamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists) (Al-Haqqa Surah, 43). "لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبُطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَلِيمٍ خَمِيدٍ" Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it: (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise. (Fussilat Surah, 42). "فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا" Then High above all be Allâh, the True King. And be not in haste (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) with the Qur'ân before its revelation is completed to you, and say: "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge. (Taha Surah, 114)

Affirming this principle entails several implications:

- The Quran is Divine Speech.
- The Quran is miraculous and infallible.
- The Quran is sacred.
- The Quran is the truth, with no falsehood in it.
- The Quran is a proof of creation. (Al-Ridha'a, n.d)

From this perspective, the importance of this principle becomes clear in limiting the phenomenon of selectivity and its repercussions on interpretive outcomes. This principle serves as a boundary against the claims of modernity and guarantees the preservation of the interpretive process from its consequences, such as the assertion of the Quran's humanity, the denial of its sanctity, and the relativity of its rulings, rendering them unsuitable for all times and places. One of the most significant and dangerous effects of selectivity, as seen in modernist approaches, is the application of selective methods to the Quranic texts through the use of Western methodologies. To mitigate these dangerous phenomena, it is necessary to acknowledge that the Quran is a Divine, sacred revelation that cannot be treated with the same methods applied to human texts or be subjected to dissection, doubt, or similar approaches. As the martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr said, "The interpreter who wishes to interpret the Quran must do so with an Islamic mindset."

This means that the interpreter must have a set of fundamental concepts, based on Islam, that are connected to the Quran and form the general framework for interpretation. Through this framework, the interpreter can arrive at correct conclusions in the process of interpretation. The interpreter's understanding of the Quran should be that it is a Divine revelation, not a human product. By adhering to this principle, the interpreter ensures the preservation of Islamic concepts related to the sanctity of the Quran. Scholars have emphasized the importance of having correct beliefs and considered it a condition for the interpreter. Al-Suyuti said, "Know that one of the conditions is correct belief first and foremost, and adherence to the Sunnah of the religion. If one's faith is questionable, how can one be trusted with worldly matters, let alone with religious ones?" This is a necessary requirement imposed by the nature of faith, which holds that the Quran is the book revealed by Allah to His Prophet without addition or omission, and it must be viewed from a sacred perspective. It serves

as the foundation upon which the interpreter relies. (Al-Suyyouti, n.d). "Belief has an effect on its holder, and it often leads them to distort texts or betray the transmission of information." (Al-Qattan, n.d). The research argues that asserting the Quran as a Divine revelation has a fundamental impact on limiting selectivity. This is evident through the following:

1. By affirming the Quran as Divine revelation, the Quranic texts become immune to selectivity or bias. This principle necessitates understanding the Quranic texts within a comprehensive framework, without ignoring any verse or fragmenting one text from another.
2. Affirming the Quran as a Divine revelation also requires adherence to the intended meaning of Allah, avoiding the pursuit of any ideological or personal goals. Commitment to this principle allows for distancing from any manipulation or imposition of external ideas or theories onto the text.

Second: The Quran's Immunity from Alteration

Ignoring the first principle, which asserts that "the Quran is a Divine revelation," would imply the possibility of distortion, as there would be nothing to prevent changes or alterations in the Divine intent. If the revelation were not Divine, errors could potentially affect it. However, since the revelation is Divine and connected to the unseen world, no error can penetrate it. (Al-Manthari, 1990)

The Quran's immunity from alteration is supported by several rational and textual indications. The Quran explicitly affirms this principle in multiple places, such as the verse: *إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ*. Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'ân) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)[(Al-Hijjr Surah, 9). The importance of this principle lies in the fact that the interpreter can approach the process of exegesis with confidence in the integrity of the text, ensuring that no word or phrase is overlooked or doubted, as there is no possibility of change or distortion in the text. (Al-Ridha's, n.d)

One of the consequences of claiming the possibility of distortion is the negation of the Quran's authority. The reliance on the apparent meanings of the Quranic verses depends on the belief that the text is free from any additions or omissions. Assuming additions would undermine the acceptance of the Quran's divinity, while assuming omissions suggests the possibility of contradictions with the apparent meanings, even if these contradictions do not exist in reality. Therefore, in both cases, one cannot fully rely on the apparent meaning of the text. (Al-Wa'ali, 1414AH)

Based on the above, it can be concluded that adhering to this principle makes it difficult to impose invalid interpretations on the Quranic text. Additionally, the belief in the Quran's immunity from alteration necessitates the stability of Quranic rulings and their relevance to all times and places. This, in turn, helps limit the phenomenon of selectivity in interpreting the Quranic texts or manipulating them to fit personal or institutional preferences.

