Does Ellipsis Really Exist in the Qur'ān? An SFL-Based Perspective

Zaid Alamiri

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Keywords: ellipsis, Arabic linguistic tradition, taqdīr, cohesion, systemic functional linguistics, Qurʾān

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AN SFL-BASED PERSPECTIVE

Zaid Alamiri[*]

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Keywords: *ellipsis*, *Arabic linguistic tradition*, *taqdīr*, *cohesion*, *systemic functional linguistics*, *Qurʾān*

"The Arabs used to delete a sentence, a single word…as long as there is an indicating clue; otherwise it would be a subject of speculation."[1] "The elided element, with the presence of a clue hinting to it, is much like the uttered one…"[2]

"not a noun or a verb being elided, without being better deleted than mentioned, and you find that its being suppressed is more constructive than being articulated."[3]

"Ellipsis occurs when something that is structurally necessary, is left unsaid"[4] but what is "'unsaid' implies but understood nevertheless"[5], and "where there is ellipsis, there is a presupposition…that something is to be supplied or understood."[6]

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[1]   Abū l-Fatḥ ʿUṯmān Ibn Jinnī, *Al-Khaṣāʾiṣ*, ed. M. A. Al-Najjār (Cairo: Dār alkutub al-Miṣriyah, 1960), vol. 2, 360.
[2]   Ibid., vol. 1, 284.
[3]   ʿAbdul Qahir al-Jurjānī, *Dalāʾil a-Iʿjāz* [Indications of the Inimitability of the Qurʾān], ed. Muhammad Šāker (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānchī, 1984), 146.
[4]   Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (London: Longman, 1976), 144.
[5]   Ibid., 142.
[6]   Ibid., 144.

INTRODUCTION

Being a phenomenon shared by all natural languages, the ellipsis is discussed by all linguistic theories.[7] Arabic is no exception. Voluminous works have been produced and many more are still being written; most of these works have used the Qurʾān as the main source of analysis.[8] That the Qurʾān, as a text,[9] has shaped the development of the Arabic linguistic tradition is an established fact shown through the inextricable relation that ties Qurʾānic scholarship and Arabic grammar that grew up in the shadow of the Qurʾān. Based on that, the ellipsis is one among many tools of grammatical interpretation that grammarians and exegetes alike use in their understanding of Qurʾānic discourse.

The purpose of this research is to examine the phenomenon of the ellipsis in the Qurʾān from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics (SFL), which, as a linguistic theory, considers the ellipsis as one of the grammatical devices that contributes to the cohesion of text. This approach, based on the mechanisms of internal organisation of text, represents a new avenue in Arabic linguistic scholarship whose description of the ellipsis was syntactically oriented by intra-sentence relation. This article presents a brief and satisfactory account of the ellipsis in Arabic linguistic tradition, on the one hand,[10] and SFL theory expounded by a concept of cohesion, on the other.[11] Because the texts (*sūras*) analysed in this study are not exhaustive, the results presented here are preliminary observations that need further elaboration to formulate a sound theoretical approach on the ellipsis phenomenon.

ELLIPSIS IN ARABIC LINGUISTIC TRADITION

The lexical meanings of ellipsis (الحذف)[12] are semantically interrelated in that they refer to a process of removal of something by pulling, chopping or dropping. The last term is used at the level of phono(morpho)logy (dropping a particle – or more – or a vowel from a word), as well as structure (dropping a word(s) or phrase(s)). It is worth mentioning at the outset that the ellipsis, in traditional and contemporary Arabic linguistic scholarship, is based on the theory of ʿamal[13] (governance or operation العمل), where an ʿāmil (operator or operant العامل) acts on the maʿmūl (operand المعمول) effecting its case endings; the process changes the relationships

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[7]   Three things are implicit in this definition. First, the scope and use of ellipses varies considerably between languages, see Christina Solimando, "Ellipsis in the Arabic Linguistic Thinking (8th–10th century), in *The Word in Arabic*, ed. Giuliano Lancioni and Lidia Bettini (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011). Second, the ellipsis principle is the occurrence of an omission of a syntactic constituent of speech, written or spoken. Third, the principle of economy and avoidance of repetition of syntactic form are the general motives for an ellipsis, see Thomas Christiansen, *Cohesion: A Discourse Perspective* (Peter Lang, 2011), 131.

[8]   The particularity of the ellipsis has its roots in the exegetic activity of the first *mufassirūn*. Solimando, "Ellipsis," 72.

[9]   For the Qurʾān as a text, see Zaid Alamiri, "Understanding the Qurʾān Textuality: A Preliminary SFL-based Analysis of the Qurʾān as Text," *The International Journal of Arabic Linguistics* 6 (2020).

