Cohesive Devices in the Short Suras of the Glorious Quran

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Abstract
This study tackles cohesive devices in the short suras of the Glorious Quran which connect sentences and clauses or text relations that contribute to the text’s unity or texture beyond intra-sentence relations or ties. It is mainly based on Halliday and Hasan’s model of cohesive devices in English, in terms of both grammatical and lexical cohesive devices. Special attention is given to differences between English and Arabic that have been mentioned in the literature regarding the use of cohesive devices. Ten short suras of the Glorious Quran are analyzed for this purpose. The study confirms that the pattern of cohesive devices found in the data diverges from Halliday’s model in some respects. The main cohesive devices in the short suras of the Glorious Quran are the rhyming sound unit, reference, repetition, conjunction, and synonymy. The least used devices are substitution, ellipsis, hyponym and antonym. Keywords: cohesive devices, short suras of the Glorious Quran, grammatical devices, lexical devices, rhyming sound unit
Cohesive Devices in the Short Suras of the Glorious Quran


Cohesion is “one factor that distinguishes text from a random collection of sentences” (Graddol, Ceshire, & Swann, 2005, p.225). Text whether spoken or written is a semantic and pragmatic unit, but sentence is considered a grammatical unit (Quirk et al, 1985, p. 1423). Cohesion refers to the use of linguistic devices which connect sentences and clauses (Cook, 2001, p. 151). For Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 14), intra-sentence relations and ties are distinguished from cohesion, as cohesion deals with relationships beyond the boundary of a sentence. It concerns text relations that contribute to text unity or texture.

1. After they had left home, it snowed.
2. They left home. Afterwards, it snowed.

Example 1 has internal structural connectedness, but in example 2, the second sentence has a semantic relation to the preceding one expressed by the conjunction ‘Afterwards’, which is a cohesive tie.

As a matter of fact, cohesive relations can extend over a long text that consists of very long sentences” (ibid, p.294). The cohesive relation, which usually is anaphoric, is not always directly related to the preceding sentence, but can be related to more distant units. A text may also be as short as a single word utterance as in the case of “a road sign bearing the word DANGER” (Quirk et al, 1985, p. 1424).

Cohesion has been viewed as an objective linguistic aspect that can be realized in terms of lexical and grammatical cohesive devices, unlike coherence which seems to be a rather subjective aspect in which judgments may vary (Hoey, 1992, p.12).

Beaugrande and Dressler (1981, p. 49) relate cohesion to full or partial recurrence, parallelism, paraphrase, proforms, ellipsis, in addition to surface signals that relate events or situations by the use of tense, aspect and conjunctions. Yule (2001, p.141) also separates cohesion from coherence saying that cohesion by itself is not enough to enable readers to make sense of what they read since one may produce a well-connected text that might be difficult to understand; and Widdowson states that some texts are coherent although they manifest no cohesive tie (in Hoey, 1992, p.11). Different texts may manifest variation in the density of cohesive devices used. What is important for Munday (2001, p. 97), is “the density of cohesive devices and the progression of cohesive ties throughout a text.” This can be due to the degree of shared knowledge between the addressee and the addresser as less cohesive devices are needed when there is a high degree of such mutual understandings (Hyland, 2000, p.116).

Others believe that cohesive devices represent a form of explicit or implicit local coherence relations (Fairclough, 2010, p.122). Prasad (2008, p.154) states that cohesion creates
text, but discourse is created by coherence. Hickey (1998, p. 179) relates cohesion not only to
text, but also to context and the pragmatic factors that govern a communicative event. Bloor &
Bloor (2004, p. 101), who follow Halliday and Hasan, say that “the thematic structure of the text
is supported by the cohesive component of the grammar, which consists of reference, ellipsis and
substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion.” The work of Halliday and Hasan (1976, pp. 333-
338), Cohesion in English is held to be the most influential one on cohesive devices (inter-
sentential ties).