Third: The Quran is a Wise Book

Wisdom is defined as knowing the best things through the best knowledge. A person who accomplishes tasks in the best way is called wise. (Ibn Manzur, n.d). The Quran describes Allah as wise, and this quality is also attributed to the Quran as His speech. *ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ*. This is what We recite to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) of the Verses and the Wise Reminder (i.e. the Qur'ân). (Aal-Omran, 58). *وَيُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ*. And Allâh makes the Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) plain to you, and Allâh is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surah Al-Noor, 18). *تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ*. These are Verses of the Wise Book (the Qur'ân). (Surah Luqman, 2). *الرَّ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ*. Alif-Lâm-Râ. [These letters are one of the

miracles of the Qur'ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. These are the Verses of the Book (the Qur'ân) Al-Hakîm. (Yunnus Surah, 1).

Some of the manifestations of the wisdom of the Quran include:

1- **The Internal Consistency of the Quran:** This refers to the absence of contradiction or conflict between the verses of the Quran. The Quran alludes to this in several places, such as in the verse: *أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نُنزِّلُ الْغُرُوبَ مِنْ سَحَابٍ مُمَجَّدٍ وَعَلَىٰ غُرُوبِهِمْ نُؤْتُونَ حَبًّا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَمْ تَكْفُرُونَ*. *كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لَوْجُدًا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافٌ كَثِيرٌ*. Do they not then consider the Qur'ân carefully? Had it been from other than Allâh, they would surely have found therein many a contradiction. (Surah Annisa, 82). The "contradiction" here is not the usual distinction between general and specific, unrestricted and restricted, or ambiguous and clear. Instead, it refers to the lack of contradiction and opposition between the concepts within verses that deal with the same subject. The Quran being the speech of a wise being implies that it is free from contradictions, as a wise speaker does not utter conflicting statements. This is in line with wisdom, which is one of the divine attributes. (Al-Ridha's, n.d)

Hence, the internal consistency of the Quran requires the interpreter not to isolate verses from their context to serve their own purposes. Relying on verses taken out of context inevitably leads to misleading and erroneous interpretations. On the other hand, paying attention to the internal consistency of the Quran ensures sound understanding and interpretation.

2- **The Rationality of the Quran:** One of the necessary implications of the Quran being wise is its rationality, as a wise person does not speak contrary to reason. Instead, their actions and words are based on reason. The rationality of the Quran has a significant impact on understanding and interpreting it. When attempting to derive any system of knowledge from the Quran, one cannot propose a system that is unwise or contrary to reason. The Quran's view of humanity, society, and history is a wise one. Therefore, any interpretation of the Quranic verses that contradicts reason will be disregarded. (Al-Ridha'ai, n.d)

Indeed, the assertion of the Quran's rationality contributes to understanding the Quranic texts according to sound reasoning, free from distortion and the fallacy of selectivity. Understanding the Quran from this perspective helps interpret the Quranic texts in alignment with the spirit of Islam, which addresses the intellect and reinforces values. A rational approach to understanding the Quran, and acknowledging the rationality of its texts, aids in minimizing contradictory interpretations that arise from selective readings, which rely on manipulating texts and evidence to justify specific positions.

Fourth: The Epistemological Correlation Between the Quran and the Progeny

The cognitive connection between the Quran and the pure Ahl Al-Bayt (peace be upon them) is a central and prominent issue in Islamic thought, particularly in the field of interpretation. As is well known, the Imams of Ahl Al-Bayt (peace be upon them) have a political and religious role that complements the role of the Prophet (peace be upon him), meaning that this role should not be neglected or their legitimate authority be disregarded.

This interpretive principle plays a significant role in curbing the phenomenon of selectivity, which has led to severing the cognitive link between the Quran and the Ahl Al-Bayt. The concept of this cognitive connection refers to the complementary role of both the Quran and the Ahl Al-Bayt, where the Ahl Al-Bayt represent a reliable source of knowledge after the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "I am leaving among you two precious things: the Book of Allah and my Ahl Al-Bayt. As long as you adhere to both, you will never go astray after me." According to this noble hadith, we can uncover the depth of this relationship and the prohibition of neglecting or excluding either side. Together, the Quran and the Ahl Al-Bayt provide a comprehensive understanding of the Quranic text and ensure the fulfillment of God's will, free from selectivity and fanaticism. This cognitive connection necessitates the presence of a reliable scientific methodology from which the interpreter can draw, without falling into the pitfalls of following personal desires

or assuming false interpretations of the Quranic texts. Thus, the "cognitive connection" can be considered a methodological criterion to reduce the phenomenon of selectivity, offering a balanced and comprehensive understanding of the sacred texts (Quran and Sunnah). Adherence to this principle eliminates the gap created by selectivity between the two bodies of knowledge, which has tainted some sects and schools of thought, resulting in interpretations less prone to the risks of selective reasoning.

