A linguistic Analysis for Coherence in the Quranic Text

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Abstract

Appropriateness must be preserved in any acceptable text to achieve logical connectivity and textuality. Based on the notion of 'logical coherence' advocated by Levy (2003) and our criteria of continuity of thought and lexical cohesion, one can analyse Quranic text in terms of appropriateness, continuity of thought, and lexical cohesion. Appropriateness is a prototypical Quranic discourse property which is based upon linear thematic connection both intrasententially (within a sentence) and intersententially (between sentences). Quranic discourse displays a number of techniques through which the text accomplishes appropriateness. Some of such techniques are specific to Quranic Arabic. A number of sceptic researchers claim that the ayahs of the Quranic text are randomly assembled and bear no logical connection to the surrounding ones (e.g. Ohlander, 2005; Paret, 2010). This baseless

claim assumes that the Quranic text lacks appropriateness, thematic unity, and an underlying logical structure.

The present paper, hence, is an attempt to counterargume such claims through providing discussions on how the Quranic text achieves appropriateness through proper employment of grammatical constructions, accurate selection of lexical items, and thematically connect sentences and surahs. More precisely, I follow a text-specific-properties method to argue for how coherence and appropriateness are achieved in the text. In addition, following Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981:20) argument that textual and discourse appropriateness leads to the continuity of thought, this paper examines how appropriateness is hinged upon the textual fact of continuity of thought through investigating sequentiality and connectivity of senses at a word level, sentence level, or at a larger running text.

Keywords:

coherence, cohesion, textual analysis, appropriateness, thematic unity, logical structure

دراسة لغوية تحليلية للترابط المنطقي في النص القرآني

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ملخص البحث

لابد من استيفاء متطلبات المناسبة اللغوية في النص لكي يحقق الترابط المنطقي والتناسق اللغوي. بناء على مفهوم الترابط المنطقي الذي طوره لفي (٢٠٠٣)، وطبقاً لمعياري الاستمرارية الموضوعية والتناسق اللغوي فإنه بالإمكان تحليل النص القرآني الكريم من خلال المناسَبة اللغوية، الاستمرارية الموضوعية، والتناسق اللغوي، إذ تعد المناسبة خاصية أسلوبية في الخطاب القرآني تعتمد على الترابط الموضوعي على مستوى مكونات الآية القرآنية من ناحية وعلى مستوى العلاقة بين الآيات من ناحية أخرى. يحتوي النص القرآني على العديد من أساليب المناسَبة، وبعض هذه الأساليب مقتصر على اللغة العربية دون غيرها من اللغات. لقد قام بعض الباحثين من غير المسلمين بالطعن في آيات القرآن الكريم بوصفها زوراً وبهتاناً بانعدام الترابط المنطقي (منهم على سبيل المثال لا الحصر أوهلاندر، ٢٠٠٥ وباريت، ٢٠١٠). هذا الادعاء الذي لا يستند إلى أساس يطعن في المناسبة اللغوية، والوحدة الموضوعية، وكذلك التركيب المنطقي في النص القرآني.

وعليه، فإن هذه الدراسة تحاول دحض تلك المزاعم من خلال نقاش الأساليب القرآنية في تحقيق المناسبة اللغوية على مستوى التراكيب النحوية، التوظيف الأمثل للمفردات، والترابط الموضوعي بين الآيات والسور. لذا، فقد استخدمت منهجية تعتمد على خصائص النص القرآني لاثبات الترابط المنطقي والمناسبة اللغوية في النص. بالإضافة إلى ماذكر أعلاه، بناء على ما خلص إليه بيقراندي ودريسلر (1981:20) بأن المناسَبة في النص تفضي إلى الاستمرارية الموضوعية، فإن هذه الدراسة توضح كيف تعتمد المناسَبة على الاستمرارية الموضوعية من خلال بحث تسلسل المعاني على مستوى المفردة والجملة وكامل النص.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الترابط المنطقي، الترابط اللغوي، تحليل النص، المناسبة، الوحدة الموضوعية، التركيب المنطقي.

1.   Introduction

Coherence is one of the most essential requirements in any text. The text is a communicative event that forms a unified whole (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:1-2). It is, therefore, a realisation of a conceptualisation that should meet certain requirements. These requirements of textuality are: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981:3).

The present paper discusses coherence in Quranic text. Quranic text underlies a conceptualisation. This conceptualisation, in turn, is realised through the linguistic forms and expressions that occur in the text. Research on the Quranic text within the perspective of text linguistics began nearly a century ago by orientalists (see section 2 below). It is only recently that muslim scholars take on the task to study the Quranic text.

The prominence of coherence as a requirement for textuality is highlighted in several works. For example, Hellman (1995) maintains that a text is incomprehensible if it is incoherent. She also argues that coherence is one of the properties that constitute texts. Neubert and Shreve (1992:94) defines coherence as the ability of the text to have "an underlying logical structure that acts to guide the reader through the text". For Levy (2003), coherence is a situation of events that are systematically connected. I.e. in order for a text to be coherent, the concepts constituting the conceptualisation it realises must be logically ordered. The axiomatic result of the logical connectedness of concepts is "the continuity of thought" (Abdul-Raof, 2019). The co-occurrence of the 'continuity of thought' and 'coherence' has been emphasized by many linguists (e.g. Rickheit and Habel, 1995; Abdul-Raof, 2019 among others).

Textual coherence can be studied inter-sententially (between sentences) and intra-sententially (within a sentence). Intersentential coherence is a semantic relation that holds between the semantic properties depicted by one sentence and those of other sentences. Hence, the identification of the intersentential coherence relationship of one sentence (or more sentences) necessitates interpretations of other neighbouring sentences in the text (Asher & Lascarides, 2003; Kehler, 2002). The text fails to cohere if intersentential relations between its constitutive sentences are not accommodated successfully. Intrasentential relations, on the other hand, refer to connecting relations that "hold among elements of structure within grammatical units such as word, phrase, clause, or sentence" (Bublitz, 2011:37). For Bublitz (ibid:37), "intrasentential relations are determined by phonological and grammatical rules and described as syntactic-semantic relations of valency, dependency, constituency, modification". This is consistent with Goldberg's (1995, 2006) argument that the grammatical construction bears semantic content. The grammatical construction, therefore, forms a source to accommodate intrasentential coherence relations.

Although it has not been easy to determine what makes a text coherent, it is generally accepted that appropriateness is one of the measures contributing to the attainment of coherence. In the view of Alharbi (2021: 12-13), "appropriateness in Quranic Arabic is a semantic relation that holds between lexical items that are directly related for the achievement of the pivotal theme of a given statement". Thus, a text would be unacceptable it does not achieve appropriateness. I.e. the lexical items constituting a sentence , and sentences constituting a text must be appropriately coherent. Otherwise, the text would be a collection of jumbled up incomprehensible statements that hold no connection between each

other. In this case, the logical structure underlying the text would be inexistent. In the view of Hellman (1995: 195, 196), "appropriateness is often equated with discourse comprehension".