The main cohesive devices that have been suggested by Halliday and Hasan are:
1. Reference:
   - definite article (the), pronouns (he, she, it, him, his, they, their, them, etc.),
   - demonstratives and deictics (this, that, these, those, then, here, there);
   - quantity and quality comparatives (more, less, as many, as+adjective, comparatives, superlatives).
2. Substitution: nominal substitutes, verbal substitutes, clause substitutes, positive and
   negative substitutes (so, not).
4. Conjunctions:
   - additive conjunctions: simple additive conjunctions (and, so)
   - alternative additive conjunctions (or, or else)
   - negative additive conjunctions (nor, and not)
   - complex additive conjunctions (furthermore, add to that)
   - expository apposition conjunctions (that is, in other words)
   - explicatory apposition conjunctions (thus)
   - similar comparison conjunctions (likewise, in the same way)
   - dissimilar comparison conjunctions (by contrast, on the other hand, contrarily)
   - adversatives conjunctions (yet, though, even so, however, all the same)
   - contrastive conjunctions (in fact, actually)
   - emphatic contrastive conjunctions (conversely)
   - correction of meaning conjunctions (rather, I mean)
   - dismissal conjunctions (in any case, anyhow)
   - causal conjunctions (so, therefore, on account of this, under the circumstances, in that
case, then, otherwise, apart from this)
   - temporal conjunctions (just then, before that, in the end, hitherto, finally, at first, formerly, at
once, soon, until then, at this moment, up to now, from now on, to sum up, to resume).
5. Lexical Cohesive Devices:
   The lexical environment of any item according to Halliday and Hasan (1976, pp. 289 &
292) includes “not only the words that are in some way or other related to it……but also all
other words in the preceding passage…, but it is the occurrence of the item IN THE
CONTEXT OF RELATED LEXICAL ITEMS that provide cohesion and gives to the
passage the quality of text” and that grammatical alone cannot “form a text unless this is
matched by cohesive patterning of a lexical kind.

The main categories of lexical cohesive devices in Halliday and Hasan’s model are:
A. Repetition (full or partial)
B. Synonym (or near synonymy)
In this paper, the analysis of the inter-sentential-cohesive devices in the short suras of the Holy Quran will be based, as much as possible, on Halliday and Hasan’s model of grammar and lexical cohesive devices. But since languages may differ in the type and proportion of cohesive devices used in different languages (Baker, 1992, p.206), careful attention will be paid to any such discrepancies between English and Arabic. Aziz (1996, pp. 98 & 108) mentions a number of such differences between English and Arabic such as English prefers the use of the definite article, ellipsis, and substitution; where Arabic tends to use demonstratives, repetition and conjunctions.

Verses will be given numbers for easy reference. Intra-sentential ties will be treated as structural rather than cohesive devices, i.e. grammatical or lexical devices within a single verse will be considered structural rather than cohesive, and hence discarded.

In what follows ten short suras will be analysed to find out the main cohesive devices used in them.

**Sura 108: Al-Kawthar:**

1. إنا اعطيناك الكوثر
2. فصلي لربك وانحر
3. إنّ شانئك هو الأبتر

**Grammatical Cohesive Devices:**

Reference: ---

Ellipsis:
- In 6, the word ‘siraat’ is ellipted after ‘ghaira’, and ‘wala’ and thus cohesively connected to ‘siraat’ in 5.

Substitution: ---

Conjunction: ---
- The conjunction of causality at the beginning of the 2\(^{nd}\) verse (ف) connects it to the first verse.
- The conjunction of emphasis at the beginning of the 3\(^{rd}\) verse (إنّ) connects it to 1 and 2.

**Lexical Cohesive Devices:** ---

Synonymy: ---

Repetition: ---
- Antonym or opposition: الكوثر in verse 1 is semantically opposed to الأبتر in verse 3.

Hyponymy: ---

Sound or Rhyme:
In this short Sura, rhyme seems to play a major cohesive role in relating the verses and complementing their semantic unity with phonological conformity through the recurrence of the terminal rhyming sound /ar/ that occurs at the end of the three verses. Sound harmony or
rhyming, particularly terminal ones, have a cohesive function in the short Suras of the glorious Quran. The glorious Quran is, in the first place, a book to be recited when read.

Sura 110: Al-Nasr:

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:
Reference:
- The implied 3rd person pronoun in verse 3 refer to the pronoun in verse 2.

Ellipsis: ---
Substitution: ---
Conjunction: The conjunction "إن" occurs at the beginning of verse 2.
The conjunction of exception "لا" occurs at the beginning of verse 3.

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:
Synonymy: ---
Repetition: ---
Antonym or opposition: ---
Hyponymy: ---

Sound or Rhyme:
The terminal sound unit /ri/ occurs at the end of all the three verses.

Sura 112: Al-Ikhlas:

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:
Reference:
- The implied subjective 3rd person pronoun in the verbs "يولد" and "ولد" in verse 3 refers to the pronoun in verse 1.
- The possessive pronoun "له" in verse 4 refers to Allah in verse 1.
Ellipsis: ---
Substitution: ---
Conjunction: The conjunction "و" occurs at the beginning of verse 4.