Section Four: Mastery of Interpretative Rules

The term "rule" refers to a general judgment that helps in understanding specific rulings. The concept of "interpretive rules" is defined as "the general principles through which one can understand the Quranic text and derive its meanings." (Al-Sabt, n.d, Al-Mubaidi, n.d)

The research suggests a fundamental distinction between the concepts of "fundamentals" (أصول) and "rules" (قواعد) in interpretation. While the principles represent the necessary foundational elements that prepare the interpreter for a fair and unbiased interpretative process, free from sectarian dogmatism, personal inclinations, and biases, the rules come into play after the principles. They continue to guide the interpreter throughout the interpretative process, serving as a systematic framework for understanding the texts and regulating the process of revealing their meanings. (Al-Sabt, n.d, Al-Mubaidi, n.d)

Selective interpretation involves focusing on certain texts or evidence while disregarding others, leading to an incomplete or incorrect understanding of the text. Therefore, the role of interpretative principles emerges as "universal laws applied to specific instances and details of Quranic verses, through which the Quran's interpretation is understood. Their relationship to interpretation is akin to the relationship of logic to thought, as they prevent ambiguity that may arise" (Al-Didha', n.d). These principles serve as a methodological standard to limit the manifestations of selectivity, meaning that adherence to these principles necessarily leads to a balanced and objective understanding of texts. This ensures interpretations free from the negative phenomena arising from selective interpretative methods. Scholars have derived these principles from several sources, including: "The Quran, the Sunnah, rational axioms, established religious principles, common rational perceptions, the fundamentals of jurisprudence, books on Quranic sciences, and introductions to some interpretations" (Al-Ridha' ai, n.d).

Given the diversity of sources, differences have arisen among scholars and researchers regarding the classification of these principles. The purpose of this research is not to explore the extent of these differences or their classification methods. Instead, it aims to investigate the potential of interpretative principles to limit the phenomenon of selectivity. Thus, the study will present interpretative principles based on the classification provided by the author of the book *Logic of Quranic Interpretation*, as it is the most comprehensive in encompassing the majority of principles from various sources.

Section One: Principles Shared Between Interpretation and the Fundamentals of Jurisprudence

The fundamentals of jurisprudence are a discipline that establishes the principles and methods used to regulate the understanding of religious texts and deduce rulings from them. It is defined as "the science that studies principles resulting in methods for deriving religious rulings" (Al-Mudhaffar, n.d). Since a significant portion of the Quranic verses pertains to religious rulings, understanding them requires familiarity with the fundamentals of jurisprudence. This implies that such knowledge is a prerequisite for understanding and interpreting the Quran, and that all principles of jurisprudence are considered principles of interpretation (Al-Ridha'i, n.d).

First: Rules of Command (Amr)

The Linguistic Meaning of "Amr" (Command):

In Arabic, "Amr" is the opposite of prohibition (Nahi). It is derived from the verb "أمره" (to command him), and its various forms like "أمره" (he commanded him), "أمره إياه" (he ordered him to do it), and "فأتمر" (he accepted his command) indicate the act of giving a command. Linguistically, "Amr" refers to a "request for action in a specific form," and it can also be understood as a "pure request directed at the addressee to immediately fulfill its content." (Ibn Manzur (n.d.) Al-Fayoumi (n.d.) Al-Zubaidi (n.d.), Ibn Ya'ish (2001), Al-Jawari (n.d.)

The Meaning of "Amr" According to the Fundamentalists

In Usul Al-Fiqh (Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence), several meanings are attributed to the form of "Amr," including: the state of being, the act or action, the thing or incident, the obligation, or the request. (Committee for the Compilation of Jurisprudential and Foundational Principles, 2002). The linguistic root of "Amr" is associated with a request that pertains to the action of someone else. For the command to be valid, it must originate from someone of higher authority, as commands from equals or subordinates are considered requests or prayers rather than orders. Al-Khoei (1999). Therefore, the form of "Amr" typically indicates obligation unless there is a contextual clue suggesting that it is a recommendation (istihbab). (Al-Muzaffar (n.d.)