In the sections that follow, I will attempt to provide a linguistic discussion for coherence in the Quranic text. These discussions can serve as counterarguments to the claims of some Orientalists against the Quranic text. An overview of these claims is provided in section (2) below.

2.   Orientalists' views on the Quranic text

Orientalists have always, both implicitly and explicitly, described the Great Quran as being incoherent. Ohlander (2005: 138) stated that Richard Bell made efforts "to restore the Quranic text to a more coherent form."   Another claim put forward by Paret (2010:186) refers to the thematic arbitrariness in arrangement and disjointedness of the surahs and ayahs of the Quran. A similar contextually unjustified proposition describes the Quran as being thematically irrelevant Muir (1923:17). In the view of Muir (ibid), this is attributed to "the constant chaotic mingling of subjects, disjoined as well by chronology as by the sense; a portion produced at Medina sometimes immediately preceding a passage revealed long before at Mecca; a command put in some places directly after a later one which cancels or modifies it; or an argument suddenly disturbed by the interjection of a sentence foreign to its purport."

The length of the surahs as well as the chronological order of the surahs and their ayahs have also attracted the attention of skeptics. Margoliouth (1914:31) is puzzled by the position of the ayah (al-yawma 'akmaltu lakum dinakum - This day I have perfected for you your religion, Q5:3). He enquires why this ayah is positioned

at the middle of the Quran while, according to the chronology of the revelation, he claims, it should surface at the end of the Quranic text, and also, he continues, why "the verse which has every appearance of being the first revealed is stowed away not far from the end, and evidently short as is the surah wherein it is inserted, mixed with matter belonging to a different period." The different lengths of the surahs also intrigues Margoliouth; it is not clear to him (ibid) "why in certain cases several texts are put together to form a chapter, whereas towards the end of the volume, we have a series of surahs limited to a very few verses apiece."

Repetition of the topics in different places of the Quran has also been the focus of discussion from some skeptics. For example, Wansbrough (1977:23) claims that the story of Shuᶜaib, that occurs in Q7:85-93, Q11:84-95, and Q26:176-190, provides counterevidence to the structural unity and internal relationships of the Quranic text. He unreasonably claims (ibid: 23) that, in terms of thematic coherence, the story of Shuᶜaib in Q7:85-93 is "the most coherent' while the other version in Q26:176-190 is 'the least." In his view (ibid: 19), the different topics introduced in the second surah of the Quran points to, he claims, thematic disconnectedness of the Quranic text. Relevant to the issue of repetition is the irrational claim of Adams (1978: 157) that the Quranic text is not a directly organized discourse; rather, he continues, it switches without transition from one theme to another and returns after many topics to a subject discussed earlier.

While we admit that it is difficult for our mentality to bear these unjustified claims and harmful critiques of the orientalists and skeptics, we need to refute them objectively. It can be argued that the above-mentioned claims, which revolve around the skeptic's conviction that the Quranic text is incoherent, are based on the

presupposition that the linguistic competence of the divine source from which the Quran was revealed is exactly the same as that of humans. This presupposition is ostensibly wrong. Yet, given the fact that the potential audience for this research are skeptics and western orientalists, an account based on linguistic theoretical foundations is definitely possible. The following section reviews some studies that tackled the notion of coherence in Quranic text.

3.   Studies on Coherence in Quranic Text

Although orientalists' studies on coherence in Quranic text started, at least, a century ago, studies refuting the claims and criticisms of the skeptics' views against the Quranic text have only started relatively recently. One of these recent, and considered to be the most prominent, works is that of Farrin (2014) which explores structural and thematic coherence in Quranic text. Farrin's main premise, contrary to orientalists' criticism of disjointedness in the Quran, is that the Quranic text is coherent. To argue for this premise, Farrin uses a model of textual analysis that takes into account the following three different approaches:

(i) Rhetorical analysis of the Quran (Cuypers, 2015)
(ii) Pairings of adjacent suras of the Quran (Islahi, 1994)
(iii)   Model of ring structure and chiasmus (Douglas, 2007)

Farrin's analysis prioritises structural coherence over thematic coherence. This is clearly evident in his analysis of the first surah of the Quranic text, al-Fatihah which 'epitomizes the Qur'an in terms of structure and theme' (ibid: 1). In the view of Farrin (ibid: 3), the invocation (basmalah) is not considered to be a part of the surah as it does not have any influence on the structure of the surah.

In his thematic analysis of the surah, Farrin tries to link the ayahs constituting the surah to ayahs of other surahs. He uses traditional exegetical works to find appropriate links between verses of different surahs. For example, Farrin finds that, according to Ibn Abbas, the word *alcalamin* in the first ayah of the Quranic text means "humankind and jinn. This ayah is linked to (Q39: 75) 'Praise be to God, Lord of all peoples' that occurs in reference to the events of the day of judgement where this sound is heard. Also, a thematic connection can be observed between the first ayah of the Quran and the last surah of the Quran where believers are advised to seek refuge with the 'Lord of people' from 'humankind and jinn' (Farrin, 2014: 8). This example clearly shows that a combination of structural analysis, thematic analysis, and the views of traditional exegetical works can be used to show how coherence is achieved in Quranic text. While this analysis interestingly provides convincing arguments against the orientalists' criticism of disjointedness within Qur'anic text-it provides evidence for overall unity of the Quran, it overlooks intrasentential coherence; i.e. it does not provide any analysis for the internal structure of the ayah and how it is linked with the semantic and pragmatic properties the ayah underlies.

Another recent study explores coherence in the Quranic text through the employment of a number of measures for textuality. Alshanqeeti (2020: 492) uses six different mechanisms that determine the achievement of coherence in the Quranic text. These mechanisms are: (i) continuity of thought, (ii) linearization, (iii) morphological form, (iv) grammatical form, (v) conjunctions, and (vi) lexical links. In the view of Alshanqeeti (ibid: 493), the continuity of the leitmotif in the Quranic text occurs in four different positions: (i) adjacent ayahs of the same surah, (ii) adjacent surahs, (iii) peripheries of surahs, and (iv) ayah-final

couplet epithets. The first of the above-mentioned positions is considered to be "a prototypical feature of coherence in Quranic discourse" (ibid: 493). Also, ayah-final couplet epithets do not occur randomly. Rather, their occurrence is mainly determined by the lexical semantic properties of the macro-level context. This context governance for the selection of Allah's couplet epithets is a clear manifestation for coherence in the Quranic text, as in (^{c}aziz hakim – mighty and wise, Q2:129, Q3:6, 18, 62, 126, and Q5:38 to name a few).