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:
Synonymy: ---
Repetition: ---
The word "الله" is repeated in verses 1 and 2.
The word "الله" is repeated in verses 1 and 4.
Cohesive Devices in the Short Suras of the Glorious Quran

Ilyas Harahsheh & Obeidat

The particle of negation لَمُ is repeated in verses 3 and 4

Antonym or opposition: ---

Hyponymy: ---

Sound or Rhyme:
The final sound unit /ad/ occurs at the end of the four verses 1-4.

**Sura 106: Quraish:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>لأَيَلَافُ قَريش</td>
<td>Iyaf Quraish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>اِيلَافُهُم رَحلةْ الشتاء والصيف</td>
<td>Iyaf them journey of winter and summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>فَلَيَعِبْدُوا رَبَّهُ هَذَا البَيْت</td>
<td>Let them worship their Lord this house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>الَّذِي أَطْعَمُهُمْ مِن جَوعٍ وَأَنْمِمَهُمْ مِن كُرْف</td>
<td>Which fed them from hunger and protected them from danger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grammatical Cohesive Devices:**

**Reference:**
- The implied 3rd person pronoun in verse 2 (الأَيَلَافُ) refers to قَريش in verse 1.
- The subjective plural 3rd person pronoun in (يَعِبْدُوا) refers to قَريش in verse 1.
- The objective plural 3rd person pronouns in (أَنْمِمَهُمْ and أَطْعَمُهُمْ) refer to قَريش in verse 1.
- The subjective 3rd person pronouns in (أَنْمِمَهُمْ and أَطْعَمُهُمْ) refer to رَبَّ in verse 3.

**Ellipsis:** ---
**Substitution:** ---
**Conjunction:** The conjunction فَ occurs at the beginning of verse 3.

**Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:**

**Synonymy:** ---
**Repetition:** ---
The word الأَيَلَافُ is repeated at the end of verses 1 and 2.

**Antonym or opposition:** ---
**Hyponymy:** ---

**Sound or Rhyme:**
The sound unit /fi/ occurs at the end of verses 2 and 4, which contributes to the Sura’s cohesion.

**Sura 111: Al-Masad:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ثَبَتْ يَدًا أَبِي لِهَبِ وَتَبَتْ</td>
<td>Thabat hand of father of Hell and burned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>مَا أَغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالِهَا وَمَا كَسِبْ</td>
<td>What is your wealth and what you have acquired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>سَيَصِلُ نَارَةَ ذَاتِ لِهَبِ</td>
<td>Will he reach the Hell fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>وَأَمَرَّهُ حَمَالَةَ الحطب</td>
<td>He commanded his caretaker of wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>فِي جِيِهِ حُبْلٌ مِن مَسْد</td>
<td>In his hand a rope made of steel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Grammatical Cohesive Devices:
Reference:
- The implied possessive 3rd person pronoun in ماله in verse 2 refers to أبي لهب.
- The implied 3rd person in كسب in verse 2 refers to أبي لهب in 1.
- The implied 3rd person in سيصلى in verse 3 refers to أبي لهب in 1.
- The implied possessive 3rd person in امرأته in verse 4 refers to the wife of أبي لهب.
- The implied possessive pronoun in جيدها in verse 5 refers to the wife of أبي لهب.

Ellipsis: ---
Substitution: ---
Conjunction: The conjunction و occurs at the beginning of verse 4.

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:
Synonymy: ---
Repetition: ---
The word لهب is repeated in verses 1 and 3.
Antonym or opposition: ---
Hyponymy: ---

Sound or Rhyme:
The sound unit /ab/ occurs at the end of the four verses 1-4.

Sura 105: Al-Feel:

grammatical cohesive devices:
Reference:
- The implied 3rd person pronoun in the verb (جعل ) in verse 2 refers to رب in verse 1.
- The implied subjective 3rd person pronoun in the verb (أرسل ) in verse 3 refers to رب in verse 1.
- The implied subjective 3rd person pronoun in the verb (ترمي ) in verse 4 refers to طيرا in verse 3.
- The implied subjective 3rd person pronoun in the verb (جعل ) in verse 5 refers to رب in verse 1.
- The objective plural 3rd person pronouns (الملت ) in verse 4 and (جعلهم ) in verse refer to أصحاب الفيل in verse 1.
Substitution: ---
Conjunction: The conjunction و occurs at the beginning of verse 3.
The conjunction ف occurs at the beginning of verse 5.

**Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:**
Synonymy: The clause in verse 1: كيف فعل ربك is clarified in verses 3 and 4 establishing a form of context-based synonymy.

Repetition: The particle ألم is repeated in verses 1 and 2.
Antonym or opposition: ---
Hyponymy: ---

**Sound or Rhyme:**
The sound unit /i:l/ occurs at the end of verses 1, 2, 3, and 4.
The sound unit /u:l/ occurs in verse 5.