The essence of the command (Amr) is understood as a "request for action, either to perform or abstain from something." The execution of this request is typically immediate unless there is evidence suggesting a delay. (Al-Zalmi (2014), Al-Ridha'i (n.d.). The principle derived from the command is that "to order something logically necessitates prohibiting its opposite." This rule has significant implications for interpreting Quranic verses related to obligations, particularly in the context of worship and transactions. For instance, the selective or subjective interpretations posed by modernists on issues like fasting, pilgrimage, and other religious obligations may be challenged by this rule. They sometimes argue that these rulings are not suitable for all times and places, advocating for a reinterpretation of these obligations in line with changing circumstances. However, by adhering to the principle that a command inherently entails a prohibition of its opposite, it becomes clear that such selective interpretations may distort the intended meaning of these verses, undermining the stability and universality of Islamic law. The rule of command helps safeguard the Quranic rulings from subjective, personal biases and ensures that interpretations are in line with the original divine intent. (Al-Muzaffar (n.d.), Al-Zalmi (2014), Al-Ridha'i (n.d.)

In light of the previous discussions regarding the deviations of modernist thought, particularly their views on the hijab and the biased interpretations they have offered in this regard, applying the principle of the command (Amr) can help limit these erroneous interpretations. The modernist perspective argued that the obligation of religious duties, such as prayers, was a result of the social conditions during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They claimed that such obligations were not necessary, suggesting that practices like yoga could replace prayer. Similarly, they argued that zakat was not obligatory but rather optional. (AbdulMajeed, n.d)

By applying the rule of command, it becomes clear that the divine commands regarding acts of worship, such as prayer and zakat, necessitate adherence to these duties, without substitution or reinterpretation to suit personal desires or flawed ambitions. The divine directive to perform prayer or give zakat inherently includes a prohibition of neglecting or replacing these duties. This principle plays a central role in curbing selective interpretations, as it helps to understand the texts in their full context. (Al-Ta'an, n.d), (Al-Nabhuum,1995), (Al-Sharefi, n.d). For example, applying this rule confirms that prayer is an obligation that cannot be replaced by any other practice. This highlights the importance of interpreting texts within their complete context and rejecting selective or extreme interpretations that distort the intended meaning. The rule of command, thus, not only strengthens adherence to the divine laws but also provides a systematic approach that rejects interpretations based on partial evidence.

Second: The Rule of Prohibition (Nahi)

It is widely agreed among the majority of scholars from both Sunni and Shia traditions that the essence of prohibition (Nahi) implies immediacy and repetition. The prohibition indicates a continuous obligation to refrain from the prohibited act at all times. (Badraan, n.d). It is also a common belief that all divine commandments are based on specific purposes, either for the benefit or to prevent harm. As narrated by Fatima Al-Zahra (AS), "The obligation of faith is purification from polytheism, prayer is purification from arrogance, zakat increases wealth, fasting strengthens sincerity, jihad brings honor to Islam, and qisas (retaliation) preserves blood." (Al-Saduuq, 1443)

The ruling of prohibition is derived from the form of a command of prohibition through "the rational judgment of the necessity to obey the commands of the Lord, as part of fulfilling the duty of servitude, making it analogous to the command 'Do' in its obligatory nature" (Al-Ridhai'a, n.d). The principles of prohibition play a significant role in guiding interpreters toward balanced interpretations to limit selectivity. This is because adherence to these principles imposes several obligations on the interpreter:

1. **Commitment to the Objectives of Quranic Verses:** As previously stated, the objectives of the Quran pertain either to achieving a benefit or averting harm, which is realized through commands and prohibitions. This is evident in the verse: *الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَلَالٌ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حَلَالٌ لَهُمْ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا مُنْجِذِي أَخْدَانٍ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ*. Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them. (Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time when you have given their due Mahr (bridal-money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), desiring chastity (i.e. taking them in legal wedlock) not committing illegal sexual intercourse, nor taking them as girl-friends. And whosoever disbelieves in Faith [i.e. in the Oneness of Allâh and in all the other Articles of Faith i.e. His (Allâh's) Angels, His Holy Books, His Messengers, the Day of Resurrection and Al-Qadar (Divine Preordainments)], then fruitless is his work; and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers. (Al-Ma'idah 5:90).

