Hermeneutics and Communication

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**Source 1:** Kosten, A & Patterson, R. (2011). *Biblical interpretation exploring the hermeneutical triad of history, literature, and theology.* Kregel Academic.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**

Why would we want to take the time and exert effort to learn to interpret Scripture correctly? First of all, we want to do it because we are seekers of the truth, and we realize that truth sets us free while error enslaves. Many cults have arisen because of their flawed interpretation of scripture. (p.59).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the crucial element of the History of Hermeneutics.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This additive literature supports the importance of understanding and rightly applying hermeneutics, especially regarding biblical interpretation. It highlights the detriment that can be associated with misinterpretation. When the Word of God is misinterpreted, it can lead people to destruction.

**Contextualization:**  Too many incidents have occurred in which people have manipulated and even weaponized the Word of God to benefit their agendas. An example of a cult going down the road of destruction was highlighted in Waco, Texas, in 1993.

Under the guise of religion, a religious cult group called the Branch Davidians were committing some nefarious and even illegal acts, which prompted several law enforcement agencies to band together to seize the Branch of Davidians compound. A gunfight ensued, and more than seventy people lost their lives.

**Source 2:** Bloom, A. (1987) *The* c*losing of the American mind.* Simon & Schuster Paperbacks.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Every educated system has a moral goal that is tries to attain and that informs the curriculum. It wants to produce a certain kind of human being. This intention is more or less explicit, more or less a result of reflection; but even the neutral subjects, like reading and writing and arithmetic, take their place in a vision of the educated person (p.26.)**.**

**Essential Element:** Principles of Hermeneutics

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This statement is variant. Although the intentions of the statement would support an additive rating, it is variant in the sense that it supports the principles of hermeneutics, which rightly interpret language. Every educated system does not have a moral goal, which is evident by various school districts' codes of conduct and lack of empathy. The goal should be to create an environment where students can develop a moral compass and an appetite for becoming better students. Currently, the goal above is far from being the focal point of our public education systems. In my state, the focal point is improving test scores!

**Contextualization:** It would be great if every education system were built on a cornerstone that supported having and, equally as important, maintaining a moral goal but does not.

 Still, in modern times, it’s apparent that the most important thing (at least in my state) is that test scores increase regardless of whether the student gets better (in terms of developing a moral compass or learning how to become a good student).

**Source 3:** Kaiser, W & Silva M. (1994,2007). Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics, the search for meaning.Zondervan Academic

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** The *term hermeneutics* (as well as its more ambiguous and even mysterious cousin, *hermeneutic)* has become increasingly popular in recent decades. As a result, it has been pulled and stretched every which way. With so many writers using the word, it seems to behave as a moving target, and some readers have known anxiety attacks as they seek, in vain, to pin down and figure out what it means.

Its traditional meaning is relatively simple: the discipline that deals with principles of interpretation. Some writers like to call it the *science* of interpretation; others prefer to speak of the *art* of interpretation (perhaps with the implications, “Either you’ve got it, or you don’t”). Apart from such differences of perspective, the basic concern of hermeneutics is plain enough.

It remains to be added, however, that when writers use the word hermeneutics, most frequently, what they have in mind is biblical interpretation. Even when some other text is being discussed, the Bible likely lurks in the background. (p.17).

**Essential Element:** Approaches of Hermeneutics

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote is additive; the author illuminates how the word hermeneutics has been moved and stretched in various directions, making the meaning an ambiguous moving target. At its core, Hermeneutics is the principle and or discipline of “accurate” interpretation.

**Contextualization:**  To begin with, I concur the word hermeneutics has been moved and stretched in various directions, making the meaning an ambiguous moving target. Secondly, although the straightforward meaning of the word may be simple, the statement above regarding the fluidity of the word still makes it somewhat complex. Lastly, although I started my college education at a secular institution, I didn't become familiar with hermeneutics until I entered the seminary. Therefore, I agree without hesitation that when the word hermeneutics is mentioned, the Bible immediately comes to mind.