The illocutionary force delivery of the underlying conceptualisation of the text requires, in certain cases, the arrangement of the constituents of the text in a specific manner. This is consistent with Goldberg's argument (1995) that the syntactic configuration bears semantic content and, therefore, adds to the meaning of the lexical items participating in that structure. Alshanqeeti (2020:502) refers to it as the linearization of the constituents of the sentence. In his view, the prepositional phrase in *ila allahi turj^{a}cu al-'umur* – To Allah all matters will be returned Q22:76) is purposefully placed sentence initially as it contributes to the attainment of coherence. Relevant to this phenomenon is Chesterman's (2000:48) observation that the Quran "brings formal issues to the fore, with the implication that grammatical form also carries meaning".

It is worthwhile to note that it is not only intersentential textual properties that contribute to the achievement of coherence; other cohesive elements that occur intrasententially can also play a role in the attainment of coherence (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Put more directly, Khan and Choudhary (2017: 169) argue that "cohesion has a substantial role in forming linguistic elements into a combined whole text". Using examples with conjunctions from the Quranic text such as *thumma* 'then' and *dhalika* 'because',

Alshanqeeti (2020: 515:516) illustrates that through the attainment of the cohesiveness of the text, one can achieve the coherence of the text. For some researchers such as Levy (2003: 169) cohesion is not restricted to the use of some linguistic particles, rather "it depends on the use and manipulation of specific linguistic forms, such as the clause linking devices that form part of the cohesive system, the text-forming component of language".

4.   Text-based Analysis of Coherence

Like any other text, the Quranic text underlies a conceptualisation. This conceptualisation is realised through linguistic expressions that were easily understood by their recipients at the time of revelation, the Arabs of Mecca. Yet, upon their denial of it being produced by a divine source, they were challenged to produce a single surah of its like to prove their claim. Their failure to do so indicates a highly significant property that linguists and textual analysists must not take for granted. Specifically, the Quranic text underlies some sort of competence, a divine one, that the people of Mecca could not match. I.e. their linguistic competence allows them to linguistically process the text and appreciate it but it disallows them to produce one like it in both form and content. Inevitably, no human possesses the linguistic competence underlying the Quranic discourse. Therefore, the major drawback of previous orientalists' 'analyses' for Quranic text is that they proposed certain measures of coherence and fallaciously applied them on Quranic text; in many of the cases, this application is subject to the personal opinion of the author rather than to an objective analysis based on theoretically grounded measures of textuality. Any analysis for Quranic text, therefore, must take into account its supreme uniqueness lest the analyst draws inaccurate

conclusions. To clarify this discussion, consider Q2: 49-64. For Wansbrough (1977:19), these ayahs are confusing as they express "a number of disparate topics, abruptly introduced and as abruptly dismissed". For him, (ibid: 18) this analysis came in the context of proving "the fragmentary character of Muslim scripture". However, a look at these ayahs reveals that a more nuanced analysis can be achieved by analysing their grammatical properties. We clearly find that these ayahs begin with the coordinating conjunction particle (wa) "and" which signals an additive relationship. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976:11) "the interpretation of any item in the discourse requires making reference to some other item in the discourse". Hence, the coordinating conjunction particle (wa) draws the attention of the reader to a previous ayah to which this ayah is connected. In Q2:47, we read that Allah commands the children of Israel to remember His favours upon them. This ayah sets the context for the following set of ayahs each of which begins with the coordinating conjunction particle (wa) listing the favours of Allah upon the children of Israel. Therefore, what Wansbrough (1977:19) calls disparate topics are, in fact, constituents of a list for the favours of Allah upon the children of Israel. By understanding the function of the coordinating conjunction particle in Arabic, one can easily observe the relationship between the ayahs and that the text is coherent. The function of cohesive devices is firmly grounded in the literature of textual analysis. For example, Halliday and Hasan (1976:9) considers cohesive links as "the only source of texture". Although much of the analysis of cohesive markers concentrated upon their occurrence within a sentence, we find that that they are used to link ayahs with other relatively distant ones as illustrated in the above-mentioned example of Q2:49-64.

The uniqueness of the Quranic text in terms of structure and content may necessitate that we follow a text-based type of textual analysis, rather than testing the Quranic text against a closed set of measures of textuality which might lead to missing out on interesting textual and linguistic properties specific to Quranic text. In which case, one may not do justice to the analysis of the Muslim Scripture. Through this method, we aim to focus on the properties of the Quranic discourse at different levels of the text and attempt to provide an analysis of their appropriateness to the Quranic text. We maintain that appropriateness is a measure of coherence. This is because of the fact that the attainment of appropriateness at any level of the text contributes to the achievement of textual coherence. Thus, our goal in the remainder of this paper is to provide analyses for the following properties of the Quranic text: (i) grammatically-based appropriateness, (ii) appropriateness of God's couplet epithets, (iii) appropriateness at sentence level, (iv) appropriateness at text level, and (v) appropriateness of U-turn sentences.

4.1 Grammatically-based appropriateness:

 In Quranic discourse, grammatical constructions such as the no-main-verb nominal construction and the nominal construction with a main verb occur recurrently as a technique for the realization of linguistic appropriateness. In Construction Grammar Theory (Goldberg, 1995, 2006), grammatical constructions bear semantic properties of their own which are independent of those properties borne by the lexical items constituting those constructions. Nominal constructions in Arabic express continuous, permanent and significant events. They serve the pragmatic functions of [+ Continuity], [+ Permanency], [+ Renewability], and [+

Significance]. The alternative verb-first construction fails to deliver these semantic properties and, thus, lacks the ability to serve some of the concomitant pragmatic functions such as continuity and significance. Therefore, those latter constructions are inappropriate for the continuity of thought in the one hand, and for concepts that denote permanency and continuity on the other hand. The appropriateness of the nominal sentence lies in the fact that Quranic discourse employs it for the substantiation and affirmation of monotheism, the affirmation of the prophethood of Muhammad, the affirmation of factual information, the affirmation of resurrection, and the affirmation of God's omnipotence, as shown in the following.