The prohibition in this verse aims to achieve the general benefit of protecting individuals and society from the harms of alcohol consumption. Applying this principle ensures that interpreters avoid focusing solely on texts that serve their personal interests without considering the broader objective of the text. This issue is evident in modern interpretations of verses prohibiting alcohol consumption. Modernists argue that the prohibition in the Quran does not imply absolute impermissibility but merely avoidance. (Al-Ashmawi, n.d).

2. **The Implication of Prohibition in the Quran Requires Rejecting Arbitrary Interpretations:** Prohibitions in Quranic texts carry a clear implication of abstention. Applying the principles of prohibition to the text necessitates rejecting and avoiding any unjustified arbitrary interpretations of its apparent meaning. An example is the verse: *يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ مِزًّا ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ*. O you who believe! Eat not Ribâ (usury)^[2] doubled and multiplied, but fear Allâh that you may be successful (Al-Imran 3:130). Based on his theory of "upper and lower limits," Shahrour interprets the prohibition of usury in this verse to mean that only interest exceeding 100% is forbidden, while anything within or below this "upper limit" is permissible. Such an unjustified arbitrary interpretation is refuted by the clear implication of prohibition in the verse.

1. **The Implication of Prohibition Requires Adherence to the Integrated Context of Texts:** Prohibition is often understood through the integrated textual context of verses addressing the same

subject. This obligates the interpreter to consider all verses related to a particular issue of prohibition. This prevents selectivity by ignoring some texts related to the matter under discussion. For example, the verses addressing the issue of usury or alcohol consumption are scattered across the Quran. An interpreter who approaches these verses without considering this principle risks misunderstanding the intent of the Lawgiver or may have a preconceived agenda that compels them to adopt a selective approach. This leads to neglecting the implications of prohibition that can only be derived from the interconnected context. (Shahrour, n.d)

The Rule of Ambiguity and Clarification (Al-Mujmal and Al-Mubayyin):

Al-Mujmal (Ambiguous) refers to a statement that has multiple possible meanings without any indication of preference for one over the others. This necessitates the presence of a clarifying text (Al-Mubayyin) to complete the meaning of the ambiguous verses. Therefore, this rule plays a critical role in ensuring the coherence of context and preventing selective interpretation. (Al-Sabt, n.d)

Since the relationship between the "clarified" (*mubayyan*) and the "ambiguous" (*mujmal*) is one of absolute generality and specificity, this means that the clarified terms are part of the definitive (*mubkamal*) verses (Al-Ridhai'a, n.d). The significance of this principle lies in its role in curbing a unilateral perspective often adopted by selective interpreters who rely on ambiguous verses without considering the integrative knowledge between the two aspects. This leads to an incomplete understanding of Quranic verses. An example of this is the verse: " لا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ " No vision can grasp Him, but He grasps all vision. (Surah Al-An'am 6:103). It has been said that this verse is ambiguous because it does not specify what is meant by the negation of perception, whether it implies a complete negation of vision or merely negates comprehension and limitation without denying the possibility of vision altogether (Al-Ridhai'a, n.d). Others have argued that it signifies a complete negation of vision ((Al-Zarkashi, n.d., Al-Tabari n.d.), based on clarified verses such as: and **وَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَاتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ** " And when Mûsâ (Moses) came at the time and place appointed by Us, and his Lord (Allah) spoke to him; he said: "O my Lord! Show me (Yourself), that I may look upon You. (Surah Al-A'raf, 143). However, the clarification is found in other verses, such as: **وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا " نَاطِرَةٌ**. Some faces that Day shall be Nâdirah (shining and radiant). Looking at their Lord (Allâh). (Surah Al-Qiyama, 75:22-23). **كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ**. Nay! Surely they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day. (Surah Al-Mutafifin, 15)

Thus, applying this rule forces the interpreter to view the Quranic texts as an integrated whole. An ambiguous verse cannot be interpreted in isolation but must be understood in light of the clarifying verses. This approach ensures that interpretations are comprehensive, consistent, and aligned with the full message of the Quran.

The Rule of Restriction and Specification (Al-Taqyid and Al-Takhsees):

This principle is considered one of the important topics that usual scholars have given great attention to, due to its significance in understanding texts. The term "restriction" refers to "the limitation of the scope of the general term by excluding certain individuals or cases through a restriction" (Al-Ridha'ai, n.d). On the other hand, "specification" refers to "the exclusion of certain individuals from the general ruling, after the term was originally inclusive, but for the specification" (Al-Mudhaffar,).