**Source 4:** Townley, M. et al., (2023). Ready or not? A pilot study of graduate students’ and instructors’ perceptions of the effectiveness of online support modules for enhancing academic performance. *Education Science, 13*(7), pp 656. hhtps://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13070656

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** According to the author’s research, “Issues and Challenges for Success in Graduate Studies, Graduate school is not a walk in the park”

The authors reference key terms such as online learning, academic writing, APA style, and locating academic literature. All the aforesaid terms are essential to the success of the modern graduate student.

The authors go on to mention that most people drop out of graduate school due to family challenges, work, personal problems and or financial reasons. The part of the research that was surprising and even somewhat almost unbelievable is that, according to the writers' research, only (1%) of the graduate school students surveyed dropped out for academic reasons. Also, the authors mentioned that research suggests that “motivation is key to graduate degree completion.”

**Essential Element:** APA Style

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This research is addictive. Key terms such as APA style learning, how to access academic literature online learning, and academic writing are essential to successful graduate degree completion.

**Contextualization:**  As a graduate student, the researcher hit the nail on the head with this one. When I started my master's program online, there was a huge learning curve, not so much academically but systematically. In other words, although the work was mildly challenging, formatting it for online submission gave me angst. Furthermore, I can confirm the authors' findings in that it’s extremely important to master time management, “so to speak,” while attending graduate school online.

Lastly, it was my experience that those of us who made it successfully through the program decided to embrace, trust, and finish the process.

**Source 5:** Townley, M. et al., (2023). Ready or not? A pilot study of graduate students’ and instructors’ perceptions of the effectiveness of online support modules for enhancing academic performance. *Education Science*, *13*(7), pp 656. hhtps://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13070656

 **Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** As such, adult learners come to the table with more life experience and often with diverse expectations, needs, and levels of preparation for formal study. Adult learning is multidimensional due to the converging factors that impact lifelong learning. For example, graduate students in education are typically experienced, full-time classroom teachers who balance work with busy home lives while seeking to expand their knowledge base and expertise in pursuit of higher credential levels and increased pay potential. Therefore, providing relevant curriculum and support specific to adult learners and their needs is a critical focus for their success.

 **Essential Element:** APA Style/Interpretive Methods in Social Research

 **Additive/Variant Analysis:** This additive statement highlights the flexibility needed for adult learners. It also indicates that seasoned adult learners are equipped with educational and life experiences, which brings a certain element to the equation.

**Contextualization:** Adult learners are generally life learners with a burning passion to embrace a constant self-improvement process. Unlike younger students per se, their goal isn’t so much in pursuing the degree. They are oftentimes on a quest to gain knowledge to become world-changers.

In graduate school, adult learners bring in various experiences academically and professionally (not to mention life lessons). Moreover, the adult learner usually has a job, family, and other life responsibilities competing for their time, meaning they must become time management experts.

**Source 6:** Cuff, S. (2019) Affected History:The Truth of Gadamer and Methods in the New Testament Hermeneutics. *Hermeneia (23),* 127-136.

[The truth of Gadamer and methods simon cuff - Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&as_ylo=2019&q=The+truth+of+Gadamer+and+methods+simon+cuff&btnG=)

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** If Gadamer‟s philosophical theory of hermeneutics is allowed to stand on its own terms, rather than securing right reading of the Scriptural text through the history of early or successive interpretations, it encourages us to recognise the possibility of readings and interpretations of the text which are equally moments of encounter, even if very different from our own. We might not be able to step outside of our tradition, or remove others from the tradition in which they stand, at least not this in life.

 We can however come to recognise the force of our own tradition on our own interpretation of the text, and come to terms with the impact of another‟s tradition on theirs. Such an insight prompts not relativism, but humility, until such a time that we are offered the ability to interpret the word face-to-face.

**Essential Element:** History of Hermeneutics

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive. The study supports Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons” theory in that we may have biases or closed-minded interpretations regarding dissecting written and verbal communication. One’s horizons can be expanded through interaction with others whose opinions may differ.

**Contextualization:** My position supports that Gadamer’s philosophical theory of hermeneutics can stand on its own merits. Gadamer’s fusion of horizons cuts through many facets of communication beyond a religious standpoint. There is reason to believe that we all have biases based on our experiences, exposures, education, and various other notable factors. When we take the time to actively listen “to learn” from others who have contrary opinions, a natural growth experience takes place. This does not mean we agree with their position, but through (open-minded) communication, we can understand their point of view.