**Sura 113: Al-Falaq:**

1. قل أعوذ برب الفلق
2. من شر ما خلق
3. ومن شر غارق إذا وقب
4. ومن شر النفاثات في العقد
5. ومن شر حاسد إذا حسد

**Grammatical Cohesive Devices:**
Reference:
- The implied 3rd person subjective خلق in verse 2 refers to

Ellipsis: ---
Substitution: ---
Conjunction: The conjunction و occurs at the beginning of verses 3-5.

**Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:**
Synonymy: ---
Repetition: The word شر is repeated in verses 2-4.
Antonym or opposition: ---

Verses 3, 4, and 5 are semantically included in the superordinate خلق in verse 2.

Hyponymy: ---

**Sound or Rhyme:**
The sound unit /laq/ occurs at the end of verses 1 and 2.
The sound unit /ad/ occurs at the end of verses 3 and 4.

**Sura 114: Al-Nas:**
Grammatical Cohesive Devices:
Reference:
- The implicit subjective 3rd person pronoun in the verb
  الوسواس الخناس in verse 5 refers anaphorically to
  الوسواس الخناس in verse 4.
Ellipsis: ---
Substitution: ---

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:
Synonymy:
رب الناس, إله الناس, and ملك الناس, الخناس and الوسواس are referentially synonymous (referring to the devil).

Repetition (full or partial):
The word الناس is fully repeated in 1 is repeated in 2, 3, 5, and 6.
The word الوسواس and ووسواس stand for partial repetition.

Antonymy: ---

Hyponymy: ---

C. Sound and rhyme:
The recurrence of the terminal sound /na:s/ at the end of all the six verses contributes to the cohesion of the text.

Sura 109: Al-Kafirun:

Reference: ---
Ellipsis: ---
Substitution: ---
Conjunction: The conjunction و occurs at the beginning of verses 3, 4, and 5.
Cohesive Devices in the Short Suras of the Glorious Quran

Ilyas Harahsheh & Obeidat

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Synonymy: ---

Repetition:
- The word “أعبد” is repeated in verses 2, 3, and 5.
- The word “عابدون” is repeated in verses 3, and 5.
- The words “عابد” and “تعبدون” also occur in 2 and 4 respectively.

Antonym or opposition: ---

Hyponymy: ---

Sound or Rhyme:
The sound unit /u:n/ occurs in verses 1 and 2, and /i:n/ in verse 6.
The sound unit /ud/ occurs in verses 3 and 5, and /um/ in verse 4.

Sura No. 1 Al-Fatiha (The Opening):

1. الحمد لله رب العالمين
2. الرحمن الرحيم
3. مالك يوم الدين
4. إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين
5. إهدنا الصراط المستقيم
6. صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference: ---

This sura does not contain cohesively used personal pronouns.
First and second person pronouns are not considered cohesive, because context makes their referent clear; but third person singular or plural pronouns including possessive ones can be used as cohesive devices.

Ellipsis:
In verse 6, the word ‘siraat’ is ellipted after ‘ghaira’, and ‘wala’
thus cohesively connected to ‘siraat’ in 5.

Substitution: ---
Conjunction: غير

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:

Synonymy:
- مالك يوم الدين, الرحمن الرحيم, رب العالمين in verses 2, 3, 4 respectively are synonymous with Allah in verse 1.
- الصراط الذين انعمت عليهم in verse 6 is synonymous with الصراط المستقيم in verse 5.

Repetition (full or partial):
The word “صراط” is repeated in verses 5 and 6.
Antonym or opposition:
الضالون والمعضوب عليهم
Both of the above expressions in the last verse are opposed to
الذين انعمت عليهم in verse 5.

Hyponymy: ---

C. Sound or rhyme:
The recurrence of two terminal sounds in the opening Sura contributes to the cohesion of the text:
The sound unit /i: n/ occurs at the end of verses 1, 3, 4, and 6.
The sound unit /i: m/ occurs at the end of verses 2, and 5.

Findings:
The recurring sound unit has the highest occurrence as a cohesive device with 41 occurrences.
Reference comes next with 25 occurrences.
Repetition has 17 occurrences.
Conjunction follows with 16 occurrences.
Synonyms come next to conjunctions with 15 occurrences.
Antonyms have 7 occurrences.
Hyponyms have 5 occurrences.
Ellipsis has two occurrences.
Substitution has no occurrence.

Conclusion:
The main cohesive devices in the short suras of the Holy Quran are the sound unit, reference, repetition, conjunction, and synonymy. The least used devices are substitution, ellipsis, hyponym, and antonym.

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