

Understanding the Qur'ān textuality: a preliminary SFL-based analysis of the Qur'ān as text*

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المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة لمقاربة النصّ القرآني باعتباره نصّاً لغوياً مثل أي نصّ لغوي آخر من جهة تكوينه وإنتاجه. ولذلك تناولتُ أحد مفاهيم هذه النصّية ألا وهو مفهوم التماسك الذي اعتمدته نظرية النحو الوظيفي النظمي (SFL) في تمييز النصّ من اللانصّ. ويتحقق التماسك عبر أدوات، نحوية منها ومعجمية، تسمى بأدوات التماسك والتي، من خلال إقامة سلسلة علاقات معنوية (دلالية) تربط أجزاء النصّ بعضها ببعض، تضيف على النصّ هويته النصّية المُتسِمة بوظيفتها الاتصالية التواصلية. بمعنى آخر، أنّ القرآن باعتباره نصّاً لغوياً استخدم هذه الموارد اللغوية، التي تتباين درجة مساهمتها بتماسك أجزاءه المختلفة، في إنتاج نصّه أو نصوصه.

Abstract

This study aimed to show that the Qur'ān, irrespective of its religious foundations, is a text, like any other text. As such it has a texture (textuality), a feature shared by all texts, which defines it as being text. Textuality (texture), which gives a text its text-ness, is a product of a network of semantic ties and relations working inside text rendering it meaningful. Viewed from Systemic Functional Linguistic perspectives, these semantic relations are realized by text internal forces called cohesive devices. These devices are of two kinds: grammatical (of reference, ellipsis, and conjunction), and lexical (of reiteration and collocation). The Qur'ān, in creating its text (s), employs both these devices with varying degrees of contribution to its cohesion.

Keywords: Cohesion, Qur'ānic Arabic, Systemic Functional Linguistics, grammatical and lexical cohesive devices.

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1. Introduction

That the Qur'ān is a literary text is not new¹; it is self-evident (Boullata, 2000: introduction: ix, x; 2003; Neuwirth, 2006; Fatani, 2006). Like any other literary production, it is subject to literary study which makes it “describable by and accessible to analysis by the existing methods of linguistics” (Halliday, 1964/2002, v 2:5). The linguistic study of literature (i.e., literary works) actually takes textual description as its point of departure (ibid.16). When dealing with the Qur'ān as text, two connected points deserve attention. The first bears on the ambiguity of the concept of ‘text’ in Arabic²; secondly, the study of the Qur'ān has been and still is influenced by religious considerations.

The present study, based on Systemic Functional Linguistics, henceforth SFL, focuses on the common features the Qur'ān, as a text, shares with other texts. Central to this is the concept of texture, expressed in Arabic by the stylistic terminology of textuality. Texture refers to the relations that exist between text parts; as these relations confer on text its meaningfulness in terms of being communicatively effective (Halliday, in Halliday & Hasan, 1989:10-11). Put differently, the texture (cohesion) of ‘text’ as a whole is achieved through the semantic relations that establish connections between the different parts of text. The realization of these relations is carried out by the cohesive devices that consist mainly of two groups: the grammatical cohesive devices such as ellipsis, reference, and conjunction; and lexical cohesive devices such as reiteration (consisting of repetition, and synonym) and collocation.

In a nutshell, the cohesiveness of a Qur'ānic text is a product of the cohesive devices, which vary in their degree and importance. It is essential to highlight here that this functional perspective is in complete opposition to the view, prevalent in the Qur'ānic scholarship, that the Qur'ānic cohesion is special in that it is a product of unique (textual) devices confined to it (i.e., the Qur'ān).

We like to mention that the current study is not intended to be a comprehensive review of these devices; but rather to show the role(s) these devices play in producing a cohesive text.

¹ It goes without saying that the Qur'ān, as a literary work, has a rich repertoire of literary features. Arabs, as ‘speech makers’, could discern the different kinds of speech. They tried vehemently to explain what the Qur'ān looks like in comparison to pure literary (poetry and prose) or religious texts (soothsaying) (Boullata, 2003).

² The literary approach in Muslim Qur'ānic scholarship, however, is absent in the sense it is neither recognized nor developed. This is attributable to a religiously based dogmatic notion that firstly, treated the Qur'ān as a unified whole, and secondly, that its literary merits had always set it apart, “indeed above all other literary creations” (Rippin, 1983).

Therefore, more stress is laid upon the theoretical aspects (of these devices). In this regard, al-Jurjānī, in his analysis of the Qur'ān literary superiority, discussed some points of relevance³.

The study falls into four sections: 1-Introduction, with a few words touching on the Qur'ān, and the concept of 'text' in Arabic and its relevance to the Qur'ān; 2- A general outlook of SFL that offers a brief discussion of SFL characteristic features, the metafunctions, and the concept of text; and section 3 discusses the cohesive devices (grammatical and lexical) employed in the Qur'ān; finally, section 4, reports some concluding remarks.

1.1 The Qur'ān: brief notes

The word Qur'ān means 'recitation' or 'reading'. It is probably borrowed from a Syriac cognate word *qeryānā*, "lection, reading," (Graham, 1984:365-6). Its link to the Hebrew 'miqra' (recitation, scripture), is also possible (Abdul-Raof, 2006:520-22).

As to its structure, the Qur'ān consists of Sūras (totaling 114); and each Sūra consists of a certain number of āyahs (ranging from 7 to 287). Because the Sūras deal with different themes (topics), the Qur'ān should not be taken as one text; rather a set of independent different text units (Neuwirth, 2007:97-98), having their different contexts⁴.

The status of the Qur'ān language is, it is argued, identical with the standard Arabic high language of the time, referred to as Classical Arabic (Paret, 1983:196-99). In this regard, two interesting points deserve mentioning. First, the Qur'ān repeatedly emphasizes its language being clear Arabic; this is intended, Dayeh (2010:479-480) argues, to make explicit the Qur'ān preference for employing a very comprehensible language⁵ over a scriptural language whose only

³ In *Dalā'il al-ijāz*, al-Jurjānī showed a functionally-based understanding of language in general. This is expressed in his concept of 'speech construction' or *naẓm*, where 'the meanings of grammar' (i.e., the grammatical relations) are given priority over the structural forms.

⁴ It is worth citing the opinion of 'Izz ad-Dīn Ibn 'Abd as-Salām (d.1262 CE), who grasped this meaning: "One of the speech merits resides in that its parts are held firmly with each other; and are strongly interlinked in such a way that it (i.e., speech) maintains its whole unity (i.e., devoid of interruption & disjointedness). *But* this statement is *valid only* if such a speech deals with a unified whole topic (subject) which its start is linked to its end. If a speech occurs in different contexts, then it is not a requirement that there exist ties between its parts [...]. As to the Qur'ān, it is known that it had been revealed over twenty three years addressing different circumstances of legislations for different & variable causes [...]" (196?:278). Viewed from SFL, this implies that language of the Qur'ānic texts varies according to variation of use. That is, according to the concept of register, as elaborated by Halliday.

⁵ Cuyper (2011:1-24) states that "the application of rhetorical analysis to the Qur'ān demonstrates clearly that the Qur'ān is composed in accordance with literary rules known by the Arab society...."

virtue is its antiquity. Secondly, the Qur'ān is a unique oral discourse⁶ in that it shares many characteristics of spoken speech with poetry, prose and religious soothsaying.

1.2 Text concept in Arabic and its relevance to the Qur'ān

Linguistically speaking, the term 'text' originally denoted what is 'obvious', 'apparent' and 'manifest'; and these meanings imply no need for any further explanation or other statement to clarify. Such a signification, which is still evident in contemporary Arabic⁷, is relevant to the meaning of 'text' as a stretch of meaningful speech.