This principle plays a crucial role in clarifying misunderstandings and providing a more comprehensive and integrated understanding of the intended meaning of Allah, free from fragmentation and selectivity. The Quran contains both absolute texts and restricting texts. Therefore, it is necessary to "distinguish between the two types and ensure that the former is interpreted in light of the latter, so that the restricting text becomes an indicator for adjusting the apparent meaning of the absolute one. There is no difference whether the restricting text comes before or after the absolute one" (Al-Khoei, n.d).

The goal of this principle is "to focus on the presence of both absolute and restricting texts in the Quran to understand the intended meaning of Allah" (Al-Mubaidi, n.d). Since a selective approach leads to limited understanding and focusing on one type of text while ignoring the other, it is necessary to adhere to this principle and use it as a standard to limit selectivity, in order to avoid failure in the interpretative process due to a misunderstanding of the divine intent.

Section Two: Common Rules Between Interpretation and Logic

The importance and necessity of logic in the interpretative process lie in its role as a tool for examining arguments and verifying the validity of inferences. This contributes to enriching the interpretation process by ensuring the correctness of understanding or deduction from Quranic texts. Logic emphasizes the need to employ concepts consistently, without bias toward particular opinions. One of the key principles of logic in interpretation is the rule of "paying attention to the meaning of words." This is considered essential in understanding and analyzing texts, as words are not merely verbal symbols taken at face value; they carry multiple meanings and dimensions that affect the interpretative outcomes. This means that paying attention to these meanings helps limit selectivity and one-sided interpretations. Logicians have divided the meaning of words in terms of the speaker into

1. **The Conceptual Meaning (Daleel Tasawuri):** This is the meaning that immediately comes to mind when the word is uttered by the speaker. It is the first, surface-level meaning that the listener or reader perceives.
2. **The Assertive Meaning (Daleel Tasdiqi):** This is the deeper, intended meaning that the speaker aims to convey. It includes specific, restricted, or figurative meanings, which reflect the speaker's final intention, even if the word itself may be used in a broader or literal sense.

For example, in the verse: "يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ". The hand of Allah is over their hands. (Al-Fatih surah:10). The conceptual meaning of the word "hand" (يَدٍ) is the physical, corporeal hand. However, the assertive meaning intended by the speaker (God in this case) is not the physical hand but rather divine power and control. Those who focus on the surface meaning of the word, like the literal interpretation, fall into the trap of selective interpretation, as seen with the literalists (Zahiri school). (Al-Asharai, n.d)

This distinction between the **conceptual** and **assertive** meanings is crucial in interpretation, as it helps prevent a superficial or one-dimensional reading of the text. The logic of interpretation demands that both the immediate and intended meanings be considered to avoid the risk of misinterpretation or selective understanding. Indeed, the necessity of paying attention to the meanings of words is crucial, as it prevents the

misuse of words to support biased perspectives. This principle imposes a constraint that limits the potential for deviating from the intended meaning of the text due to selective interpretation. Thus, we can conclude that the meanings of words play a significant role in reducing selectivity. By providing a broader understanding of the texts, this principle moves beyond the superficial, limited understanding of words. It offers a deeper comprehension of Quranic verses, ensuring that interpretations are aligned with the true, intended message of the text and not distorted to fit preconceived biases or selective views.

Section Three: The Rules of Arabic and Its Sciences

It is well known that understanding the language of any specific text is key to comprehending that text. To understand and interpret the Qur'an, one must be familiar with the characteristics of the Qur'anic language, which is the science commonly referred to today as (linguistics, or the science of language, or philology). This science has become widely used and applied to human texts, and Orientalists and modernists have applied it to religious texts, including the Qur'an. Therefore, one of the necessities that must be adhered to is the interpreter's understanding of the main features of the Qur'anic language, as knowledge of it provides a fundamental system that dictates a special and precise approach to the Qur'an, which is fundamentally different from other texts.

One of the most important features of the Qur'anic language is its realism. Realism here refers to the avoidance of myths and legends. The significance of this rule lies in the statement that everything the Qur'an narrates is realistic, and falsehood does not approach it from any direction. All the issues mentioned in the Qur'an, such as the unseen, history, the stories of the Qur'an, and the past nations, have a real meaning and are not related to symbolism or mythology. Thus, the claims of modernists that the Qur'anic stories are merely myths narrated by the Qur'an are refuted. (Al-Ridha'i, n.d). Moreover, the entire set of language rules in its various sciences, such as (morphology, syntax, and rhetoric), has a profound impact on understanding and interpreting the Qur'anic text. Correct understanding requires adherence to the proper linguistic rules, as they ensure accuracy in interpretation by obliging the avoidance of incorrect interpretations. (Al-Ridha'i). This allows these rules to provide an understanding that enables the interpreter to determine the correct structures of words, thereby preventing interpretations that rely on interpreting a single word or sentence for specific purposes.