[10]   The present study does not claim to offer an exhaustive literature review on the ellipsis in Arabic. Such a literature review, classic and contemporary, is too vast to be covered in a study like this.

[11]   Based on Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion in English*.

[12]   Muhammad Ibn Manẓur, *Lisān al-ʿArab* [Language of the Arabs], ed. A. M. ʿAbdulWahab and M. S. al-ʿUbaidy (Beirut: Dar 'Ihia al-Turath al-Arabi & Muaʾssasat at-Tarikh al-ʿArabi, 1999), vol. 3, 93-94.

[13]   It is beyond the scope of this study to go into details of the theory.

(between sentence constituents) to eventually produce a change in meanings. The ellipsis, thus understood, implies that unmentioned operators contribute, through the *taqdīr* (suppletive insertion; restoration التقدير), to maintain the original structure prescribed by the syntactic rules.[14] The ellipsis is taken as a device of grammatical interpretation (*taʾwil* التأويل) whose function is limited to a virtual proposition indicating the presence of unannounced elements, the operators, in the underlying original utterance. From there, a correlation is established between the ellipsis and *taqdīr* (suppletive insertion) in the sense that the former is the restoration of a non-existent element in the structure and the latter is the deletion of certain parts of a structure.[15] To a grammarian, (the function of) the ellipsis is restricted only to the deletion of an operator, whether its governed element (*maʿmūl*) keeps its original declension (*ʾiʿrāb* الإعراب) state or changes to fit its new structure.[16]

From this brief account, two important things can be inferred. First, this definition of an ellipsis, which is still used by contemporary studies, is technically ambiguous; it overlaps with other related terms like: self-sufficiency, brevity, suppression, restoration, interpretation and latitude.[17] Second, the ellipsis has never had a well-defined theoretical status in classical or contemporary Arab studies.[18] In a nutshell, preoccupied with the correctness of the structure, the main concern of grammarians was that the elided category must justify the syntactic structure of the sentence in light of the rules they set.

The Grammatical Contribution

Sibawayh (d. 177/793) is considered the first grammarian to examine the ellipsis at phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. In his discussion, he introduced two closely related terms, deletion (حذف) and suppression (إضمار), which provoke some controversy among contemporary scholars. For example, Ḥammudah[19] considers these two terms to be synonymous and Sibawayh uses them interchangeably since they partially overlap.[20] Some argue that 'deletion' (حذف) relates to the phono-morphological level, whereas suppression (إضمار) refers to the syntactic level of a word, phrase, clause and sentence.[21] But Versteegh[22] sees suppression (إضمار) as a generic term for any type of deletion and it was used by early commentaries on the Qurʾān to denote "almost exclusively…semantic deletion in the surface

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[14] Halliday Hasan, *Cohesion in English*, 144, asserts "…it is not in fact the structure which makes it elliptical. An item is elliptical if its structure does not express all the features that have gone into its make-up - all the meaningful choices that are embodied in it."

[15] ʿAli Abu al-Makarem, *Alḥaḍf Wa Taqdīr Fil n-Nahw al-ʿArabi* [Ellipsis and Suppletive Insertion in Arabic Grammar] (Cairo: Dar Ġarib lil Ṭibaʿah wal našr wal Tawziʿ, 2007), 209.

[16] Ibid., 200.

[17] Ibid., 199.

[18] Solimando, "Ellipsis," 70-71, 81.

[19] Ṭaher Ḥammudah, *Ḍahirat al-Ḥaḍf Fi Al-Daras al-Lughawi* [The Phenomenon of Ellipsis in the Linguistic Research] (Cairo: al-Dar al-Jamiʿyah lil nashr wal Ṭibaʿah wal Tawziʿ, 1999), 19-20.

[20] Michael Carter, "Elision," in *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Grammar*, ed. Kinga Dévényi and Tamás Iványi (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University Chair for Arabic Studies, 1991), 122.

[21] Ibid.; Solimando, "Ellipsis," 77.

[22] Kees Versteegh, "The Notion of Underlying Levels in the Arabic Grammatical Tradition," *Historiographia Linguistica* 21 (1994): 280.

structure" to reconstruct the speaker's underlying intention.[23] Central to the phenomenon of ellipsis is the term of *taqdīr*[24] (suppletive insertion).