As to its use in the Qur'ānic scholarship, the term 'text' takes on two different meanings. Earlier scholars (in particular exegetists) were aware of such an interpretation of the word 'text'; and they understood it to refer only to the clear and self-evident āyahs of the Qur'ān with no need for more interpretation; however, since the thirteen century the term has come to mean and refer to the whole text of the Qur'ān⁸.

Derived from, and based on this later concept of 'text' is the idea of inimitability conferred on the text of the Qur'ān as a whole⁹. That is, the Qur'ānic text, having such superlative literary merits not shared with other literary productions, as a piece of literature requires a method of analysis specific to it¹⁰. Much ink, indeed, had been spilt on this notion.

⁶ In fact the Qur'ān is unique among scriptures in the extent to which it engages its audience and addresses them directly (Neuwirth, 2006:145-147; Paret, 1983:200). Moreover, the Qur'ān shared much more with the language of oral poetry than it did with any spoken dialect (Zwettler cited in Martin, 1982:374-375). Its orality is self-evident, its first hearers understood the dialogical relationship it establishes with its addressees (Tatar, 2001:88); they realized it as something which speaks to people, not as something which talks about someone/something else. The frequent use of the speech denoting verb 'say', in its different forms, is another indicator of its orality. It is occurred over one thousand times as follows: the form 'said' (he) 529 times; and 'said' (they) 332 times; the imperative 'say-you' for second person masculine 327 times form. Besides, the first Sūra (Q 96:1) started with 'recite in the name of your Lord'. There are other elements like the use of vocatives which presupposes the existence of audience addressed. Moreover, Acharti (2008, n16:168) holds that the formulaic density, in the Qur'ān, is well above 20 percent, the threshold to establish original oral nature. And such a high density suggests that: "[...] Muhammad (or Allāh or the Archangel Gabriel) was seemingly well versed in the techniques of folkloristic oral transmission" (Dundes, Alan, 2003:65 cited in Acharti, 2008).

⁷ For example, the usage of the signifier 'the raised platform' refers to a high and apparent place perceived by the audience; its old usage indicates the place where the bride was raised and seated to apply her adornments in a visible way to disclose her beauty. For more, see Lane, 1968 (V8, p. 51).

⁸ Abū Zayd extensively elaborated on this particular point in his seminal book "*The Conception of the Text: A Study in Qur'ānic Sciences*" (in Arabic).

⁹ The concept of inimitability occupied a central position in the Qur'ānic scholarship. The concern with this idea started in the second century (of Hegira). In the fifth century, however, 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d.470/1078) approached it from a perspective, different from his predecessor, which emphasized the literary nature of the Qur'ān.

¹⁰ Abū Zayd in a detailed study refers to the dilemma of the literary approach of the Qur'ān (2003).

So, how then is the textuality (texture) of the Qur'ān currently understood? Lack of space permits only a brief outline of two pertinent views. These views vary from understanding the (Qur'ānic) 'text' as an act of communication to a religiously apologetic one. The former, principally advocated by Abū Zayd, in defining and analyzing the textuality of the Qur'ān, takes an epistemologically & hermeneutically- based approach¹¹ influenced by the verbal act of communication theory¹².

The second approach, which took the theory of 'relevance'-commonly used in the exegetical works-as its point of departure, explained the textuality in terms of the organic unity. The organic unity is interpreted as follow: though the topics of a certain Sūra are different, there is nonetheless a thematic axis¹³ around which they (i.e., the topics) revolve explained in the light of "relevance relations that contribute to one's choice of the interpretation one assigns to relations between utterances". Based on that, the "textual relations" are understood as those which "hold together the variety of topics within one Sūra"; focusing on the "relations between different and seemingly unrelated topics that occur in one Sūra".

This second approach emphasizes the Qur'ān own specific cohesive constituents (Abdul-Raof, 2001; 2010); which are seen as argumentation developers, and smoothers facilitating text processing. This view, which lays stress on the rhetorical features¹⁴, pays little attention, if any, to the cohesive relations as expressed by SFL. Furthermore, it misinterprets Halliday & Hasan

¹¹ This approach is more interested in showing the human nature of the 'text' rather than its linguistic internal forces, especially if looked at from SFL perspectives. It seeks to strip the text of its non-human nature; and demonstrates that the Qur'ān bears resemblance to other texts. The influence of the Mu'tazilites' creed is evident. Furthermore, the approach considers the temporality (descending over twenty three years) and context (both historical and cultural) of the Qur'ān as indications of its textuality (texture). It means that the Qur'ān is a text, produced within a definite culture, which later on produced a new culture (i.e., historical context). Thus, denying its textuality leads to a freezing of its message meanings.

¹² Like other 'texts,' the Qur'ān has an originator (sender), a message (code), a receiver and a purpose to serve. Abu Zayd, in formulating this, combined two perspectives. The first is derived from the Russian linguist Roman Jakobson's perspective of text as a communication act (Rahmān, 2001:12-123); the second is from the Russian semiotist Jurij M. Lotman in considering text as a code –system of signs (Kermāni, 2006:172-173). Abū Zayd presented his model as follows: the Qur'ān is a message (communicative act) with a sender, receiver, and context, all working within a code or linguistic system (1990:27-28; 1995).

¹³ As exposed by El-'Awa (2006). SFL deals with thematic axis or organic unity as being one part of the thematic structure system, which is known as thematic progression.

¹⁴ Such as: alliteration, assonance, chiasmus, euphemism, isocolon, metaphor, paronomasia, polyptoton, simile, and synecdoche.

interpretation of cohesion¹⁵. This view echoes classic scholars' interpretation of 'the superiority of the Qur'ānic text', though in new clothes.

2. General outlook of SFL

Briefly stated, SFL is a socially oriented (socio-semiotic) theory that considers language as a resource for meaning making (i.e., meaning potential)¹⁶. SFL is therefore characterized by being systemic, functional and contextual; dimensions that give SFL its distinctive features as a linguistic theory.

By systemic, it is meant that language is viewed as an integrated series of systems' networks of meaning potential with a set of options (systems) that the speakers/writers select from; they are a set of unlimited options and choices of creating meanings, rather than as a set of rules. And the specification of this "total grid of options available to a speaker" is the function of the grammar (Morley, 2000:18).

The functional aspect means that nature of language is closely related to the demands made on it by human, "as a means of organizing other people, and directing their behavior" (Halliday, 2002/1970:173; 2007/1978, v 10:256). That is, "the particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve" (Ibid, 2002:174). SFL takes function as a fundamental property of language itself; it is something that is "basic to the evolution of semantic system" (Ibid: 173)¹⁷.

Finally, the contextual dimension stems from the 'societal' aspect of language, prioritized by SFL, as a theory of language, from its very beginning in that its work is done '*always and only* in society (Hasan, 2005:53. italics from original). Central to this is the notion of context that

¹⁵ Actually, Halliday & Hasan (1976:298) maintain that cohesion is necessary but not enough for texture of a text because it (cohesion) represents only one component of a three components system (textual metafunction) responsible for text formation (texture).

¹⁶ Meaning potential, in general terms, refers to a range of options that are open to a speaker of language to choose from. Simply put, it means what speakers of a language can mean.