4.1.1 The nominal sentence as a means of affirmation and substantiation of monotheism

Monotheism (singling out Allah for worship) is the most important theme in the Quranic text. Due to its importance, it has to be believed internally, declared verbally, and manifested physically. Any violation of one of these three dimensions results in the invalidation of one's belief in the religion of Islam. Thus, a muslim is taught to stay firm upon this belief throughout his/her life. The ayahs that express monotheistic meanings in the Quran take grammatical constructions that are appropriate for these meanings. Consider the following example:

> al-ḥamdu lil-lahi rabbi al-ᶜalamin – [All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds, Q1:2

Here we have the no-main-verb nominal construction to indicate that the act of worship of praising a provider must be directed only to the one true God. This grammatical form denotes the pragmatic properties of continuity and significance. Hence, this construction is more appropriate than a verb-first construction that would fail to

convey the meanings of significance and continuity. Therefore, the grammatical construction used in the ayah contributes to the achievement of coherence in the text. Other similar examples include the following:

> iyyaka naᶜbudu / iyyaka nastaᶜin – It is You we worship and You we ask for help, Q۱:5

> dhalikum allahu rabbukum la ilaha illa huwa khaliqu kulli shai'in faᶜbuduh wa huwa ᶜala kulli shai'in wakil – That is Allah, your Lord; there is no deity except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is Disposer of all things, Q6:102

This ayah begins with a determiner (dhalikum – that) co-referenced with the God's attribute (alᶜalim – All-Knowing) mentioned in the most recent ayah. All the attributes and names of God are considered eternal and everlasting. Hence, the name of God (Allah and Rabb – Lord) denoting the only one worthy of worship (Allah) and the One who nourishes and sustains all creatures (Lord) occupy the complement position for the determiner. These attributes encode the semantic properties of delivering provisions, sustenance, and oneness. Thus, the following states the declaration of faith (There is no deity except Him) encoding the semantic properties of divinity and worship worthiness (al-Saᶜdi, 2003: 245). These meanings are appropriately expressed through the no-main-verb nominal construction which serve the pragmatic functions of eternity, continuity and prominence. A verb-first sentence fails to deliver such pragmatic meanings. Therefore, coherence is attained through the achievement of appropriateness of the grammatical construction. This analysis extends to (Q59:22-24) given below:

huwa allahu alladhi la ilaha illa huwa ᶜalimu al-ghaibi wal-shahadati huwa al-rahmanu al-rahimu (22) huwa allahu alladhi la ilaha illa huwa al-maliku al-quddusu . . . (23) huwa allahu al-khaliqu al-bari'u al-musawwiru lahu al-asma' al-husna (24) – He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed. He is the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful/ He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Bestower of Faith, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him/ He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor, the Fashioner; to Him belong the best names. Whatever is in the heavens and earth is exalting Him. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise. Q59: 22-24

Here, we have the declaration of faith followed with a list of God's attributes denoting knowledge of everything, mercy inclusive of all creatures, sovereignty over all things that no part of it can be acquired by another being, being sanctified by angels, perfection and purity, justice and superiority(Ibn Kathir, 2002,8:51). These meanings are clearly prominent and significant. Thus, a no-main-verb construction achieves appropriateness in expressing them.

The above examples are no-main-verb nominal constructions. Through the grammatical nominal status, appropriateness has been realised. Their alternative verb-first sentences, given below, will fail to deliver appropriateness as the verb-first sentence fails to convey the meanings of the nominal sentence.

naḥmidu allaha rabba al-ᶜalamin – We praise Allah, Lord of the worlds.

> naᶜbudu iyyaka / nastaᶜin iyyaka – We worship You / We ask You for help.

> yujadu rabbukum la ilaha illa huwa / yaᶜlamu al-ghaiba wal-shahadata / yarhamukum / yattasifu allahu bi'annahu la ilaha illa huwa al-maliku al-quddusu . . . / yakhluqu allahu wayabra'u wayusawwiru wa lahu al-asma' al-husna – (literally) Your Lord exists, other than whom there is not deity/ He knows the unseen and the witnessed …

> yuḥiṭu allahu bil-kafirin – God encompasses the disbelievers.

Also, a nominal structure with a lexical verb is used in the Quranic text to convey similar meanings. Let's examine the following ayahs:

> allahu yaᶜlamu wa 'antum la taᶜlamun –And Allah knows, while you know not, Q2:216

> allahu yaᶜlamu ma tusirruna wama tuᶜlinun – And Allah knows what you conceal and what you declare, Q16:19

> allahu yabsutu al-rizqa liman yasha'u – Allah extends provision for whom He wills and restricts [it], Q13:26

The verb yaᶜlamu in the first ayah depicts the lexical event of ascribing knowledge to God and depriving people of that attribute. This knowledge is not specific to any field; rather it denotes a generic reference that encompasses all types of knowledge including types human mental capacity may not even realize. The use of the same verb in the second ayah denotes a type of

knowledge that is specific to what humans conceal as well as what they reveal. In the third ayah, the verb yabsutu (extend) along with its complement (al-rizqa – provision) encode the semantic property of delivery of provision. These semantic properties have the connotations of perfection and might (al-Bigaᶜi, 2011, 4:148). Thus, their realisation in a grammatical form of a nominal sentence with a lexical verb is not haphazard. Rather, this grammatical structure contributes to the achievement of appropriateness through conveying the pragmatic functions of [+ Significance], [+ Might] and [+ Continuity].

However, the verb-first grammatical construction cannot deliver appropriateness as it fails to provide the pragmatic functions of the nominal sentence as shown in the verb-first counterparts of the nominal constructions in (Q13:26) and (Q16:19) given below:

> yaᶜlamu allahu wa'ntum la taᶜlamun – (literally) Knows Allah while you know not.

> yabsutu allahu al-rizqa liman yasha'u – (literally) extends Allah provision for whom He wills and restricts [it].

> yaᶜlamu allahu ma tusirruna wama tuᶜlinun – (literally) knows Allah what you conceal and what you declare.

4.1.2 The nominal sentence as a means of affirmation of prophethood:

The theme of the prophethood of Muhammad is the focus of early revelations of the Quranic text. The importance of this theme can be said to be twofold. First, the acceptance of Muhammad as a prophet sent by God to humans has great consequences on the society of Mecca since it imposes a new life style upon those who accept him as a prophet. Second, the revelation of the Divine Being

to a human is a metaphysical phenomenon that other people cannot experience, and hence, cannot be proved empirically. Consequently, the theme of prophethood has the pragmatic functions of [+ Obligation], [+ Eminence] and [+ Urgency].

It is more likely than not, therefore, that nominal constructions occur in Quranic text to realise affirmation of prophethood as they denote the pragmatic functions associated with it. This is illustrated in the following examples:

> in ana illa nadhir wabashir li qawmin yu'minun– I am not except a warner and a bringer of good tidings to a people who believe, Q7:188

> innama anta nadhir – But you are only a warner, Q11:12

> inni ana al-nadhiru al-mubin – Indeed, I am the clear warner, Q15:89

In these ayahs, coherence is achieved through the employment of the no-verb nominal construction with the affirmation particles (*in* and *innama*). The use of the nominal structure and the affirmative particle highlights the urgency and prominence of the theme being discussed. This urgency is culminated lexically with the depiction of the prophet as a (nadhir – warner). Explicitly, this lexical item bears the semantic properties of caution and alert (al-Saᶜdi, 2003: 289). Similarly, the affirmative particle has the connotations of significance and prominence. Thus, the syntactic construction along with the lexical items employed to express these meanings appropriately realise the pragmatic functions of urgency and prominence associated with the theme of prophethood. The use of these grammatical features other than alternative constructions

provides further evidence to our argument that the grammatical constructions employed in the Quranic text are not haphazard; rather, they are the most appropriate selections dictated by their underlying conceptualisations.