**Source 7:** Cuff, S. (2019) Affected History:The Truth of Gadamer and Methods in the New Testament Hermeneutics. *Hermeneia (23),* 127-136.

[The truth of Gadamer and methods simon cuff - Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&as_ylo=2019&q=The+truth+of+Gadamer+and+methods+simon+cuff&btnG=)

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** This article seeks to revisit Gadamer’s own reflection on his philosophical hermeneutics, his resistance to a method, and the possibility of incorporating Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics within the interpretation of the text.

Ultimately, it sees Gadamer's insight not as providing an improved method but an intellectual humility with respect to our own and others' interpretations of various texts. Understood in this way, Gadamer prompts reflection on the influences that shape us as interpreters and a greater awareness of our own standing in relation to the text.

**Essential Element:** Approaches of Hermeneutics

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This variant statement is (which could serve as an additive), one as well as an outlier, pushing it over the line to be classified as variant. The statement one could determine as the deciding factor suggests that Gadamer’s insights don’t provide an improved method. One could argue that any method other than the status quo, depending on the interpretation of it is an improvement. Furthermore, if Gadamer’s approach influences people to be more intellectual in interpreting the text, that in and of itself is an improvement.

**Contextualization:** There is good reason to believe that Gadamer’s approach to hermeneutics has been studied by nearly all of us who attend seminary. His methods and philosophy have had a major impact not only on biblical interpretation but on interpreting various strands of text.

Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons” speaks to recognizing your own biases while simultaneously having an open mind to entertain contrary thoughts from others. Actively listening to someone whose opinion differs from yours leads to natural growth. If we all grow more tolerant, we can learn to respect and eventually love each other unconditionally (Matthew 22:37-40).

S**ource 8:** Seals, D. (2023). Perspective ponderings on peer review: Part 2. Manuscript critiques.

*American Journal of Physiology-Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology. 325*(4), 309-326. <https://doi.org/10.1152/ajpregu.00112.2023>

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Peer Review of Manuscripts: Definition, Goals, and Importance. In Part 1 of this Perspective, I defined the general concept of scientific peer review and briefly discussed the goals and importance of the process. Within that broader context, one definition of manuscript peer review would be “the process of subjecting an author’s scholarly work, research, or ideas to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the same field, prior to publication in a journal.” One might argue that this description could be modified to include contemporary mechanisms that allow public discussion of articles after publication in a scientific journal, but I think the basic definition remains accurate with that caveat noted. The process involves professionals outside the authors’ institution(s) and personal network(s), i.e., external, independent “peers,” assessing the novelty, validity, and potential impact of the research in question.

**Essential Element:** Scholarly Writing Techniques

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive. When writing a scholarly manuscript that will be read and referenced by individuals, especially those affiliated with academics, the contents should be held to a certain standard. One way to ensure this standard is prevalent would be to have other qualified individuals review and comment on the material.

**Contextualization:** The peer-to-peer review process is essential to maintaining a certain standard regarding scholarly posted/shared/promoted content. Creating and constantly adhering to the spirit and framework that supports effective academia hinges on the implementation and the consistent monitoring of rules and regulations to ensure researchers/readers the product has been adequately vetted, giving it the seal of credibility.

**Source 9:** Seals, D. (2023). Perspective ponderings on peer review: Part 2. Manuscript critiques.

*American Journal of Physiology-Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology. 325*(4), 309-326. <https://doi.org/10.1152/ajpregu.00112.2023>

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Manuscript critiques submitted by peer reviewers, assist the editors of scientific journals in choosing the most meritorious articles to publish and help the authors to improve the overall quality of their manuscripts while advancing science by “filtering” new research findings for validity before the information is added to the published literature.

**Essential Element:** Scholarly Writing Techniques

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This additive statement supports the important role of the peer review validation/vetting process. With this process in place, researchers can be certain (generally speaking) that the information is credible and, therefore, usable for their projects.

**Contextualization:** The peer review process is imperative to maintain the high standards of scholarly journals. Although this may not be the sole process in ensuring that a credible document is posted, it’s certainly a viable and effective way of keeping high standards in place. The peer review process insists that students produce a good product that will pass the test (so to speak) before it will be posted and accessible to the masses.