¹⁷ It is essential here not to confuse the general meaning of function (i.e., use or purpose) of language with SFL own understanding [...] functionality is intrinsic to language in that the entire architecture of language is arranged along functional lines (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014:31). Hasan (2011/1994:292) holds that the social aspect is integral to language in that the concept of function is not limited to the social uses of language; rather the social uses of language relate to the internal system of language. For that reason, SFL sees that the concept of *function* needs to be more abstract than function equated with specific language use. It is only when functions are identified at a higher level of abstraction that they can be recognized as essential to *all* uses of language, and it is only when they are recognized as essential to *all* uses of language, becoming a property of the entire linguistic social process as such, that they can be viewed as integral to the system of language, serving to explain the nature of its internal structure by relation to its social uses. Hence, METAFUNCTIONS are abstract properties of language to the extent the concept in SFL is more abstract than the functions of languages in other functional theories (ibid: 294).

“Language, to be functional and meaning potential, should always occur in a social context of situation” (Halliday, 1978:13-23). In other words, every act of meaning (every text, spoken or written) has an environment (context of situation) within which it is performed and interpreted.

2.1 Metafunctions: modes of meaning

Language, from SFL perspectives, consists of three strata: semantic, lexico-grammar, and phonology. The principle controlling the relation between them is that of realization that works as follows: meaning (semantic) is realized by wording (grammar & vocabulary), which in turn is realized by sound (phonology). At the stratum of semantic, the language capacity to “convey meaning at three different levels gave birth to the concept of metafunctions” (Tatu, 2008:81).

The description of the metafunctions offered here will dedicate a relatively more space to the textual metafunction; because the cohesive relations- the topic of this study-, which are an essential component of this metafunction, has relevance to the text creation and production.

The ideational metafunction represents language as reflection in that it is essentially concerned with construing our experience of the world. The experience (knowledge), which this metafunction represents, covers that“.... of the processes, persons, objects, abstractions, qualities, states and relations of the world around us and inside us” (Halliday, 2002/1970, v 1:177,179). It means that the components of this metafunction are reflected in the grammar of transitivity, and are encoded in lexicogrammatical structures¹⁸.

The interpersonal metafunction represents language as action, “where language serves to establish and maintain social relations, i.e., the expression of the social roles through the communication roles created by language [.....]” (Halliday, 2002:175). That is, language serves as a channel through which interaction between people occurs both socially and linguistically in terms of expressing their “statuses, social and individual attitudes, assessments, judgments and the like¹⁹ (Halliday, 2002/1970, v1: 175-189)”. This metafunction is both speaker-and hearer-oriented (ibid, 2002/1979, v1:199).

¹⁸ These components cover the different types of processes (i.e. action, mental process, and relation), the different types of participants, and the different types of circumstances.

¹⁹ This refers to the basic speech functions, according to SFL, are statement, question, response, command and exclamation; whereby the speaker can vary his own communication role, making assertions, asking questions, giving orders, expressing doubts and so on” (Halliday, 2002/1979:189).

The third one is the textual metafunction. Its principal role is to contribute to the text-internal relationships²⁰. This role is actually an enabling or facilitating role, since both the ideational and interpersonal meanings “depend on being able to build up sequences of discourse, organizing the discursive flow, and creating cohesion and continuity as it moves along” (Halliday, 1978:130; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014:30-31). Put differently, in this way the textual metafunction, by creating text, allows language to effectively express ideational and interpersonal meanings (Halliday, 1978:130), through organizing their linguistic resources. By so doing, the textual metafunction “constructs ideational and interpersonal meanings as information that can be shared by the speaker and the addressee; and it makes this sharing possible by providing the resources for guiding the exchange of meaning in text (Matthiessen 1995:22). In other words, it allows both the speaker / writer to construct “texts”, and the listener / reader to distinguish a text from a random set of sentences (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014:120)²¹.

Due to its particular nature, its components are perhaps the hardest to interpret and represent among the three metafunctions (Matthiessen, 1995: 37-38; 53), because, unlike the ideational that embodies a theory of reality as interpretation and representation, the textual is not a representational one in that it cannot be turned back on itself to REPRESENT itself as the ideational does. Therefore it needs to be articulated in terms of the ideational metafunction (ibid. Uppercase in original).

In terms of its components, the textual metafunction consists of three structures: thematic structure system (Theme-Rheme); information structure system, presenting the same content as (Given and New); and non-structural system of cohesive relations (grammatical and lexical devices). We are concerned here with the semantic relations produced by cohesive devices.

2.2 SFL-based concept of text

The notion of text, in SFL, is taken to refer “to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole”, which is more than the sum of its parts (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 1-2, 7; Halliday, 2002, v1:223). This definition emphasizes that ‘text’ is

²⁰ The other important function of the textual metafunction is creating relevance to context of situation. That is, through this metafunction the meanings of the other two metafunctions take on relevance to some real context. Hence, it is called ‘language as relevance (the speaker as relating to the portion of reality that constitutes the speech situation, the context within which meanings are being exchanged)’ (Halliday, 2002/1979:199).

²¹ In other word, speaker-oriented choice is reflected in thematic structure, and listener-oriented choice in the distribution of given and new information (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014:120).

a unit of language in use, and not a grammatical-structural- unit, like a clause or a sentence, where size matters (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 1-2; Halliday in Halliday & Hasan, 1985/ 1989:10). In other words, text “does not CONSIST of sentences; it is REALIZED by, or encoded in, sentences”; and its parts are encoded and integrated one into another systemically in such a way that confer on a unique unity of different kind (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 2. upper case in original).

The term ‘text’, as an instance of the linguistic system operating in a context of situation, encodes these three essential features: texture, multifunctional diversification of language, and the social aspect of language.

As to the first, although it is made of words and sentences, a text is actually ‘made of meanings’; because meanings, in order to be communicated, have to be expressed or coded in words and structures (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:293; Halliday in Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989:10). Implicit in this is the notion of text as a process of meaning, and also as a product of that process. In the former, text is a continuous movement of a semantic choice or ‘flow’ through the network of meaning potential where ideational and interpersonal meanings are unfolded and carried forward by the interaction of speaker and listener (Halliday in Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989:11)²². As a product, text is as an output of the work of a network of ties (realized by cohesive elements) that gives it (i.e., ‘text’) its cohesion. The cohesion is that which confers on texture, which is a property that differentiates it from non-text. Secondly, a text expresses the functional diversity and multicity of language in that it is a polyphonic composition of ideational (content), interpersonal (interaction) and textual (organization of linguistic resources) “voices”. The “character” of the text is its pattern of selections in these various voices, and the way they are combined into a single whole (Halliday, 2002:230). Thirdly, as a “semantic unit”, text “functions as a unity with respect to its environment” (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 2, 4). However, this unity (a unified whole) is a unity of meaning in context (ibid. 293); which means that without a context of situation, which represents the semio-socio-cultural environment where the text takes place and unfolds, text cannot carry out social interaction (communication) among the members of any speech community (Halliday and Hasan, 1989:10).

²²And this is not limited to the dialogue (speaker and listener interaction); it occurs also in written language where an ‘imagined audience’ plays part in it (Halliday, 2002:227).

The above account is succinctly articulated by Halliday & Hasan (1976:293), as follows: “any piece of language that is operational, functioning as a unity in some context of situation, constitutes a text”.

3. Cohesive devices

Before discussing the devices of cohesion, a few words are necessary on the general aspect of cohesion. A Text is described as a “semantic unit” in that it is a unit of meaning characterized by texture that differentiates it from non-text. This texture (cohesion), generally speaking, is a product of the work of some elements that hold text parts together. That is, these elements establish what is called the cohesive relations. In this way, cohesion refers “to relations of meaning that exist within the text and that define it as a text” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:4). It follows that cohesion “is embodied in the concept of text”, and through “its role in providing ‘texture’, it helps to create text” (Ibid:298). It is the cohesion, therefore, that is responsible for establishing the ties between text parts and conferring its texture.