Section Three: Common Principles between Interpretation and Quranic Sciences

A comprehensive understanding of the Quranic sciences is an essential standard in limiting selective interpretations. Knowledge of aspects like *Asbab al-Nuzul* (reasons for revelation) and reconciling the ambiguous with the clear verses play a key role in limiting such biases. A well-rounded understanding of the Quranic sciences provides a clear methodology for engaging with Quranic texts, including how to reconcile ambiguous verses with the clear ones and how to understand rulings in light of the circumstances and contexts surrounding the text.

First: Understanding the Reasons for Revelation (*Asbab al-Nuzul*)

The reasons for revelation are among the most important foundations for understanding Quranic verses. Through this knowledge, a comprehensive understanding is achieved, which helps in preventing selective interpretations. Knowing the context of revelation clarifies the purpose and intent behind specific verses. By applying the principle of understanding the text in light of the reasons for its revelation, it becomes possible to avoid using Quranic verses to justify particular stances or objectives that deviate from the true goals and purposes of the Quran. The concept of *Asbab al-Nuzul* (reasons for revelation) refers to the events or circumstances that occurred during the time of revelation, which prompted the descent of the divine message. As expressed by Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, it refers to: "events that took place during the time of revelation, which necessitated the descent of the revelation concerning them." (Al-Sadr, n.d). The sources of

Quranic sciences have used two terms in relation to this concept: *Shan al-Nuzul* (the occasion of revelation) and *Asbab al-Nuzul* (the reasons for revelation). (Al-Ma'rifah, n.d)

- *Shan al-Nuzul* refers to the general matter or event for which a verse or surah was revealed, offering an explanation or clarification of the issue at hand.
- *Asbab al-Nuzul*, on the other hand, refers to specific issues or problems that prompted the revelation of a verse, such as an ambiguous situation, a question with no clear answer, or an event that lacked a solution, which the verse aimed to address. (Al-Ridha'a, n.d)

Scholars have differing views on the significance of the reasons for the revelation (*Asbab al-Nuzul*) in understanding and interpreting the verses. Among the Shi'a scholars: Imamiyah scholars argue that the reason for the revelation is important in clarifying the intended meaning of the verse and removing any ambiguity. It serves as an indicator of the meaning. (Al-Marifah, n.d). Others say: "The verses are independent in their expression and are not limited by the reason for their revelation. This applies to Qur'anic verses that were revealed for specific reasons, such as particular incidents, but the reason for their revelation only applies to one of many possible understandings." (Al-Tabtabai, n.d). The Sunni scholars have shown great interest in the reasons for the revelation, asserting that it is impossible to understand the interpretation of a verse without knowing its reason for revelation. One of the main subsidiary rules regarding the reasons for the revelation is: "The general meaning of the wording is more important than the specific reason for its revelation." It is said, "The reason for the revelation does not limit the ruling to the incident, nor does the ruling end when the incident ends, because the explanation is general, and the interpretation is absolute." This view is also held by the majority of Sunni scholars. Al-Zarkashi says, "There are verses that, although revealed for specific reasons, have been universally applied, such as the verse on the mutual cursing and others." (Al-Zarkashi, n.d). Therefore, applying this rule requires moving beyond the limitation of verses to their specific reasons for revelation, which could be selective. This rule gives a sense of universality and renewal in the verses of the Qur'an. It is also important to note that the reason for the revelation can sometimes limit the application of a verse to a specific person or situation, due to the contextual clue. In such cases, the context takes precedence over the general meaning. Al-Suyuti says, "If the verse was revealed for a specific person and there is no generality in its wording, it is limited to that person." (Al-Suyuti, n.d).

Thus, the understanding and careful consideration of these detailed matters play a crucial role in limiting selective interpretations and distortions that could hinder the correct understanding of the Quran. Such practices might lead to deviating from the intended meaning of Allah's words or misdirecting the application of verses according to the interpreter's personal views or biases, as seen in the interpretations of verses related to *Imamate*.