Other grammarians, who productively contributed, to varying degrees, to the development of the theory of ellipsis in Arabic were Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002) and Ibn Hishām (d. 761/1359). The former introduced some insightful notions of pragmatic and functional value that influenced latter grammarians, particularly Ibn Hishām,[25] whose extensive account of the ellipsis, 56 pages,[26] presented with delicacy, is striking. Central to this is the special attention he devoted to three major elements: conditions, restoration (reconstruction) of the elided element and the grammatical elements to be deleted (elliptical elements). Of interest here is to say something about the notion of the indictor, mentioned by Ibn Jinnī and Ibn Hishām. The indictors are of two types: verbal (دليل مقالي) and contextual (دليل حالي). What is important to highlight is that the verbal indictor, as understood by those grammarians, does not refer, as in SFL, to an anaphoric relation where an element is mentioned in a preceding utterance. The fact is the verbal indictor simply hints to a syntactic element in the elliptical utterance, though some examples accord with the SFL analysis of the ellipsis.[27]

Some Functional Points in Grammarians' Elaboration of Ellipsis

Despite the obvious syntactic criteria, some of the functional insights were not entirely absent from the works of early linguists; however, this does not imply the existence of a functional approach, but scattered remarks are theoretically important to maintain harmony between structure and meaning at sentence level.[28]

To begin with, Sībawayh's book deals with some of these insights. The first, I believe, of relevance to a functional approach is his mention of the addressee's role in the recoverability of the meaning of an omitted element. Implied in this relation is the mutual interaction between the existence (presence) of a verbal (textual) indicator and the certainty of meaning. This is because recognition of elided elements and recoverability of the meaning bear on the addressee's role in the entire ellipsis process. In other words, the ellipsis is "legitimate when it

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[23]   Ibid., 274; Kees Versteegh, *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought III: The Arabic Linguistic Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1997), 1-12; Kinga Devenyi, "Iḍmār in the Maʿānī of al-Farrā: A Grammatical Approach between Description and Explanation," in *Approaches to Arabic Linguistics*, ed. Everhard Ditters and Harald Motzki (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 45-64.

[24]   *Taqdīr* simply means the virtual level of speech in which something non-existent has the status of something existing. It is used to ascribe to "supposedly elided elements a virtual effect on other elements" reconstructing the underlying structure where unannounced elements in the utterance are made explicit. Ramzi Baalbaki, The *Legacy of the Kitāb: Sibawayhi's Analytical Methods within the Context of the Arabic Grammatical Theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 70.

[25]   Adrian Gully, *Grammar and Semantics in Medieval Arabic* (Curzon Press, 1995), 207.

[26]   ʾAbū Muḥammad Ibn Hishām, *Mughnī al-labīb an Kutub al-Aʿārīb* [The Book that allows the Wise Man to dispense with all other Books on Iʿrāb], ed. A. M. Al-Khaṭīb (Kuwait: Al-Majlis al-waṭanī lil-ṯaqāfa wa'l-funūn wa'l-ʾādāb, 2000), vol. 6, 317-538.

[27]   These are the only examples: Qurʾān 4:59, 92; 5:5; 13:35; 16:24, 30; 29:61; 43:87; 57:10; 65:4; 75:3-4. Ibn Hishām mentioned in his account on ellipsis.

[28]   For more, see Gully, "Grammar"; Baalbaki, *Legacy*; Amal E. Marogy, *Kitāb Sībawayhi Syntax and Pragmatics* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010); Michael Carter, *Sībawayhi's Principles. Arabic Grammar and Law in Early Islamic Thought* (Lockwood Press, 2016).

does not lead to any ambiguity" among the participants in a communication act,[29] and because "it is only possible when the real context makes the elided elements obvious."[30] This shows us two things: first, Sibawayh was aware the ellipsis "is not a peripheral language phenomenon;"[31] second, language for Sibawayh "always functioned in a real context of speaker and listener."[32]

Another related concept that Sībawayh elaborated was the circumstantial context of discourse (the non-linguistic context);[33] it is based on and derived from the everyday life of language use, and was as important as linguistic context.[34] Without a clue to the text, the ellipsis of some syntactic structures in Arabic depends on the addressees' awareness of these situations. However, this dynamic trend was largely ignored by later linguists, who distanced themselves from the real linguistic world or linguistic reality, and their approach became much more prescriptive.[35] The last term is the 'frequent usage of speech' (كثرة الاستعمال), a concept covering a wide range of deletion causes in a sort of 'attrition,' "leading to dropping one of its components…by the free will of the speaker."[36]

Ibn Jinnī's contribution lies in deepening Sībawayh's notion of situational context in the speaker–listener interaction. For example, he emphasised the importance of hearing and seeing on the part of the listener to understand the speaker's message.[37]