The function of cohesion in a text stems from that “the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another”, whether preceding or following; where “the one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it” (Halliday & Hasan 1976:4, emphasis in original).

Expressed differently, cohesion confers on any passage or stretch of language a texture that is meaningful. This meaningfulness stems from holding text parts together. As this ‘holding together’ expresses the continuity that exists between one part of text and another (ibid:4, 299). For its part, this continuity, defined as a network of relationships, is realized by the linguistic resources, both grammatical and lexical. And the cohesiveness they establish, as mentioned above, is constructed semantically despite being realized by lexico-grammatical devices (Halliday, 2002:221-222).

The linguistic resources (of the cohesive system), are existent in every language (Halliday & Hasan 1976:10, 18; 1989:48); and they have, it is suggested, evolved as a resource to transcend the boundaries of the clause so as to provide the inter-connectedness or cohesion between the sentences which are structurally independent of one another (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004:532- 533). These resources are of four kinds: (1) conjunction, (2) reference,

(3) ellipsis and (4) repetition and collocation (ibid). The first three represent the grammatical cohesive devices; whereas the fourth the lexical cohesive ones.

It is very essential to remember here that the process of text creation is carried out simultaneously by three systems, namely the thematic structure system (Theme-Rheme) and the information structure system (Given and New)²³, and the cohesion system.

3.1 cohesive devices used in the Qur'ān

In this section we show that the Qur'ān employs these cohesive devices to create its text texture so as to be meaningful and communicative. Our examination of the cohesive devices lays more stress on their theoretical aspects.

3.1.1 Grammatical cohesive devices

Ellipsis

Ellipsis is a universal property of any natural language; languages, however, differ substantially in its scope and means of realization (Solimando, 2011). Ellipsis function is based on the recoverability of an item, inside text, from a preceding part of text; thus an anaphoric relation is established that contributes to holding text parts together. In other words, this relation stems from the fact that “something left unsaid”(i.e., specific structural slots) can be recovered from somewhere else because “there is always a great deal more evidence available to the hearer for interpreting a sentence than is contained in the sentence itself” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:142-143). This means that in the preceding part of text (i.e., sentence or clause), the presupposed item (an indicator using Arabic terminology) is present (ibid: 144).

An important point needs to be made about the interrelated link between substitution and ellipsis. They both embody the same fundamental relation, between parts (as words, or groups or clauses), that concerns replacing an item inside the text. But they vary in the way the relation is carried out. That is, in the case of substitution the replaced item is filled up by another one;

²³ Thematic structure system is concerned with organizing the clause as a message in which a thematic prominence is given to an element of the clause; whereas the information structure system is concerned with presenting the same content in terms of Given (old) - New. It is of relevance to mention here that these are structural components “in the sense that options in these systems contribute to the derivation of structure: thematic options contribute to the lexico-grammatical structure, being realized through the clause, and information systems contribute to what we have called the information structure, a distinct though related hierarchy that is realized directly in the phonological system through the tone group. The cohesive relations are the nonstructural component of the system because they are not being realized through any form of structural configuration (Halliday, 1978:133).

meanwhile it (the replaced item) is left empty in the case of ellipsis. Hence, ellipsis is called a ‘substitution by zero’ where the item is replaced by nothing (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:88,142). Substitution also overlaps with the reference relation (ibid);and for that reason our analysis is limited to ellipsis only.

The weight attributed to ellipsis in the Arabic Linguistic Tradition, particularly the Qur’ānic scholarship, needs few words to be said about it; as voluminous works have been written, and much is still being written²⁴. Generally speaking, there were two approaches. One, the grammarians, primarily focused on prioritizing the structural aspects of identifying and “reconstructing” the elliptical elements through syntactic rules and internal cues²⁵. The other approach, of the rhetoricians, has busied itself more with pragmatic issues such as motives, categories and benefits of the ellipsis —which is relevant to a ‘complete’ message representation²⁶. This partially explains the rhetoricians’ obsession with the recovery of a supposedly ‘omitted information’. Such an approach was based on, and overlapped with that of the exegetists of the Qur’ān. In this regard, Halliday & Hasan (1976:143-144) state that “when we talk of ellipsis, we are not referring to any and every instance in which there is some information that the speaker has to supply from his own evidence [...]; we are referring specifically to sentences, clauses whose structure is such as to presuppose some preceding item, which then serves as the source of *the* missing information” (ibid. italic in original).

From this brief account, it follows that there is a lack of ‘textual’ understanding²⁷ of the ellipsis function. But the Qur’ān, as text, like any other text employs ellipsis in the way

²⁴ The particularity of the ellipsis is born in a context outside the grammarians’ tradition: it has its roots in the exegetic activity of the first *mufasssīrūn* (Solimando, 2011).

²⁵ Generally speaking, the grammarians’ domain was the intra- sentence relations where cohesion has no place. The functional understanding is not completely absent; for example, the ‘verbal indicator’ generally corresponds to the ‘presupposed item’ in SFL terminology; as well as the notion of the nonlinguistic ‘context of situation’. cf. Ibn Hišām’s discussion of the conditions of ellipsis (2000, v6: 317-538).

²⁶ The motives, as expounded by rhetoricians, fall under frequency of use, shortening and lightening of the clause, ease of articulation and rhetorical and other pragmatic considerations (Ḥammudah 1998, 97-112). The most paramount of these motives, however, is the frequent usage and the prolixity of the syntactic structures of the sentences (i.e., the concept of brevity). Many rhetoricians, to cite but few, Ibn Qutayba (d. 889 CE), ar-Rummānī (d. 996 CE), al-Jurjānī (d. 1078 CE), az-Zarkašī (d. 1392CE) & ‘Izz ad-Dīn Ibn ‘Abd as- Salām (d.1262 CE) - offered a reasonably comprehensive treatment of a semantic nature.

²⁷ That is, ellipsis “is a relation within the text and in the great majority of instances the presupposed item is present in the preceding text” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:144-145). In other words, ellipsis interpretation, in a sense proper, is not understood as contributing to text cohesion. The presumed occurrence of ‘textual’ ellipsis is attributable, we claim, to a tendency, the Qur’ān displays, of its economical use of language; and this is manifested through two techniques, so to speak. The first is the use of terseness and brevity in that they are erroneously assumed to be within the domain of ellipsis (Ibn Hišām states that not every instance of a missing element is necessary an ellipsis (Carter,

understood in accord with SFL perspective as a cohesive relation. Though examples are numerous, the account presented here is not exhaustive, nor does it get into detail of the kinds of ellipsis (i.e., nominal, verbal, clausal).

