

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 has been tackled by many scholars (Huddleston, Hudson, Winter, and Henrici, 1968; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik, 1972; Gutwinski, 1976; Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Beaugrande 1981; Baker, 1992; Hoey, 1992; Cook, 1992; Johnston, 1994; Cook, 1995; Aziz, 1996; Hickey, 1998; Munday, 2001; Prasad, 2008; Kolln & Funk, 2009 & 2010; Fairclough 2010, etc.).

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 addresser and the addressee 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).
3. Ellipsis: nominal ellipsis, verbal ellipsis, clause ellipsis.
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, then, 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)

- C. Superordinate-hyponym relation
- D. General word
- E. Collocation

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- إنَّ شانئك هو الأبتَر

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 2nd verse (ف) connects it to the first verse. The conjunction of emphasis at the beginning of the 3rd verse (إنَّ) connects it to 1 and 2.

Lexical Cohesive Devices: ---

Synonymy:---

Repetition:---

Antonym or opposition: الكوثر in verse 1 is semantically opposed to الأبتَر 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:

- 1- والعصر
- 2- إن الإنسان لفي خسر
- 3- إلا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات وتواصوا بالحق وتواصوا بالصبر

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

- The implied 3rd person pronoun in verse 3 (آمنوا وعملوا... وتواصوا... وتواصوا) refer to الإنسان (denoting all humans) in verse 2.

Ellipsis:---

Substitution: ---

Conjunction: The conjunction إن occurs at the beginning of verse 2.

The conjunction of exception إلا 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-Ikhlās:

- 1- قل هو الله أحد
- 2- الله الصمد
- 3- لم يلد ولم يولد
- 4- ولم يكن له كفوا أحد

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

- The implied subjective 3rd person in the verbs يلد and يولد in verse 3 refers to الله pronoun in 1.
- The possessive pronoun له in 4 refers to Allah in 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 أحد is repeated in verses 1 and 4.

The particle of negation لم 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:

- 1- لأيلاف قريش
- 2- ايلافهم رحلة الشتاء والصيف
- 3- فليعبدوا رب هذا البيت
- 4- الذي أطعمهم من جوع وآمنهم من خوف

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

- The implied 3rd person pronoun in verse 2 (لأيلاف) refers to قريش in verse 1.
- The subjective plural 3rd person pronoun in (يعبدوا) refers to قريش in verse 1.
- The objective plural 3rd person pronouns in (آمنهم and أطعمهم) refer to قريش in verse 1.
- The subjective 3rd person pronouns in (آمنهم and أطعمهم) refer to رب in verse 3.

Ellipsis: ---

Substitution: ---

Conjunction: The conjunction ف occurs at the beginning of verse 3.

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:

Synonymy: ---

Repetition: ---

The word ايلاف 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:

- 1- تبنت يدا أبي لهب وتب
- 2- ما أغنى عنه ماله وما كسب
- 3- سيصلى نارا ذات لهب
- 4- وامرأته حمالة الحطب
- 5- في جيدها حبل من مسد

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

- The implied possessive 3rd person pronoun in **ماله** in verse 2 refers to **ابي لهب**
- The implied 3rd person in **كسب** in verse 2 refers to **ابي لهب** in 1.
- The implied 3rd person in **سيصلى** in verse 3 refers to **ابي لهب** in 1.
- The implied possessive 3rd person in **امرأته** in verse 4 refers to **ابي لهب** the wife of **ابي لهب**.
- The implied possessive pronoun in **جيدها** in verse 5 refers to **ابي لهب** the wife of **ابي 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:

- 1- **الم تر كيف فعل ربك بأصحاب الفيل**
- 2- **ألم يجعل كيدهم في تضليل**
- 3- **وأرسل عليهم طيرا أبابيل**
- 4- **ترميهم بحجارة من سجيل**
- 5- **فجعلهم كعصف مأكول**

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

- The implied 3rd person pronoun in the verb (**يجعل**) 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 (**ترميهم**) in verse 4 and (**جعلهم**) in verse 5 refer to **أصحاب الفيل** in verse 1.

Ellipsis: ---

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 **ألـ** 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 غاسق إذا وقب
- 4- ومن شر النفاثات في العقد
- 5- ومن شر حاسد إذا حسد

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

pronoun **رب** in 1. - 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 **ما 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:

- 1- قل أعوذ برب الناس
- 2- ملك الناس
- 3- إله الناس
- 4- من شر الوسواس الخناس
- 5- الذي يوسوس في صدور الناس
- 6- من الجنة والناس

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference:

- The implicit subjective 3rd person pronoun in the verb
الوسواس الخناس in verse 5 refers anaphorically to ملك الناس in verse 4.

Ellipsis: ---

Substitution: ---

Lexical Cohesive Devices which include:

Synonymy:

ملك الناس, إله الناس, and رب الناس in verses 1, 2 and 3 are synonymous.
الوسواس and الخناس 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 يوسوس and وسواس stand for partial repetition.

Antonymy: ---

Hyponymy: الجنة and الناس in verse 6 are hyponyms in relation to الناس in verse 5.

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:

- 1- قل يا أيها الكافرون
- 2- لا أعبد ما تعبدون
- 3- ولا أنتم عابدون ما أعبد
- 4- ولا أنا عابد ما عبدتم
- 5- ولا أنتم عابدون ما أعبد
- 6- لكم دينكم ولي دين

Grammatical Cohesive Devices:

Reference: ---

Ellipsis: ---

Substitution: ---

Conjunction: The conjunction ولا occurs at the beginning of verses 3, 4, and 5.

Lexical Cohesive Devices:

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 **تعبدون** and **عابد** 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:

الرحمن الرحيم, رب العالمين and, مالك يوم الدين in verses 2, 3, 4 respectively are synonymous with Allah in verse 1.

صراط 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.

الرحمن الرحيم in verse 2 is a case of partial repetition.

Antonym or opposition:

الضالين and المغضوب 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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