Rhetoricians' Approach

Rhetoricians, on the other hand, are far more concerned with motives,

categories and benefits of ellipsis— pragmatic issues relevant to a 'complete' message representation; an obsession they had with recovering supposedly 'omitted information.' Such an approach was based on, and overlapped with that of the exegetists of the Qurʾān.[38]

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29   Solimando, "Ellipsis," 74-75.
30   Carter, "Elision," 126.
31   Solimando, "Ellipsis," 74-75.
32   Carter, "Elision," 126; ʾAbū Bishr ʿAmr b. ʿUṯmān b. Qanbar al-Baṣrī Sībawayhi, *al-Kitāb*, ed. ʿA. S. Hārūn (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānchī, 1988), vol. 1, 224; vol. 3, 103.
33   This is different from SFL's 'context of situation' elaborated under the concept of register. Zaid Alamiri, "The Register of the Qurʾānic Narratives: SFL-Based Preliminary Observations on Q19 (41–50)," *The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics* 12 (2020).
34   Baalbaki, *Legacy*, 191-201; Carter, "Elision," 131; Solimando, "Ellipsis," 80.
35   Baalbaki, *Legacy*, 170; Carter, "Elision," 126, Solimando, "Ellipsis," 31.
36   Solimando, "Ellipsis", 78; Hanady Dayyeh, "The Relation between Frequency of Usage and Deletion in Sibawayhi's Kitāb," in *The Foundations of Arabic Linguistics: Sibawayhi and Early Arabic Grammatical Theory*, ed. Amal Marogy (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 75, 82-84.
37   Ibn Jinnī, *Al-Khaṣāʾiṣ*, vol. 1, 245-247, 284-293; vol. 2, 370-371.
38   The motives, however, cover a wide range of pragmatic concepts that fall under frequency of occurrence, shortening and lightening of the clause, ease of articulation, rhetorical and other pragmatic considerations. Ḥammudah, *Ḍahirat*, 97-112. These motives are extensively discussed by Ibn Qutayba (d. 889 CE), ar-Rummānī (d. 996 CE), al-Jurjānī (d. 1078 CE), az-Zarkashī (d. 1392 CE) and ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd as-Salām (d. 1262 CE).

Central to this approach is brevity, a notion highly relevant to the literary superiority of the Qurʾān.[39] Brevity,[40] which is widely employed in prose and poetry,[41] is extensively used by the Qurʾān as another linguistic "mechanism that makes out of the Arabic language a dynamic and flexible one."[42]

What is important to highlight is that grammarians and rhetoricians, in discussing the phenomenon of the ellipsis, departed from the same notion; that is, the intra-sentence (i.e. clause simplex) relations where the semantic relations, responsible for text cohesion, are absent. While the grammarians primarily focus on identifying and reconstructing the elliptical elements, the rhetoricians busy themselves more with pragmatic issues.

It follows from the above discussion that the ellipsis, in the Arabic linguistic tradition, lacked understanding of the cohesive role it plays, as internal mechanism, in the text. Instead, grammarians generally took the ellipsis as a kind of linguistic interpretation (*taʾwil* تأويل), a grammatical mechanism, to justify the difference between linguistic phenomena and syntactic rules. Unfortunately, such an understanding led to disregarding the semantic aspect of syntactic forms.

GENERAL OUTLOOK OF SFL

SFL, as a linguistic theory, considers language first and foremost "as a resource for meaning making" (i.e. meaning potential[43]) human beings use in their communication. SFL, therefore, is a socio-semiotic "characterized by being systemic, functional and contextual— dimensions that are much more fully developed than in other functional approaches."[44]

By systemic,

it is meant that language is not a set of rules, rather a set of unlimited options and choices (systems) that the speakers/writers select from to create meanings. And the specification of this is that the total grid of options available to a speaker' is the function of the grammar.[45]

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[39]   Floyd Mackay, *Ibn Qutayba's Understanding of Qurʾānic Brevity* (Master's diss., McGill University, 1991), 5-11, 18.

[40]   ar-Rummānī (d.386/996) divided brevity into two categories: by abbreviation and by ellipsis. Brevity by abbreviation implies using fewer words and augmenting the meaning without any deletion. Earlier linguists did not differentiate between these two terms and their technical meanings were not fixed until the 4th century. See Yousef Rahman, "Ellipsis in the Qurʾān: A Study of Ibn Qutayba's Taʾwil Mashkil al-Qurʾān," in *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qurʾān*, ed. Issa Boullata (London: Routledge, 2000).

[41]   Mukhtar ʿAṭiya, *Al-Iʿjāz Fi Kalām al-ʿArab wa naṣ al-Iʿjāz* [Inimitability of Arab Speech and the Succinctness of the Text] (Cairo: Dar al Maʿrifa aljāmiʿya, 1997), 49.