**Source 10:** Stan, M. et al., (2023). Modellnig research competencies in social and engineering science at master’s level programs. *Sustainability 15* (1), 574. https://doi.org/10.3390/su15010574

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** In recent years, research has become a priority in higher education policies and research competency (RC) is currently one of the most important capabilities to acquire. Research has been the driving force for many remarkable advances, and it crucial to becoming able to respond to the increasingly diverse and flexible environment of the global and knowledge-based contemporary society. Why is it important to develop RC, starting from pre-university education to university programs? It is because RC enables a deeper understanding of the investigated issues.

**Essential Element:** Interpretive Methods in Social Research

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive. In this information age, learning how to be an effective researcher works hand in hand with obtaining a college degree, especially master's and doctorate degrees.

To some extent, due to the fact hand-held computers (phones) are readily accessible and utilized by the masses, one could argue that being a researcher is woven into the fabric of our society. The question becomes, what kind of research is conducted, and are the sources accessed credible?

**Contextualization:** The question isn’t so much about the importance and benefits of conducting research. The question is how it is being done. In working with youth for several years and working with them in the education and technology center(s), all students appear to conduct research for their school projects. Nowadays, they all know who to research, but they don’t know where to research, nor have they been explained the difference between credible and untrustworthy sources of information. Being a researcher can be extremely powerful when conducted correctly, and it can be detrimental if the site's visited/referenced information hasn’t been vetted properly.

**Source 11:** West, S & Schill, C. (2022). Negotiating the ethical-political dimensions of research methods: A key competency in mixed methods, inter-and transdisciplinary, and co-production research. *Humanities & Social Science Communications, 9*(1),14. Hhtsps:// doi.org/ 10.1057/s41599-022-01297-z

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Methods “of research” are often thought of as neutral tools that researchers can pick up and use to learn about a reality ‘out there.’ Motivated by growing recognition of complexity, there have been widespread calls to mix methods, both within and across disciplines, to generate richer scientific understanding and more effective policy interventions.

**Essential Element:** Interpretive Methods in Social Research

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This additive statement represents the need to broaden research horizons. When speaking of expanding the research horizon, there should be a mix of qualitative and quantitative information gathering. The researcher could also gain a deeper insight into his subject matter if she acquired pertinent information outside the scope of normal research. For example, if the researcher is in the medical field, she could benefit from pulling relative information from sociology sites.

**Contextualization:** During my educational “formative years,” I believed that research was research, regardless of the source. Early on, I didn’t understand the value of combining quantitative and qualitative research. Moreover, if the information gathered during my research didn’t substantiate my belief or if it wasn’t additive to my position, I dismissed it altogether.

Currently, my position begins with starting with a credible source, not that Wikipedia isn’t credible, but it’s no longer on the list. When accessing credible sources, I conduct a balance of quantitative and qualitative research that gives me a 360-degree view of the subject matter that I agree with and often disagree with. The goal is to acquire enough information to make good decisions and construct a solid educationally-based document.

**Source 12:** Theodore, G (2020). Hermeneutics. *The Standford encyclopedia of philosophy.*

[Hermeneutics (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/)

**Comment 12**

 **Quote/Paraphrase:** Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation. Hermeneutics plays a role in a number of disciplines whose subject matter demands interpretative approaches, characteristically, because the disciplinary subject matter concerns the meaning of human intentions, beliefs, and actions, or the meaning of human experience as it is preserved in the arts and literature, historical testimony, and other artifacts.

**Essential Element:** Principles of Hermeneutics

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This reading is additive to my understanding that a well-thought-out method of interpretation is essential. The author mentions Hermeneutics, which is the study of interpretation, and the important role hermeneutics occupies as it pertains to numerous disciplinary subject matters to ensure that accurate interpretation is adhered to.

**Contextualization**: Hermeneutics, the discipline, art, science (and in some circumstances, philosophy) of interpretation, is essential to the well-being of society. As history has shown, when things are misinterpreted, such as the Bible, there can be grave consequences.

We, the people, need perimeters (such as the Constitution and other governing documents) to keep order in our society.

People aren’t infallible; therefore, a method to accurately interpret our governing documents is critical to ensure we live up to our highest moral, human, and civic standards. To that end, hermeneutics, the study of interpretation, is needed now more than ever.

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