

Research Paper

Application of the Theory of Textual Cohesion in Surah Al-Mutaffifin and Its Semantic Implications

Mansour Homeirani ^{*1} , Ebrahim Zare'ifar² 

¹ M.A, Qur'an and Tradition Sciences, PNU, Fasa, Iran

² Theology and Islamic Studies Department, Islamic Azad University, Fasa, Iran



10.22080/qhs.2025.5872

Received:

May 2, 2025

Accepted:

July 5, 2025

Available online:

September 10, 2025

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Studying the Qur'an through the lens of text linguistics is a modern approach that focuses on analyzing the internal relations and mechanisms of cohesion and semantic connectivity within the divine text. According to the theory of textual cohesion proposed by Halliday and Hasan, a text becomes meaningful only when its linguistic elements are logically and conceptually linked. This theory explains how a text maintains unity of meaning through cohesive devices such as repetition, reference, contrast, and conjunctions. The Qur'an, as a miraculous text, exhibits the highest level of cohesion, with each surah

organized according to a purposeful and meaning-oriented structure. *Surah al-Mutaffifin* is a striking example of such cohesion. By addressing the moral and social problem of fraud in measurement and linking it to the denial of the Day of Judgment, the surah forms a unified and educative structure. Analyzing its cohesion reveals the intricate network of semantic relations between the verses and highlights how the Qur'anic language serves its divine and ethical message.

2. Methods

This study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach grounded in the theory of textual cohesion to examine the cohesive mechanisms in *Surah al-Mutaffifin*. The cohesive elements of the surah were first

*Corresponding Author: Mansour Homeirani

Address: PNU, Fasa, Iran.

Email: mansorhomirany@gmail.com

identified and categorized, and then their roles in creating semantic unity and strengthening the discourse structure were analyzed. The data were collected through close reading of the surah, identifying instances of word repetition, semantic links, oppositions, and hierarchical relations, and then analyzed semantically to clarify how the surah's discourse is organized at both the linguistic and conceptual levels.

3. Results

The analysis of *Surah al-Mutaffifin* shows that its semantic cohesion is systematically and purposefully formed through a network of cohesive elements. The most significant ones include:

a. Repetition:

Repetition is the most prominent cohesive device in this surah. Words such as *wayl*, *yawm*, *dīn*, *kitāb*, *fujjār*, *'illiyyīn*, and *sijjīn* appear repeatedly, either explicitly or implicitly, forming the conceptual core of the discourse. Repetition here not only serves an emphatic function but also establishes mental connections between verses and reinforces the continuous message of the surah. Especially, the repeated mention of *Yawm al-Dīn* creates a circular structure that engrains the central theme—belief in the Day of Judgment—into the reader's mind.

b. Semantic Inclusion:

Lexical items related to reward and punishment are arranged hierarchically. Concepts such as *Mutaffifīn*, *Na'īm*, and *Tanāfus* fall under the broader notions of *recompense* and *the Day of Judgment*. This inclusion ensures conceptual cohesion among the surah's sections and gradually guides the semantic progression from warning the *Mutaffifīn* to promising bliss for the *Abrār*.

c. Semantic Opposition:

One of the most prominent features of this surah is the contrast between the *Fujjār* (wicked) and the *Abrār* (righteous). This opposition shapes the surah's dual structure, leading the audience from moral warning to theological reflection. Antithetical word pairs create a dynamic interplay that strengthens the cohesive flow between the surah's two halves.

d. Conjunctive Elements:

Conjunctions and linking expressions are skillfully employed to establish logical relations between verses. Words and particles such as *alā*, *wa mā adrāka*, and *hal* serve specific roles in connecting sections and facilitating the gradual transition from divine warning against the *Fujjār* to the glorification of the *Abrār*. Overall, the findings indicate that the surah's structure is based on precise internal cohesion. The interrelation between words and stylistic forms leads the reader on a gradual journey—from denial to belief, and from moral corruption to faith and righteous action.

4. Conclusion

The cohesive analysis of *Surah al-Mutaffifin* reveals that the Qur'an, beyond its rhetorical and linguistic miracle, possesses a deeply organized and purposeful structure. Repetition emerges as the key cohesive element that, by reactivating core words and concepts, maintains the continuity and vitality of the surah's message. Moreover, the hierarchical and oppositional relations between concepts such as *Fujjār* and *Abrār* provide both ethical and theological coherence to the surah. The central axis of this cohesion is belief in the *Day of Judgment*, presented as the foundation of moral and social reform. Thus, the surah's cohesion reflects a divine semantic order in which the Qur'anic language functions as a network of meaning-

driven signs guiding the reader toward understanding the divine message.

References

- Ibn 'Āshūr, Muhammad (1984). *Al-Tahrīr wa al-Tanwīr*. Tunis: Dār al-Tūnisiyya.
- Bahrapour, Shabān 'Alī. (2000). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. Tehran: Farhang-e Gofman Publications.
- Shaeiri, Hamidreza. (2006). *A Semio-semantic Analysis of Discourse*. Tehran: SAMT Publications.
- Hassan, Tammam. (1993). *Al-Bayān fī Rawā'ī 'al-Qur'ān: A Linguistic and Stylistic Study of the Qur'anic Text*. Cairo: 'Ālam al-Kitāb.
- Abdul-Majīd, Jalīl. (1998). *Al-Badī' bayna al-Balāghah al-'Arabiyyah wa al-Lisāniyyāt al-Naṣṣiyyah*. Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyyah.
- Shibl, Muhammad 'Izzah. (2009). *Ilm Lughah al-Naṣṣ: Theory and Application*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Ādāb.
- Maslouh, Saad. (1990). *From Sentence Grammar to Text Grammar*. Kuwait: Najm 'Abdu Badawi.
- Qafī, Ṣubḥī Ibrāhīm. (2000). *Text Linguistics between Theory and Practice: A Comparative Study of the Meccan Surahs*. Cairo: Dār Qibā'.