Second: Referring the Ambiguous (*Mutashabihat*) to the Clear (*Muhkamat*)

The importance of this principle lies in its foundation within the Quran itself. Allah says: هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ "He it is Who has sent down to you the Book; in it are verses that are clear (*Muhkamat*) - they are the foundation of the Book - and others are ambiguous (*Mutashabihat*)." (Al-Omran surah 3:7). The term *Muhkam* refers to something that is clear, precise, and firmly established. It means connecting one part of something to another so that everything forms a simple, cohesive whole without fragmentation or ambiguity. Referring the ambiguous verses to the clear verses is considered one of the important principles to achieve balance and avoid selectivity in interpretation. Since the ambiguous verses may carry meanings that appear unclear or could be interpreted in various ways depending on the interpreter's inclinations and viewpoints, referring them back to the clear verses helps in understanding the meaning accurately, free from bias or personal preference. The "clear verses" (Al-Ayat al-Muhkamat) serve as a reference for other verses, governing their apparent meanings and clarifying the correct and intended meaning of the ambiguous verses (Al-Ayat al-Mutashabihat). The ambiguous

verses should be referred back to the clear verses that are relevant to their subject matter, and their interpretation should be guided by the context of the clear verse.

By applying this principle, objectivity in interpretation can be enhanced, which requires avoiding individual interpretations based on the interpreter's mood or cultural background. An example of this is what has been done by proponents of deviant sects and rigid ideological movements, who cling to ambiguous verses (*Mutashabihat*) and interpret them according to their own intellectual or sectarian foundations. This highlights the importance of applying this principle, as it preserves the coherence of Quranic meanings, ensuring that the correct and precise meanings of the legal texts are reached. Thus, it can be said that the interpretive rules, regardless of their sources, serve as essential methodological and practical tools to limit selective interpretation. They enforce adherence to a comprehensive scientific methodology for understanding texts. Complying with these principles achieves the objective goal of interpretation, leading to an interpretation free from the manifestations of selectivity that arise from piecemeal reading and bias.

Conclusions

After completing this research journey with the facilitation of Allah, the research reached a number of scientific and methodological results regarding the concept of selectivity and its impact on the interpretation records:

1. There is a difference between using the concept of "selectivity" linguistically and technically. Linguistically, selectivity means "choosing the best", whereas technically there is another stage that follows this choice in addition to meaning, which is the "reconciliation" between these selected elements. This "reconciliation" can either be between compatible elements, resulting in "reconciliatory selectivity," or between conflicting elements, resulting in "arbitrary, artificial selectivity."
2. Objectivity, with its three meanings: "objectivity in contrast to subjectivity and bias, objectivity as the connection between the external reality and the Quran to derive a Quranic perspective on that reality, and objectivity as the gathering of Quranic verses related to a specific topic," is considered one of the fundamental pillars to limit the phenomenon of selectivity. Based on the first meaning, objectivity regulates and limits subjective tendencies and bias. Through the second meaning of objectivity, it is possible to limit blind imitation, which is one of the consequences of selectivity. What objectivity seeks in this context is to arrive at a Quranic perspective on a specific topic, free from the extremes of selectivity, bias, or imitation of a particular direction or opinion. As for the third meaning of objectivity, it limits the characteristic of narrowness often found in the selective approach. Here, objectivity provides a comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied, while selectivity offers an incomplete understanding, far from the true meaning of the text.
- Given the diversity of interpretive trends and methodologies imposed by a number of significant reasons and circumstances, such as: the inclusion of the Quran with a set of interconnected verses, the divine command to refer to the Prophet (peace be upon him), the variety of beliefs and opinions, the introduction of non-Muslim ideas and sciences into the Islamic arena, the difference in sources and tools of interpretation, and modern trends in interpretation, all of this necessitated that the interpreter benefit from all accepted methodologies such as: the method of interpreting the Quran by the Quran, the narrational method, the scientific method, the symbolic method, and the rational method, to clarify the intended meaning of the verses in a comprehensive manner.
4. The interpretive principles are among the most important criteria for limiting selectivity. This importance arises from the interpreter's acknowledgment and submission to these principles. One of these principles is the belief that the Quran is divine revelation, which makes the Quranic texts immune from the application of selectivity or bias in their understanding and interpretation.

5. Since selectivity means focusing on certain texts or proofs without considering others, leading to a wrong or incomplete understanding of the text, the role of interpretive rules becomes crucial. These rules are considered universal laws that apply to the instances and details of Quranic verses. Through them, the interpretation of the Quran is known, and they prevent any ambiguity that may arise, serving as a methodological standard to limit the manifestations of selectivity. This means that adhering to these rules inevitably leads to understanding the texts in an objective and balanced manner, ensuring the development of an objective interpretation free from the negative phenomena resulting from the selective approach in interpretation.

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