However, other ayahs referring to the theme of prophethood take verb-first constructions such as (Q2:119, Q17:105, Q21:107) given below:

> inna arsalnaka bil haqqi bashiran wa nadhira - Indeed, We have sent you, [O Muhammad], with the truth as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, Q2:119

> wama arsalnaka illa mubashshiran wa nadhira - And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, Q17:105

> wama arsalnaka illa rahmatan lil ᶜalamin - And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds, Q21:107

An initial glance at these ayahs might view them as counterexamples to our analysis of the above-mentioned ayahs at the beginning of this subsection. However, a macro-contextual analysis reveals that the surah divides the creatures into believers, disbelievers, and hypocrites. It also directly addresses the children of Israel who denied and rejected the Quran. Then, this ayah shifts the addressee from the rejecters of the message to the messenger through expressing the event of God's sending him with the truth. This shift has the illocutionary force of solace and comforting the prophet that his mission does not necessitate that he guides all people to the message (al-Bigaᶜi, 2011, 1:234). Since the event of sending a messenger involves two participants of the event (the

agent and the messenger), the employment of a sentence with a lexical verb is more appropriate than an alternative one. Thus, coherence is attained here. A similar analysis also applies to Q17:105 and Q21:107 where the modifying noun phrase *mubashshiran* (bringer of glad tidings), which holds the focus position as it occupies the head position of the modifying noun phrase, and *rahmah* (mercy) in Q21:107, achieve the pragmatic functions of [+solace] and [+comfort]. Similarly to Q2:119, the latter ayahs realise the event of God's sending his messenger, which requires a lexical verb to realise the event. Thus, a sentence with a lexical verb contributes to the achievement of coherence in the text.

4.1.3 The nominal sentence as a means of affirmation of factual information:

Similarly to the affirmation of prophethood, grammatical realization of events of affirmation of certain facts is achieved through nominal constructions in Quranic text. This is because the nominal construction denotes semantic properties compatible with events denoting factual information. These include the semantic properties of inevitability and immutability. Consider the surface realization of the affirmation of the events of the inevitable death of the prophet (Q39:30), God's aversion of wrongdoers (Q3:57), and God's kindness to His servants given below:

> innaka maiyitun wa innahu maiyitun – Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die , Q39:30

> wa allahu la yuhibbu al-zalimin – and Allah does not like the wrongdoers, Q3:57

> wa allahu ra'ufun bil-ᶜibad – and Allah is Kind to [His] servants , Q3:30

We can observe in Q39:30 the close relevance of the morphological shapes of the lexical items to the grammatical structure of the ayah. This is for the purpose of cohesion as it is a requirement for the coherence of the text. More explicitly, although the ayah depicts a telic event, involving a temporal endpoint, (namely, the death of the prophet) which had not yet occurred the moment the ayah was revealed, the morphological form used to depict the event of death is that of a nominal form describing a being who has experienced death, i.e. *maiyitun* (literally, dead) to denote the inevitability of death (al-Saᶜdi, 2003: 691). This is concomitant with the use of the affirmation particle *innaka*. These cohesive tools involving the lexical selection, morphological form, and the affirmation particle all occur within a grammatical construction that serves the pragmatic functions of [+ inevitability] and [+ immutability]. The clustering of these grammatical features perfectly contributes to the text producer's aim to achieve the illocutionary force underlying the structure. Thus, coherence is achieved through the attainment of appropriateness of the lexical items, morphological forms and grammatical constructions.

In Q3:57, the nominal construction is used with a lexical verb to denote the renewability and continuity of the event. The nominal sentence with no lexical verb would fail to realise these meanings. Thus, in order for appropriateness to be achieved in the grammatical expression of the events depicted by the ayah, the surface realization has to encode the pragmatic functions of renewability and continuity, which the nominal construction with a lexical verb does perfectly.

4.1.4 The nominal sentence as a means of affirmation of resurrection:

God's omnipotence is permanent. One of the manifestations of this divine might is God's ability and knowledge to resurrect the dead

(al-Biqaᶜi, 2011, 5:135). Hence, the morphosyntactic realization of God's omnipotence requires the realization of the concomitant properties of God's might, i.e. permanence and continuity. Because they bear the semantic properties of permanence, nominal constructions appropriately realise events depicting God's ability to resurrect the dead. This is illustrated in the following ayahs:

> dhalika bi'anna allaha huwa al-ḥaq wa annahu yuḥyi al-mawta wa annahu ᶜala kulli shai'in qadir – That is because Allah is the Truth and because He gives life to the dead and because He is over all things competent, Q22:6

> wa anna allaha yabᶜathu man fi al-qubur – and that Allah will resurrect those in the graves, Q22:7

> wa huwa al-ladhi yabda'u al-khalqa thumma yuᶜiduh wa huwa ahwanu ᶜalayh – And it is He who begins creation; then He repeats it, and that is [even] easier for Him, Q30:27

The verbs yuḥyi (gives life), yabᶜathu (resurrect), and yuᶜiduh (repeats it) occur in these ayahs to denote the event of resurrection after death, which is considered to be the second most significant theme in the Quran (monotheism being the most significant theme). The nominal sentence with a lexical verb appropriately delivers the pragmatic functions of significance and renewability, while the verb form denotes the pragmatic function of occurrence of an event (of resurrection). One might, however, suggests that active participle nouns may also replace the verbs to deliver the

same meaning. This would clearly violate the requirements for syntactic coherence which stipulate that a verb form must occupy the position of the relative clause complement in Q30:27. Thus, this is a case where the syntactic properties and the pragmatic properties converge in the achievement of coherence in Quranic text.

In Q22:7, coherence is achieved through paralleled grammatical forms, where a particular grammatical form is repeated in adjacent ayahs. In this case, we notice the repetition of the nominal sentence with a lexical verb in both Q22:6 and Q22:7. In the view of Alshanqeeti (2020:510), "this can also achieve syntactic parallelism and assonance on the stylistic level".

4.1.5 The nominal sentence as a means of affirmation of God's omnipotence:

Other manifestations of God's omnipotence include cleavage of grain and date seeds (Q6:95) and creation (Q31:28). God's omnipotence is permanent, continuous and eternal. These are realised by means of nominal constructions as shown in Q6:95 and Q31:28 illustrated below:

> inna allaha faliqu al-ḥabbi wal-nawa – Indeed, God is the cleaver of grain and date seeds, Q6:95
>
> ma khalqukum wala baᶜthukum illa kanafsin waḥidah – Your creation and your resurrection will not be but as that of a single soul, Q31:28

The employment of the nominal sentence with no lexical verb in these ayahs serves to realise the pragmatic functions associated with the meanings of God's omnipotence. The use of this

construction, then, contributes to the achievement of textual coherence.

