



Analysis of the Tensive Discourse System in Imam Ali (AS) 's Letters to Mu'awiyah in Nahj al-Balaghah

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1. Introduction

Semiotic-semantic discourse analysis, as a suitable model for religious text analysis, particularly Nahj al-Balaghah, utilizes the tensive semiotics model introduced by Jacques Fontanille and Claude Zilberberg. This model delves into the intricate interplay between intensive (emotional, internal) and expansive (cognitive, external) valencies, offering valuable insights into the dynamic structure of the text, emphasizing the tensive-active and sensory-perceptive relationships. This article explores how meaning is intricately woven in the enunciation, bridging the gap between quantitative and qualitative dimensions, thus shedding light on the production of meaning in the discourse processes within the Imam's letters to Mu'awiyah. The study transcends a mere analysis of the fixed letter structure, focusing on the fluid and adaptable nature of the letters' production process and the interactive dimension between the agent and the actor in the enunciation space.

2. Materials and methods

In the realm of the tensive model, the discourse experiences both engagement and disengagement processes, which significantly impact its dynamics. Disengagement marks a departure from the enunciation space, distancing itself from the realm that was originally shaped by one presence, ultimately expanding while decreasing intension. This shift unveils new horizons and introduces other agents into the discourse, illustrating disengagement's essence as an act of expansion and amplification. Conversely, engagement propels the discourse back towards its origin, emphasizing intension over extension, returning to the nearest reference point and refocusing the discourse. This research harnesses intensive semiotics to delve into the discourse processes present in Imam Ali's (AS) letters to Mu'awiyah. It

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pioneers an exploration into how "tensive discourse" unfolds in letters, particularly in the realms of emotion and cognition. Within this interactive space, meaning and action emerge, propelled by the underlying tension.

Imam Ali (AS) orchestrates a dynamic discourse within the tensive system, particularly concerning his actions and those of Mu'awiyah, who seeks his allegiance and responds to his revelations. This discourse operates through the mechanisms of engagement (conjunction) and disengagement (disjunction), giving rise to meaning and action. The letters' tensive structure mirrors the interplay between Imam Ali (AS) and Mu'awiyah, revealing the intricacies of sensory-perceptive processes and their impact on discourse. In these confrontations between the discourse parties, marked by conjunction and disjunction in the enunciation and interaction space, the letters' discourse leans toward the center of discourse, centered around imamate and allegiance, transcending mere actions to embrace the aesthetic dimensions of the final outcome.

Jacques Fontanille's theory (1998: 67) introduces a tension schema for discourse, akin to a coordinate diagram, with the vertical axis (y) representing emotional pressure and the horizontal spatial axis (x). This framework highlights the critical role of extension and intension, distinguishing between direct valency when both parameters move in the same direction (increase or decrease), and inverse correlation when they move in opposite directions (e.g., decreased extension with increased intension, or vice versa). As a result, the tensive space accommodates four types of extensive-intensive valencies, creating a rich landscape for the discourse (Fontanille, 2006: 39-40).

3. FIGURES

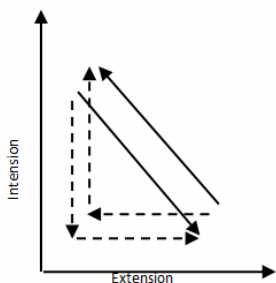


Figure1: Inverse correlation

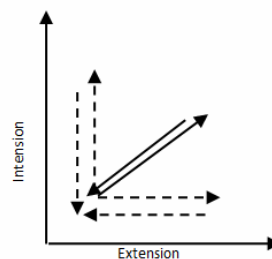


Figure 2: Direct correlation

3. Results and discussion

This paper examines the tensive discourse system in Imam Ali's (AS) letters to Mu'awiyah. The discourse stance reveals a kind of discourse orientation for developing relationships and interactions between convergent and divergent forces. Enunciation is a fluid stream in which the interaction of two intensive (emotive) and extensive (cognitive) valencies of the discourse causes the production of meaning in discourse, the fluidity of meaning, and its evolution owing to the tensive process of discourse. This formation is a function of the presence of a semantic sign. The study aims to examine the letters of Imam Ali (AS) to respond to Mu'awiyah's accusations and revelations and their impact on the audience's understanding using the tensive discourse system and pass the conditions of discourse separation and connection. In a tensive discourse system, the intensive and extensive layers play roles in interaction with each other and create an external connection of the intensive

and extensive valencies of the discourse. As an enunciator, Imam Ali (AS) becomes a dynamic actor in the process of dynamic and fluid semantics, giving meaning and value to the truth of his “allegiance” and “legitimacy” in the tensive discourse system. Therefore, Imam used a particular tensive and linguistic structure to convey meaning, breaking the semantic system of Mu’awiyah’s domination and showing Mu’awiyah by exposing his unauthorized acts, behaviors, and speeches. Using these signs increases the emotion in the word, and the language achieves the impossible times and places and, as a result, has a more significant impact on the reader.

4. Conclusion

In the letters of the Imam to Muawiyah, tension serves as a prelude to action, emerging in the interaction between the agents as they seek to redefine the discursive model, resulting in semantic fluctuations. The discourses within these letters, marked by their sensory-perceptive and tensive nature, along with actions of value, can be analyzed through semiotic-semantic analysis to assess the dimensions of tension and action within the discourse process in a fluctuating and intermediate state. Additionally, the discourse system in Imam's letters to Mu’awiyah adheres to an ascending and descending tense structure, with the descending structure complementing the ascending one. This study employed a library-based and applied-analytical approach. The findings reveal that the discourse system in Imam Ali 6-9-10’s letters to Mu’awiyah exhibits three tensive structures: amplification, attenuation, and ascendance.

Keywords: Discourse, Imam Ali (AS)’ Letters, Mu’awiyah, Semiotic-Semantics, Tensive Model