Among the salient cases of ‘textual’ ellipsis is the case of interrogatives²⁸ (which include these two kinds of questions. The polarity question²⁹ of: ‘yes’- ‘no’ interrogative; and content question of: WH-interrogative); however, in the case of polarity question the answer normally suffices with using ‘yes or no’. In the answer to the polarity question, the use of the particle (بلى) is distinctive as these examples show: Q2:260; Q6: 30; Q36:81; Q39:71; Q40:50; Q43:80; and 57:14³⁰. We cite here some āyahs, in which the elliptical element is found in the preceding part of text (i.e., anaphoric); the cases cover the three kinds of ellipsis, the nominal, the verbal and the clausal. We start with the nominal ellipsis. In Q3:160 the noun ‘Allah’, mentioned in the preceding part of the āyah, is deleted in the second part. The same relationship is also found in Q26:61-62, where the noun Moses, mentioned in āyah 61, is omitted in āyah 62. These two examples showed the deletion of a single noun; however, there are cases of nominal phrases in the following two examples: in Q5: 5, the nominal phrase (جُلُّكُمْ) in the fourth clause is deleted because it is mentioned in the second and third clauses; in Q6:12 the nominal phrase (مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ) mentioned in the first clause is omitted from the second clause. Secondly, the verbal ellipsis, which means the deletion of a verb, occurs in these āyahs. In Q16:30, the verb (أَنْزَلَ) in the second clause (sentence) is omitted because it is mentioned in the first clause of the āyah; the same occurs in Q43: 87, the verb (خَلَقَهُمْ), mentioned in the first clause of the āyah, is omitted from the second clause. Finally, the clausal ellipsis means the deletion of a clause (sentence). In Q17:49-50, the clause (أَلَا إِنَّا لَمُبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا) in āyah 49 is not mentioned in āyah 50. In Q7:113-114, the clause (إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ) in āyah 113 is omitted in 114.

To avoid the confusion that may stem from differentiating the cases textual and non-textual ellipsis in the Qur’ān, it is sufficient to emphasize that in the ‘supposedly’ elliptical cases there is not a ‘presupposed item’ in a preceding text. Based on that, the latter can be

1991:122)), in particular in the narratives. Secondly, the reference, as a cohesive device, compensates for using textual ellipsis.

²⁸ It is because ellipsis is “usually confined to closely contiguous passages, and is particularly characteristic of question + answer or similar ‘adjacency pairs’ in dialogue” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014:606).

²⁹ A polarity question, in the Qur’ānic narratives, does not necessarily seek a yes / no reply. The functions it serves are semantically various; they cover a wide range of: invalidatory and reproachful denial; confirmation (acknowledgment); disdain and mockery; command; exclamation (Ibn Hišām’s Muḡnī I-Labīb, 2000:90-97).

³⁰ But not all uses of (بلى) indicate an elliptical element as in Q67:8-9; Q64:7, for example.

explained either in terms of syntactical rules³¹ or pragmatic motives³².

We add to Solimando's (2011) call for a specific and thorough study of ellipsis that in-depth SFL based- research will enrich our understanding of ellipsis as a cohesive device contributes to the cohesiveness of the Qur'ānic texts.

Reference

Unlike ellipsis and substitution, Reference works at the semantic level (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:31). The "semantic content rather than the content itself (lexical item)" is of importance to the texture of a text. In this relation, the texture is created "not because the interpretation has become available, but because the interpretation clinches the fact that a particular kind of semantic relation obtains" (Hasan in Halliday & Hasan 1989:78). Simply put, every language has certain items which "instead of being interpreted semantically in their own right, they make reference to something else for their interpretation" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 31,305). It follows that the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, the identity of the particular thing or class of things that *is* being referred to (ibid. italics in original). And what produces the cohesion is the continuity of reference, whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time.

There are two types of reference, one exophoric referring to the context of situation, which has been suggested to be the prior form of reference; the second is endophoric which

³¹ Two cases are worth mentioning. The first is that of *لَا* located sentence initial as in, for example, Q 2:30; Q8:30; and Q21:78. It is argued that this particle is adirect object for an elided verb, which has no connection with a preceding text; this, of course, is a plain syntactic based interpretation working inside a single sentence (intra-relation). Moreover, this particle is actually controversial; here it is considered as a noun denoting temporality. Beside temporality, it denotes futurity, surprise, explicative (expressing cause) (Mukaram, 1988). It has assumed in MSA a conditional function (Kammensjö, 2006, v1: 476). When it is used in Theme position, as a commencing particle, it expresses an interpersonal aspect (Hassān, 1993: 35), as in Q.46:11 for it is highly charged with emphatic meaning similar to meanings expressed by both the commencing particle (*لَا*), and the confirmative (*لَقَدْ*) (ibid). Such usage, he maintains, is found in more than thirty places in the Qur'ān, which does not carry any sense of temporality typically associated with it. And when it is substituted by *لَقَدْ*, Hassān asserts, no change of meaning is felt at all (ibid). The second case is that of Subject-Predicate relation as in: Q2:18; Q3:169; Q21:26; Q51:29; Q56:13; Q56:28; Q101:11; and Q104:6. And the same argument applies.

³² This is actually a case of a 'reduction' or concision frequently employed by the Qur'ān, particularly, in narratives. In such literary manoeuvre, the Qur'ān simply leaves gaps in a story condensing certain 'events' of it, touching on them only in passing. Interestingly enough, the rhetoricians sometimes turn to such 'omitted events' mentioned in a different text (mostly Sūra) very far from the text in question as in Q21:57-58, where the 'omitted' information is mentioned in Q37:90-93. Or sometimes the 'omitted' information is mentioned inside the same Sūra but in different separated āyahs; for example, in Q7, material 'deleted' in āyah 115 is mentioned in āyah 107; and that in āyah 152 is found in āyah 138. As explained above this is an exegetical-based interpretation where exegetists used their imagination to furnish the 'omitted material'. Examples of this type are too numerous. Q2:73; Q7: 111-112, 117,160; Q12:45; Q18: 79; Q20:91-93; Q27:28-29; Q28:7; Q39:22; and Q57:10.

domain is the text where an item refers back to something that has been mentioned already (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:31, 145). And this type is what we discuss here.

This semantic relation (of reference) had been known in the Arabic Linguistic Tradition under the notion of ‘personal pronoun falling back on its interpreter (referent)’. It received extensive analysis in linguists’ treatises where the pertinent points of reference bear relevance to many of SFL-based notions. For example, the notions of ‘salient semantic features of personal pronouns’³³, ‘phoric relations’³⁴, and the concept of ‘aboutness’³⁵ were part of their discussion of the reference relation.

Reference, in Arabic, is realized through personal, demonstrative and relative pronouns and the definite article. Among these, the pronominals (personal pronouns)³⁶, occupied a large space, and received ample attention, in the Qur’ānic scholarship.

As for the role that reference plays in the Qur’ān, three pertinent statements are worth mentioning³⁷. The first (of these statements) has relevance to the salient role of the personal pronouns, particularly the third person pronoun (singular & plural, of course); as it comprises “in many texts the most frequent single class of cohesive items” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:49, 51). This is principally attributable to its endophoric, indeed, anaphoric direction referring typically to a preceding item in the text” (ibid:48). Hence, a continuity of reference builds up establishing the

³³ Pronouns are known to have two salient semantic features, namely, brevity and ambiguity. Brevity means that pronouns’ role in speech is to render the text more concise, thus keeping the discourse running and well-connected; it enables writers to “dispense with the frequent usage of explicit nouns and hence contributes to certainty of meaning” (al-‘Alawī [d. 1348] 2009, 1: 444; Ibn Ya‘īš (d. 1245) 2001, 2: 292). This function creates a cohesive textual link between text elements. as-Suhaylī (d. 1185) stresses that whenever a speaker “needs to repeat an already mentioned thing (noun), he turns towards pronouns to substitute them (nouns)” (1992: 170-177). Q 33:35 is a good example of how one pronoun (‘to them’, *لَهُمْ*) dispensed with the repetition of twenty nouns. On the other hand, pronouns inherent ambiguity stems from their pointing “to everything, animate and inanimate; and the definiteness, required to remove this uncertainty, comes not from themselves, but through their referents” (al-‘Astarābādī [d. 1289] 1996, 2:406).