In specific situations, however, the Quranic text employs a lexical verb to instantiate God's omnipotence as shown in many positions in the Quranic text. The question that arises here is: how can we account for this surface change given the pragmatic differences between the nominal construction with no lexical verb and that with a lexical verb? It can be argued that a sudden change in the grammatical form in cases where the addressee expects a different form has the illocutionary force of driving the attention of the addressee. In the view of al-Zamakhshari (2012, 2:46), the sudden shift in the grammatical form of constructions instantiating God's omnipotence from an active participle normally occurs as in *mukhriju* (literally, bringer out) into a lexical imperfective verb as in *yukhriju* (to bring out) aims at drawing the addressee's attention to the event specified by the verb, which is bringing the living out of the dead in our example. In such cases, therefore, the text producer's aim dictates the appropriate manipulation of different grammatical features in such a way that guarantees (i) the attainment of that aim, and (ii) the achievement of coherence in the text.

4.2 Appropriateness of God's couplet epithets

This section discusses ayahs that end with God's couplet epithets. The occurrence of a specific couplet epithet of God is determined by both macro-contextual and micro-contextual properties. On the macro-context level, the discourse paves the way for the occurrence of the ayah in question by addressing relevant themes. Thus, in order to ensure the attainment of the continuity of thought, the ayah in question occurs. Similarly, on the micro-level context, the ayah contains semantic properties that determine the selection

of an appropriate God's couplet epithet. Hence, continuity of thought is achieved through the attainment of appropriateness of God's couplet epithet.

We can visualize the process of the occurrence of a specific God's couplet epithet as an interplay between lexical cohesion and contextual coherence. This process may contain the following steps:

(i) The macro text contains properties that are thematically connected to the ayah in question.

(ii) The ayah contains semantic and pragmatic properties that are related to those of the selected God's couplet epithet.

(iii) The semantic properties of the appropriate God's couplet epithets are specified.

(iv) From the lexicon, the trilateral roots of the God's couplet epithet that match those semantic properties are selected.

(v) The morphological component provides the forms for the roots for God's couplet epithets.

(vi) At the lexicon-morphology interface, the roots are mapped on the grammatical forms.

Therefore, the ayah-final epithets play a significant role in the realisation of appropriateness since their occurrence plays a pivotal role in the achievement of lexical cohesion and contextual coherence. Consider the following example:

> falillahi al-ḥamdu rabbi al-samawati wa rabbi al-arḍi rabbi al-ᶜalamin / walahu al-kibriya'u fi al-samawati wal-arḍi wa huwa al-ᶜaziz al-ḥakim – Then, to God belongs all praise – Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, Lord of the worlds / To Him belongs all grandeur within the heavens

and the earth, and He is the exalted in might, the wise, Q45:36-37

In terms of appropriateness, the couplet epithets (al-ʿaziz al-ḥakim – the exalted in might, the wise) have been well selected based on the context in which they occur. On the macro level context, reference has been made to the following themes (Ibn Kathir, 2002, 7:177-181)

(i) the creation of the heavens and earth (Q45:22),

(ii) the skeptics of the resurrection (Q45:24-25 and 32),

(iii) the dominion of the heavens and the earth belongs to God,

(iv) the contrast (antithesis) between the fate of the believers and the unbelievers (Q45:30-31), and

(v) the skeptics who took the Quran in ridicule.

In order to select God's epithets that are appropriate for the context and to achieve continuity of thought, the sentence-final couplet epithets (al-ʿaziz al-hakim – the exalted in might, the wise) are well-selected for the following contextual reasons:

(1) The couplet epithets echo God's might (al-ʿaziz) in the creation of the heavens and the earth, in His irresistibility, and in His capacity to bring the dead to life again, i.e., to resurrect them, and

(2) The couplet epithets semantically represent God's wisdom (al-ḥakim) in how to deal with the skeptics and what kind of decision to be made with regards to their fate.

4.3 Appropriateness at sentence level

Like any discourse, Quranic discourse is unique in its format and style. It is our position in the present discussion that the ordering of the ayahs in all of the chapters of the Qur'an comes in the most

appropriate way. However, one may question the occurrence of an ayah that on the surface looks inappropriately placed after its preceding ayah. The methodology we can follow in providing an account for appropriateness of such ayahs should depend on the conceptualisation that the ayah or the set of ayahs preceding the one in question underlies. There are also contextual clues in the macro text that we can rely upon when investigating the appropriateness of a certain ayah in a certain position. Therefore, the methodology I will use in my argument for the appropriateness of the ayahs stands upon:

(i) the reasons of revelation since those reasons project a number of concepts relevant to it which constitute the conceptualisation underlying the text of the surah (chapter),

(ii) the gradation of these concepts in terms of the extent to which they are related to the reason of revelation, and

(iii) the logical and coherent arrangement of those concepts in the surah.

Let us consider the ayah in Q13:8 given below:

> allahu ya°lamu ma taḥmilu kullu 'untha wa ma taghiẓu al-arḥamu wa ma tazdad wa kullu shay'in °indahu bimigdar - Allah knows what every female carries and what the wombs lose [prematurely] or exceed. And everything with Him is by due measure, (Q13:8)

A scrutinised look at the macro text reveals that the previous surah ends with exclaiming against the irrational behaviour of

disbelievers' passing over (seeing) the signs of God and turning away from them (al-Ṭabarī, 2001, 13:371).

wa ka 'ayen min ayatin fi al-samawati wa al-arẓi yamurruna ᶜalayha wa hum muᶜriẓun - And how many a sign within the heavens and earth do they pass over while they, therefrom, are turning away, (Q12:105)

This ayah, in turn, is a probe triggering the detailing that the following surah (Q13) provides (Al-Biqaᶜi 2011, 4:118). Hence, this surah begins with listing the mighty 'visible' creation of Allah, that's why we have the word *tarawnaha* 'that you can see'. These creatures visible to humans included in the ayahs are heavens, sun, moon, spreading earth, firmly set mountains, rivers, the making of two mates of all fruits, and the alternation of the night and the day. The ayahs also mention the neighbouring plots of land, gardens of grapevines, crops and palm trees (al-Zamakhshari, 2012, 2:469). The surah, then, urges people to think and reason upon these signs, which clearly indicate the Creator's ability to resurrect people after death. Disbelief in God's ability to resurrect people is described as astonishing and irrational since they have already seen and continue to see these aforementioned signs. However, in (Q13:7) the disbelievers mock God's ability and still wonder why can't a sign be sent down to this prophet from his Lord. Because the aforementioned visible signs underlie Allah's might and knowledge, this ayah (Q13:8) states the acts of God that entail His knowledge and ability, such as His knowledge of the processes of reproduction which take place in the wombs. This knowledge, by itself, is an ability that exceeds humans' power, and the processes

of reproduction which ensure the continuity of the existence of the different types of species are also signs of God's power and knowledge that go beyond the capacity of humans. Hence, ayah (Q13:8) appropriately fits its position as the contextual clues clearly indicate: the surah comes as a response to the disbelievers' doubting God's knowledge and ability, stating visible signs indicating power and knowledge attributes of God, and then this ayah comes as a direct response to disbelievers' mockery of God's ability to reveal a sign to His prophet.

Another example occurs in Q13:26 where this ayah looks for skeptics, on the surface, inappropriately placed after ayah 25.

> allahu yabṣuṭu al-rizqa liman yasha'u wa yaqdir wa fariḥu bil hayati al-dunya wa ma al-ḥayatu al-dunya fi al-akhirati illa mataᶜ - Allah extends provision for whom He wills and restricts [it]. And they rejoice in the worldly life, while the worldly life is not, compared to the Hereafter, except [brief] enjoyment, (Q13:26)

If we analyse the macro text, one can observe that the few ayahs preceding the one in question urge people to do a number of virtuous practices such as (i) being patient on fulfilling the covenant of God, (ii) maintaining ties with relatives, (iii) performing prayers, (iv) giving the needy, and (v) showing good morals even to the ones who are harmful to you. Then, Q13: 23, 24, 25 state that people demonstrating these morals will be rewarded while those who break the ties with relatives, break the covenant of God, and spread mischief on earth will be punished

and cursed (See al-Ṭabarī, 2001, 14: 509-511). The antithetical statement of Q13:25 where the punishment of the disbelievers is expressed provides a situation where it is likely that the disbelievers attempt to refute this ayah by arguing that they currently live in abundance despite their wrongdoing while believers live in poverty despite their obedience. A direct reply to this possible argument comes in Q13:26 (Al-Biqaᶜi, 2011, 4: 148). We conclude, then, that this ayah is perfectly appropriate in this position as is the case with the entirety of the Quranic text.

4.4 Appropriateness at the text level

The aim of the text's producer is a conceptualisation that takes the form of a text. The main goal of the producer of the text is to ensure the delivery of the message to the recipients in such a way that guarantees the achievement of textual coherence. One important mechanism for coherence of the discourse is the continuity of thought throughout the text (Alshanqeeti, 2020: 493).

For the continuity of thought to perpetuate throughout the text, the attainment of appropriateness at the macro level must accrue. Thus, one possible way to explore appropriateness at the macro-text level is to through the analysis of the logical links between the surahs or within the same surah in order to achieve the major function of coherence, which is the establishment of continuity of thought at the Quranic macro text level. This is illustrated bellow. For space limitation, the analysis for the examples will be brief.

(i) The logical link between the beginning of a surah and the beginning of the subsequent surah, as in Q43:2 and Q44:2 where the noun phrase (al-kitab al-mubin – the clear Book, i.e., the Quran) occurs. The same applies to Q39, Q40 and Q41 where at the beginning of Q39:1, Q40:2, and Q41:2, reference is made to the

same theme of the revelation of the Book (the Quran) and to God's couplet epithets:

(tanzil al-kitab min allah al-ᶜaziz al-ḥakim – The revelation of the Book is from God, the exalted in might, the wise) → (tanzil al-kitab min allah al-ᶜaziz al-ᶜalim – The revelation of the Book is from God, the exalted in might, the knowing) → (tanzil min al-raḥman al-raḥim – This is a revelation from the entirely merciful, the especially merciful).

(ii) The logical link between the end of a surah and the beginning of the following surah, as in Q45:37 and Q36:2 where God's couplet epithets (al-ᶜaziz al-ḥakim – the exalted in might, the wise) occur at the end of Q45:37 and at the beginning of Q46:2.

(iii) The logical link between the beginning of a surah and the end of the same surah, as in Q45:2 and Q45:37 where God's couplet epithets (al-ᶜaziz al-ḥakim – the exalted in might, the wise) occur.

4.5 Appropriateness and U-turn sentences

The above discussion has focused on how appropriateness is achieved in Quranic discourse and that the Quran enjoys the textual characteristic of linear thematic connection among sentences that are the constituents of the Quranic text. However, one may observe that some Quranic sentences are not connected to each other thematically. In other words, in some Quranic passages, we notice *on-the-surface* inappropriateness because a sentence makes a sharp U-turn from the previous sentence(s). If this were true, then in such a case there would have been a lack of appropriateness among such sentences and, therefore, neither continuity of thought nor texture have been achieved. However, there are logical links between these ayahs and the ones preceding them. Let us consider the following examples:

> in yuḥa ilayya illa annama ana nadhirun mubin – It has not been revealed to me except that I am a clear warner. Q38:70

The above sentence refers to the theme (notion) of the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH). However, one can observe a sharp U-turn in the subsequent sentences of Q38:71-85 where reference is made to the story of Satan's refusal to obey God's command to prostrate to Adam. A bird's eye view of the larger text can provide an insight into the fact that the logical link, i.e., appropriateness, lies in that while the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) is rejected by the unbelievers, sentences of Q38:71-85 represent a stark warning to the opponents of prophethood and reminds them of the fate of Satan and of reward and punishment. Thus, one can see clearly that Q38:70 is appropriately linked to Q38:71-85 and that continuity of thought is intact and on-the-surface unrelatedness is invalid.

Another instantiation of appropriateness in U-turn sentences is discussed below. Consider the following ayah:

> walaqad naṣarakum allahu bibadrin wa'antum adhillatun fattaqu allaha . . . idh taqulu lil-mu'minina alan yakfiyakum an yumiddakum rabbukum bithalathati alafin min al-mala'ikati munzalin. bala in taṣbiru watattaqu . . . wama jaᶜalahu allahu illa bushra lakum walitatma'inna qulubukum bihi . . . walillahi ma fi al-samawati wa ma fi al-arḍi . . . – And already had Allah given you victory at [the battle of] Badr while you were weak [i.e., few in number]. Then fear Allah… when you said to the believers, "Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord should reinforce you with three thousand angels sent down?... Yes, if you

> remain patient and conscious of Allah ... And
> Allah made it not except as [a sign of] good tidings
> for you and to reassure your hearts thereby ... And
> to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and
> whatever is on the earth, Q3:123-129