³⁴ This refers, in particular, to the kinds of reference and their directions; and the distance between the reference and its referent. Referents are classified into two general kinds: endophoric (present in the text pointing either anaphorically or cataphorically) or exophoric (unmentioned), that is, where the referent is understood from the context of speech or from a circumstantial context (al-‘Andalusī 1993, 2: 252; Ibn Hišām 2000, 1: 169). As to the distance (range) of referents, the general rule is that the referent should be proximate to the pronoun, i.e. in the immediate preceding sentence. However, with the existence of a clue, the referent may be far removed from the pronoun (reference item) (Ḥassān 1993: 135; 2005: 185-186). And when there are two or more (multiple) referents, the nearest among them is taken as the potential candidate (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:2-3, 14-15).

³⁵ Having multiple reference items (pronouns) raises a problem of determining which referent each of these reference items falls back on. As a general rule, linguists, realizing the semantic aspect, consider that the one the text revolves around is the relevant pronoun. For example, in Q29:27, It is argued that the pronoun in (ذُرِّيَّتِهِ) should fall back on Abraham mentioned in the earlier āyahs (starting from number 16), and not on Isaac or Jacob, though they are close to the pronoun, because Abraham is the focus of the story. Other examples are found in Q 15:16-17 and Q 100:6-8.

³⁶ In Arabic, pronouns are morphologically and syntactically diverse in terms of person, gender and number.

³⁷ The studies, both articles and dissertations, are innumerable to cite. It suffices to refer again to the classic treatises.

‘cohesion’, “where the same thing enters into the discourse a second time” (ibid.:31, 50; Halliday 2002 /1977:39). Due to lack of space, and due to large number of studies examining reference relation in Arabic, particularly in classic sources as we mentioned earlier, only few cases are reported here. For example, the pronoun (هُم) in Q23:1-6 and 8-9, was mentioned six times falling back on one referent (الْمُؤْمِنُونَ). Another conspicuous example is (لَهُمْ) mentioned in Q33:35 referred back (i.e., anaphorically) to twenty referents (nouns); and thus it contributed to the text cohesion by dispensing with the repetition of twenty nouns.

The second statement concerns the demonstrative pronouns. Their salient contribution to the cohesion of a text resides in establishing what is called text reference in which the range of the reference relation is extended over distant pieces of a text. That is, reference items not only fall back on a (single) lexical referent, but take a part of a text as their referent. This function is mostly realized by the pronouns هَذَا ‘this’ and ذَلِكَ ‘that’, where they refer to distant portions of a text; creating, thus, links that hold them together (ibid). For example, the pronoun هَذَا in Q6:76-77-78, and Q21:63 mentioned in each āyah refers anaphorically to an immediate single referent coming before it. The same demonstrative pronoun falls back on a whole text that consists of clause complexes as in Q 37:106 referring to āyahs 102-105 (Alamiri and Mickan, 2016:209-215). Another example is the demonstrative pronoun (ذَلِكَ) in Q23:7 refers back to āyahs 2-6 (Ibid).

The third statement is about the recurrent use of a certain referent or multiple referents. Its importance resides in creating an interconnected “network of lines of reference”, where “each occurrence being linked to all its predecessors up to and including the initial reference” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:52). The multiple referents are considered “one of the factors which gives to any text its particular flavor or texture” (ibid). For example in Q20:9-99, beside the main referent, Moses, there are three more referents, sorceress, Moses’ people and Pharaoh, respectively. The interesting thing about this type of reference is that each referent has its own personal and demonstrative references; functioning as a main referent in the passage it is mentioned. However, they are related in one way or another to the central referent (Moses in this case). Their contribution to cohesion is twofold, one through their own, and secondly through their relation to the central referent. Their cumulative effect, therefore, enables a creation of link networks that unite the parts of text together, and facilitate its understanding by the addressees (Alamiri and Mickan, 2016:212).

To recapitulate, reference, a potentially cohesive relation (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:309), unlike the ellipsis, is a straightforward relation easily identified in the Qur'ānic texts. Reference represents the most important cohesive device employed by the Qur'ān.

Conjunction

Unlike reference and ellipsis, the cohesive ties of the conjunctive elements are not derived from these elements “themselves but indirectly, by virtue of their specific meanings. In other words, “the conjunctive relations themselves are not tied to any particular sequence in the expression”; but a specification of the way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:226-227). The cohesive system of CONJUNCTION has evolved as a complementary resource providing the resources for marking logico-semantic relationships that obtain between text spans of varying extent, ranging from clauses within clause complexes to long spans of a paragraph or more (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014:609-110).

In this regard, it is essential to differentiate between conjunctions and Conjunctive Adjuncts. The former refers to a word or group that either links (paratactic) or binds (hypotactic) the clause in which it occurs structurally to another clause; whereas the Conjunctive Adjuncts (discourse Adjuncts) are adverbial groups or prepositional phrases that establish nonstructural relations between clause complexes, relating thus the clause to the preceding text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2003:81; Halliday & Hasan, 1976:228). This is because the former are indicators of local relation while the latter are more global nature³⁸.

In the case of Arabic, the picture is rather different. The structural relations, governed by the theory of I'rab (الإعراب)³⁹, and emphasized by the grammarians, result from coordinating equal linguistic units, in particular the words. In this way, the conjunctions were considered as general-purpose particles —capable of a wide variety of interpretations (Holes, 2004:267). There is, however, a semantic view shown by the rhetoricians' interpretation of the conjunctions where some points of the logico-semantic relations, of interdependency (taxis) and expansion as

³⁸ These cohesive conjunctions are also known as discourse markers. For more, see Halliday & Matthiessen (2014:609); note 3. Some of the structural conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *or*, and *though*) serves also the function of Conjunctive Adjuncts when used at the beginning of a new sentence connecting it to a previous sentence, because the meaning, they create, extends over the entire sentences (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:232).

³⁹ I'rab means both the mood markers (=desinential inflection); and the (syntactic) parsing as well.

understood in SFL, were brought to the fore. But this understanding (of logico-semantic relations) was limited to the disjunction⁴⁰ (asyndetic coordination), or implicit conjunction⁴¹.

The ‘waw’ (‘and’) stands as a good example of conjunctive system in Arabic. In both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic, the ‘waw’ is by far the most frequent conjunction. It is primarily treated structurally as a paratactic coordinator governed by the rules of syntactic parsing⁴². This approach is the prevalent. Its initial position in a clause is seen as serving a resumptive function connecting a preceding clause (Cantarino, 1975, v3:11-12; Sarig 1995, cited in Kammensjö, 2006, v1: 474). Or it is seen as a textual connector (Abdul Fatah, 2010:96) indicating a flow in the discourse (Abdul-Raof, 2001:125).

However, our treatment is limited to showing the semantic functions that the ‘waw’ serves as a Conjunctive Adjunct when it works between clauses (clause complexes). The ‘waw’ in Q2:217 (consisted of eight clause complexes) can serve various semantic meanings. In Arabic, however, analysis, normally found in textbooks of the ‘syntactic parsing of the Qur’ān’, takes it as a coordinator or as a resumptive.

Q2:217

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ. وَصَدُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكَفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ. وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُعَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا. وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ. وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ.

“They ask thee about the sacred month: ‘[is] fighting [permissible] in’. Say: ‘Fighting in it is a grave transgression. And (=But) turning men away from the path of God and disbelieving in Him, and preventing access to the Sacred Mosque and expelling its people there from are yet graver in God’s eyes. And (=because) persecuting Muslims is worse than killing. And (=Despite

⁴⁰ Arabic is considered a syndetic language.

⁴¹ One of its subdivisions (the complete relatedness) which expresses meanings of explication, confirmation, and paraphrasing (التأكيد والإبدال، البيان) corresponds, in general terms, to the three categories of expansion in SFL: elaborating, extending and enhancing.

⁴² In the Arabic Linguistic Tradition, its function is seen to serve the ‘absolute association or joining’; where it associates the coordinated element with its antecedent in form (making the second element concords with the first in its inflection, or syntactic parsing) and meaning (making the second element concords with the first in its logical predicament). Halliday & Hasan (1976:234) state that when ‘and’ works between a pair of sentences to create text by cohering one sentence to another, the sentences follow one another ‘at a time as the text unfolds’; and ‘cannot be rearranged, as a coordinate structure can, in different sequences’. In this sense, conjunction is not simply coordination extended so as to operate between sentences (Ibid.238). Though there are some that “are closer to coordination in particular the ADDITIVE, to which the closest parallel among the structural relation is the coordinate ‘and’”. Because “what these connections are depends in the last resort on the meanings that sentences express, and essentially these are of two kinds: experiential, representing the linguistic interpretation of experience, and interpersonal, representing participation in the speech situation” (Ibid).

this) they cease not fighting you, so as they make you revoke your faith, if they can. And (=So, therefore), if any of you turn away from his faith, and consequently die as a disbeliever, then these people their deeds will come to nothing in this world and in the life to come. And (=furthermore) these are people of the Fire, they therein to abide forever”⁴³.

As explained above, the ‘and’, in this āyah, as Conjunctive Adjunct, has different conjunctive functions. The first expresses an adversative meaning ‘but’⁴⁴. The second use of ‘and’ has an expressed meaning of causal relation, that is, ‘because’. The third use is also of an adversative relation with an emphatic nature. The fourth is of a general causal relation. The fifth is of addition (furthermore). The rest are of a coordinating nature between phrases acting inside a clause. It should be kept in mind that these different meanings of ‘and’, in this āyah, cannot be properly assessed without being aware of the context of the āyah⁴⁵.

Summing up, the ‘waw’ serves different functions such as causal (Q6:121; Q8:48; Q18:51), adversative with the imbued meaning of ‘but’ (Q3:66; Q7:31; Q12:10, 17; Q17:8; and Q82:13-14), and a concessive function of ‘though’ (Q11:74; Q12:8); and finally, a temporal ‘then’ (Q12:15). It becomes explicit that ‘waw’ (and), as a Conjunctive Adjunct, expresses a wide range of relationships between the clauses it conjoins⁴⁶. The ‘waw’ in these cases establishes a logico-semantic relation of expansion (i.e., elaborating, extending and enhancing). Mir (2006:100) asserts that “a close study of Qur’ānic parataxis can reveal complexities hidden behind seemingly simple constructions”.

3.2 lexical cohesive devices

Lexical cohesion is realized through the use of lexical items (vocabulary); it is based on the assumption that “a shared lexico-semantic relationship holds” (Sanders and Maat, 2006:591, cited in Fontain, 2017:7) in that the parts of a text are related in some way, and a link is established (Thompson, 2013:146; Bloor & Bloor, 2013:99). In other words, the choice of an item relates to the choices that have gone before (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014:606; Bloor &

⁴³ Our translation.

⁴⁴ Some exegetists grasped this adversative meaning of the ‘waw’ (ar-Rāzī, 1981, 6:32-33, for example), and others the causal meaning (Ibn ‘Ašūr, 1984, 2:330). It is beyond our scope to go into detail. ‘Waw’, in this regard, is similar to the English ‘but’ that contains within itself also the logical meaning of ‘and’; and because of that, the combination of ‘and but’ cannot be said in English (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:237).

⁴⁵ The whole āyah revolves around unintended killing of a Meccan unbeliever, during a sacred month, by some Muslims. The Qur’ān rejects the unbelievers’ criticism arguing that their acts towards Muslim community in Mecca are more serious and grave than this unintended ‘killing’, though it occurred during a sacred month.

⁴⁶ Cf. Holes, 2004:267; Abdul Fatah, 2010:96, 101; Waltisberg 2006:469.

Bloor, 2013:99). The range of the lexical cohesion is primarily between two or more clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014:642); but it is not necessarily that lexical items be adjacent to each other. Lexical cohesion consists of two types, reiteration and collocation. Reiteration covers repetition, synonyms (or near synonyms) or superordinates (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:284, 288). Repetition (the strongest cohesive force in lexical cohesion) refers to the exact –identical– reproduction of the same item mentioned earlier in a text; a synonym is the occurrence of a different lexical item that is systemically related to the first one.

The collocation, on the other hand, refers to the regular co-occurrence of lexical items where their association produces lexical cohesion. It is different from reiteration in being the most problematic part, and “its effect on a text is subtle and difficult to estimate” (ibid). The Qur’ān, as text, employs all these lexical resources of cohesion (i.e., reiteration & collocation). Our elaboration of this cohesive relation is brief showing its general features. In the case of reiteration, the Qur’ān, like any other text, employs reiteration to obtain texture features. Its strongest form, the repetition, is widespread in the Qur’ān. Repetition covers a wide scope extending from a word (noun or verb) to phrases, clauses and passages. It’s worth mentioning that a repetition inside the same sentence (i.e., clause simplex) has no other function than being emphatic, as in Q23:36 and Q89:21-22⁴⁷. Therefore, only the repetition between sentences (i.e., clause complexes) is that which establishes the relations that contribute to text-ness of a text. For example, in Q3:49, the prepositional phrase “by God’s will” is mentioned twice between two clauses; and, the prepositional phrase “by my will” is repeated four times in four consecutive clauses in Q5:110. In Q30:20-25, the prepositional phrase “of His signs is [...]”, mentioned 6 times. In Q8:1 (consisting of six clause complexes) three nouns are repeated as follows: “spoils of war” (two times), “Allah” (three times), and “messenger” (two times). In Q7:195, a polarity interrogative, namely, “have they [...]” was mentioned four times in four consecutive clauses⁴⁸. In Q96:1-6, three verbs, are each repeated twice, and one noun is repeated three times.

⁴⁷ Some take it for reduplication, intensity and distribution (El Zarka, 2009, v.4:52.).

⁴⁸ Mir (2006:101) argues that function of such repetition is not limited to putting “more than ordinary emphasis on a statement”; rather it serves a pragmatic function of argumentation bringing “into sharp relief a certain doctrine of the religion”.

Repetition of clauses also occurs. For example, in Q4:7 & Q99:7-8⁴⁹ two clauses are repeated; and in Q30:21-24, the clause “surely there are signs in this for [...]”, is mentioned three times. In Q109, four clauses are repeated; of which three are nominal clauses (one of these is repeated twice), and the fourth is a verbal clause (i.e., a sentence that starts with a verb)⁵⁰.

As to the synonymy, it is very controversial⁵¹, particularly its direct form. The antonymy, a type of synonymy, is prevalent in the Qur’ān where lexical items express opposite meanings, as these opposites cohere lexically by virtue of lexico-semantic (word meaning) relation (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:284)⁵². Also the hyponymy and meronymy are present but in a very general terms.

It follows that lexical reiteration is not realized “only through repetition of an identical lexical item but also through occurrence of a different lexical item that is systematically related to the first one, as a synonym or superordinate of it” (ibid.:278-279, 284). That is, a reiterated item may be a repetition, a synonym or near-synonym, a superordinate⁵³, or a general word.

The second kind of lexical cohesion is the collocation. Simply put, collocation means the co-occurrence of a pair of lexical items “which are in some way associated with each other in the

⁴⁹ In Q4:7 ‘Men shall have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind’, ‘and women shall have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind’; and in Q99:7-8 ‘whoever has done the smallest particle of good will see it; while whoever has done the smallest particle of evil will see it’.