We are told by the above passage about the battle of Badr that took place in 2H / 624AD in which the Muslim army was significantly less in number and equipment than the enemy who were the unbelievers of Makkah. However, the enemy was defeated and this was a moral boost to morale of the Muslims. The themes (notions) of patience and piety are also highlighted as prerequisites of achieving victory on the battleground. Reference is made to the angels who were sent as fighters to support the ill-equipped Muslim army. The other matter raised in the passage is that the total obedience to the Prophet's orders is necessary to achieve victory. It is worthwhile to note that the above ayahs of Q3:123-129 were revealed after the battle of Uhud in 3H / 625AD in which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) made military positions for fifty archers at the top hill overlooking the enemy. He told them to stay in their positions until they were told to leave. However, the Muslims were overjoyed and became preoccupied by the pleasures, spoils and material gains from the enemy. The archers abandoned their strategic top hill positions after they had seen the defeat of the enemy but they were not commanded to do so by the Prophet. They abandoned their positions looking for spoils of war. However, the enemy regrouped quickly and launched a counter attack from the right flank during which the Prophet was seriously injured. The above passage also instructs the Prophet to be a model in morality, that all affairs of this life belong to God, and that it is up to God whether to forgive or punish people for their deeds. The

above passage has provided us with an insight into the following ayah:

> ya aiyuha alladhina amanu la ta'kulu al-riba aḍ ͨafan muḍa ͨafatan wattaqu allaha la ͨallakum tufliḥun – O you who have believed, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah that you may be successful. Q3:130

The above sentence refers to the evil effect of usury (al-riba) which was forbidden according to Q2:278. Having read the above sentence Q3:130, one wonders whether there is a continuity of thought and a logical link with the previous passage Q3:123-129. One may claim that Q3:130 has made a sharp U-turn from the previous sentences. Based on the underlying meaning of Q3:130, one can see clearly the logical relatedness and the appropriate connection with the previous passage. The underlying meaning of Q3:130 is that the enemy's army was well-equipped. However, their military equipment was paid for by the money gained through usury, that running after the spoils of war represents weak belief because this represents the affection to the worldly gains while the true believer should look for the gains of the hereafter, that weak belief leads to disobedience to the Prophet's orders, and that the spoils of war do not belong to the Muslims. Thus, they are not allowed to have them. We are also admonished by Q3:130 that the Muslims are not allowed to take usury because the money is not theirs, and that the spoils of war are as bad as usury (al-Biqa ͨi, 2011).

On-the-surface inappropriateness can also be explained through the following example:

> wayaqulu alladhina kafaru lawla unzila ͨalaihi ayatun min rabbih… – And those who disbelieved

say, "Why has a sign not been sent down to him from his Lord?" You are only a warner, and for every people is a guide. Q13:7

where we are informed about the unbelievers who challenge the prophet to provide evidence of his prophethood. However, the following sentence deals with something dramatically different:

allahu yaᶜlamu ma taḥmilu kullu untha wama taghiẓu al-arḥamu wama tazdad wa kullu shai'in ᶜindahu bimigdar – Allah knows what every female carries and what the wombs lose [prematurely] or exceed. And everything with Him is by due measure. Q13:8

where we are told about God's knowledge of the wombs. The unbelievers' curiosity cannot be satisfied unless they see for themselves a sign as a proof of the revelation of the Quran. However, Q13:8 refers to the fact that God knows that the unbelievers are asking for a sign not as a means to guide them to the truth and make them embrace Islam but their challenge is not thoughtful and is presented just out of conceit and contempt to the revelation and Muhammad. The theme of God's omnipotence about all affairs and things as represented by Q13:8 provides the text with thematic and textual appropriateness and relatedness with Q13:7. God knows everything including the minute creatures such as the fetus in the womb as well as the evil intention of the skeptical unbelievers. On the macro textual level, we can observe a thematic link between Q13:7 and Q13:31, Q6:7 and 111, and Q10:96-97 which rebuke the unbelievers who are skeptical about the revelation. They are told that even if they see a miracle, they will still deny the revelation (al-Biqaᶜi, 2011).

5. Conclusion

This paper provided linguistic analyses for coherence at different levels of the Quranic text. These analyses aimed at refuting the skeptics' negative remarks against the text through adopting a text-based approach to discourse analysis rather than the widely adopted method of testing whether or not the text achieves a closed set of measures of textuality. This is to escape the possible risk of overlooking important properties of the Quranic text.

As a fundamental measure of coherence, the attainment of appropriateness at different levels of the text was central to our discussions. In particular, the paper explored the instantiations of appropriateness at different levels of the Quranic text. These include the levels of the (i) grammar, (ii) lexical cohesion, (iii) sentence, and (iv) text. In terms of the grammatical level, it was found that the Quranic text employs the nominal sentence to address topics pertaining (but not limited) to the affirmation of (i) monotheism, (ii) the prophethood of Muhammad, (iii) factual information, (iv) resurrection, (v) God's omnipotence. Upon the analysis of some examples from the text, we concluded that the employment of the nominal construction with these topics contributed to the achievement of coherence because they serve the pragmatic functions of [+ Continuity], [+ Permanency], [+ Renewability], and [+ Significance].

Similarly, it is our position that the occurrence of a specific lexical item is determined by micro-textual and macro-textual properties. The analysis of God's couplet epithets provides textual evidence for that stance since the semantic properties of the employed lexemes match those of the ayah and the surrounding text. On the other hand, our discussions on appropriateness at sentence level focusses on the ayahs that can be problematic for the readers; ayahs for which the rationale for its occurrence in its position may

not easily be conceived. In our analysis for these ayahs, we adopted a methodology that stands upon (i) the reasons for revelation, (ii) the relevance of the themes of the surah to the reasons for revelation, and (iii) the arrangement of the themes in the surah. Conclusions drawn from these ayahs do not only point to the fact they appropriately occur in their positions, but rather their occurrences in these specific positions contribute to the achievement of coherence. Also, the Quranic text employs ayahs (termed U-turn sentences) that discuss a theme that is different from the one specified by the previous one. However, analytical scrutiny reveals that there is a logical link between these U-turn ayahs and the ones preceding them. Hence, these logical connections provide textual evidence for coherence in the Quranic discourse and, therefore, refute the sceptics' negative views against the Quranic text. Evidence from the macro text analysis also supports our argument, that the text achieves coherence, through the attainment of thematic connectivity between the surahs.

However, one of the shortcomings of this paper is that it did not explore the thematic development across the Quranic text which could help uncover the underlying logical structure in the text. There is a consensus amongst researchers of text linguistics that in order for a text to be coherent, it must have "an underlying logical structure that acts to guide the reader through the text" (Neubert and Shreve, 1992:94) so that "it 'sticks together' as a unit" (Hatch 1992:209) and makes the "feeling that a text hangs together, that it makes sense, and is not just a jumble of sentences" (McCarthy 1991:26). Hence, it is recommended that this topic is further investigated from the perspective of discourse analysis in order to identify (i) the nature of the logical links between the themes of the adjacent surahs, and (ii) the linear development of the themes across the Quranic text.

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