⁵⁰ Here are examples showing the repetition of a verbal clause (sentence) in āyahs consisting of a clause complex (two clause simplexes). In Q4 the following clauses: ‘said (they)’, ‘He make go astray’; prostrate (as an imperative and as a statement); ‘those who wronged’; and ‘said (they)’, occurred in āyahs: 14, 26, 35, 59, 67-70, respectively. The same is seen in Q26 (131-132 ‘be aware’; 221-222, ‘descend’). This also applies to nouns, whether single or a nominal group (phrase). In Q4:1-4 ‘those’ is repeated in āyah consisting of two clause complexes; ‘sickness’ (āyah10), ‘the fools’ (āyah13), Allah (āyahs 20, 26 and 27), the rightness (āyah 42), and ‘they’ (āyah 46). In Q19, the noun Satan repeated thrice in āyahs (44-45); My Lord twice (48), and ‘Father Mine’ four times (42-45). In Q26, the words, ‘the magicians’; ‘our Lord’; ‘Noah’; ‘Lot’; ‘punishment of a day of’ and ‘they’ are repeated cohesively twice in āyahs: 40-41; 50-51; 105-106; 160-161; 189; 225-226, respectively. In Q30: 55, the noun ‘hour’ in definite and indefinite forms is used in two consecutive clauses. In Q96, ‘your Lord’, is repeated three times, and the noun ‘Man’ three times. In Q97:1-3, the noun phrase ‘the Night of Power’ is mentioned three times. It is essential to mention that these repetitions occur in two clauses āyah (i.e., āyah consisting of two sentences) which confer its cohesive role. Sometimes a complete clause is repeated, such as this refrain (فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ) in Q55.

⁵¹ Some denies categorically its occurrence; and other argues for it. The examples the defenders cite are not really cohesive (occurring between two sentences) because they deal with, in most cases, two consecutive ‘words’ inside a single sentence. The instances are too numerous to cite; and a few suffice: Q20:77,107,112; Q33:67; Q43:80; Q74:22, Q28; & Q 77:6. As to the cohesive one, we can cite 35: 35, where two verbs bear synonymy in two sentences. Other examples are related to two specific verbs (أتى) & (جاء) that occur in two sentences as in Q7:129; Q19:43; Q 25:33; Q29:53; Q 47:18; Q98:1-4. Actually, synonymy needs an in-depth survey of the whole Qur’ān to come with satisfactory results.

⁵² Examples are: believers & disbelievers; darkness & light; party of Allah & party of Satan; prosperity & adversity; Outward & Inward; He gives life & brings death; and the unseen & invisible. This is on the level of a sentence. There are also examples in a text (between sentences) as in Q. 78: 21-30 vs. 31-36; Q80:27-31 &38-42; Q82:13-14; Q84:7-12; Q88:2-16; Q90:3-6 & 7-10; Q92:1-2 & 5-10, for example.

⁵³ The category of superordinate “refers to any item whose meaning includes that of the earlier one; in technical terms, any item that dominates the earlier one in the lexical taxonomy” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:280).

language” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:285-286). That is, the cohesive relation does not depend on any general semantic relation of the types mentioned above; rather it depends on the mere tendency of a pair items to co-occur (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014:648). In the Qur’ān such co-occurrence is visible where the effect “is not limited to a pair of words; as it is very common for long cohesive chains to be built up out of lexical relations of this kind , with word patterns like [...]weaving in and out of successive sentences” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:286).

As examples are too abundant, it suffices to mention but a few. The collocation of two words is shown by these pairs: the ‘Salāt’ and the ‘Zakāt’; the heavens and the earth; an appointed term; those who believe and do good works; sever chastisement, blazing Fire, the fire of hell. The other type of collocation across sentence boundaries is also abundant: ‘the people of Paradise’ collocates with ‘those who believed and did good deeds’; and also with ‘best residence and finest lodging’; and in general with the phrase of ‘believers, righteous and reward’. Related to that is that the opposite of the above (i.e., the people of Fire’ with its collocations) also occurs. Of collocations, the following expressions are also included: ‘seeking help with patience and prayer’ collocates with patients and guided for example. The word ‘disbelievers’ is collocated with ‘eternal in Fire, and curse of Allah on them’; Satan is collocated with ‘evil and abomination deeds, and calling for Fire, and an obvious enemy’. These two patterns as Halliday & Hasan assert “occur freely both within the same sentence and across sentence boundaries; they are largely independent of the grammatical structure” (Ibid).

It follows that the repetition of words or phrases and even of structures, in the Qur’ān, is not without function; rather it establishes a cohesive relation that contributes to its texture (textuality).

4. Concluding remarks

In summary, this study sought to show that the Qur’ān, despite its religious foundation (message), is after all a text, like any other text. As such, it has texture- a feature shared by all texts-which is the outcome of multiple relations and ties. These relations are realized by text internal forces (grammatical and lexical cohesive devices) that work to hold text parts together producing a whole unity or a unified whole. These internal forces, cohesive devices, therefore, contribute to the building of text, on the one hand, and on the other hand, to its interpretation by

the recipient / reader. Therefore, these cohesive devices reduce the interpretive speculation of text and minimize the recipient / reader role in reshaping the text.

Based on that, our treatment of the cohesive devices (in the Qur'ān) revealed that the Qur'ān as text employs these cohesive elements to produce its texture (cohesion) in accord with the perspectives of SFL. SFL, then, as a linguistic theory, opens new avenues to better understand and analyze the textual relations (of the Qur'ān)⁵⁴.

It is essential to note that the range within which the cohesive devices operate varies according to the relation these devices establish. For example, one can claim that Reference, a grammatical device, operates over a wide range; and this makes its contribution to cohesion to be significantly noticeable. Meanwhile, Ellipsis, because of the Qur'ānic 'strategy' of economizing the use of language, appears less clear.

As to the conjunctive system, the brief elaboration of the 'waw' showed some of the cohesive relations it can serve as a Conjunctive Adjunct. The conjunctive system, in general, represents a potentially cohesive resource to the Qur'ānic text(s), particularly its role in the logico-semantic relations of 'taxis and expansion'. The cohesive relations of the 'disjunction', based on its elaboration in the Arabic Linguistic Tradition, and viewed from SFL concept of 'expansion', support our aforementioned statement.

For its part, lexical cohesion, which plays also an important role in the Qur'ānic cohesion, is realized principally by the two systems of reiteration and collocation. The repetition, due to its variant types (synonymy, and antonymy), occupies a salient place in the Qur'ān cohesion. But collocation is no less important.

Derived from this description is a twofold outcome. The first is that our analysis sought to demonstrate, theoretically in principal, that SFL- based interpretation of the Qur'ān's cohesive relations, offers productive means of better appreciating the textuality of this religious text. Second, this approach does no injustice to the 'sacredness of the text'; on the contrary the supposedly religious approach deprives the 'sacred text' of its internal forces; and exaggerates its non-linguistic aspects.

Finally, it is essential to remember that the cohesive relations represent one component of text formation, which is the work of a whole system, i.e., textual metafunction. Within this metafunction, the role of cohesion is to provide the continuity of text by connecting its parts;

⁵⁴ Alamiri, 2018. SFL- Based Analysis of Thematic Structure of the Qur'ān.

while the role of the other two components (the thematic structure system & the information structure system) is to organize the linguistic resources (of experiential and interpersonal metafunctions). All these three systems work together to produce meaningful text.

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