[42]   Solimando, "Ellipsis," 70-71.

[43]   Meaning potential, in general, 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. Michael Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning* (London: Arnold, 1978), 39.

[44]   Christopher Butler, *Structure and Function: A Guide to Three Major Structural Functional Theories* (Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2003), vol. 1, 44.

[45]   G. David Morley, *Syntax in Functional Grammar: An Introduction to Lexicogrammar in Systemic Linguistics* (London, New York: Continuum, 2000), 17-18.

By functional,[46] it 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."[47]

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.[48] Language, Halliday[49] asserts, to be functional and meaning potential, should always occur in the social context of a situation.

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. At the stratum of semantic, the language capacity to convey meaning at three different levels gave birth to the concept of metafunctions.[50]

These metafunctions are the ideational (experiential and logical) interpersonal and textual. A brief account of the latter is given here because the ellipsis is part of text creation and production.

The internal relationships of text are the domain of the textual metafunction, where its function is to enable or facilitate the expression of the ideational and interpersonal meanings and build sequences of discourse, organise the discursive flow, and create cohesion and continuity.[51]

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.[52]

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[46]   Functionality, not to be confused with use or purpose of language, is intrinsic to language in that the entire architecture of language is arranged along functional lines. Michael Halliday and Christian Matthiessen, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2014), 31. It is interesting to mention that this understanding of the functionalist approach has its traces in the works of Sibawayh, al-Jurjānī's theory of speech and other intellectual movements, notably the Muʿtazilah. See Zaid Alamiri, "SFL-Based Analysis of Thematic Structure of the Qurʾān (19:41–50): Some Reflections," *The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics* 10 (2018).

[47]   Michael Halliday, "Language Structure and Language Function," in *The Collected Works of M. A. K. Halliday*, vol. 1, ed. J. Webster (Continuum, 1970/2002), 173.

[48]   Ruqiaya Hasan, "Language and Society in a Systemic Functional Perspective," in *Continuing Discourse on Language: A Functional Perspective*, ed. Ruqiaya Hasan, Christian Matthiessen and Jonathan Webster (London: Equinox, 2005), vol. 1, 55-56, italics in original.

[49]   Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 13-23.

[50]   Silviu Tatu, *Qatal//Yiqtol (Yiqtol//Qatal) Verbal Sequence in Semitic Couplets*, Gorgias Ugaritic Studies 3 (Gorgias Press, 2008), 81.

[51]   Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic*, 130; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Introduction*, 30-31.

[52]   Christian Matthiessen, "Theme Enabling Resource Ideational 'Knowledge' Construction," in *Thematic Development in English Texts*, ed. M. Ghadessy (London, New York: Pinter, 1995), 22.

In other words, the "textual metafunction allows both the speaker/writer to construct texts, and the listener/reader to distinguish a text from a random set of sentences."[53]

In terms of its components, the textual metafunction consists of three systems: 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). This concerns the ellipsis as one of the grammatical devices that establish semantic relations between parts of the text.

SFL CONCEPT OF TEXT

Since these concepts are inextricably linked, a brief account of them is necessary. We start with text. In SFL, "the notion of text 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."[54] This definition emphasises that "'text' is a unit of language in use, and not a grammatical (structural) unit, like a clause or a sentence, where size matters."[55] "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."[56] Based on that understanding, text is made of meanings, which, in order to be communicated, have to be expressed or coded in words and structures.[57] In this way, text is seen as a process of meaning and as a product of that process.[58] 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.[59]

Cohesion and Cohesive Devices

As a product, text is an output of the work of a network of ties that gives it (i.e. 'text') its cohesion. Accordingly, cohesion confers on text the property of texture[60] that differentiates it (i.e. text) from non-text.

> [The] function of cohesion in a text arises from that 'the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another, whether preceding or following;

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[53]   Halliday and Matthiessen, *Introduction*, 120.
[54]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 1-2, 7.
[55]   Ibid.; Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social Semiotic Perspective* (OUP, 1989), 10.
[56]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 2, caps emphasis in original.
[57]   Ibid., 293; Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context*, 10.
[58]   Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, *Context*, 11.
[59]   Ibid.
[60]   Beside texture, 'text,' "as an instance of linguistic system operating in a context of situation, encodes two other essential features: multifunctional diversification of language, and the social aspect of language." Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 2, 4, 293; Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context*, 10.

where the one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it.'[61]

It follows that "cohesion is embodied in the concept of 'text', and through its role in providing 'texture,' it helps to create 'text.'"[62] For its part, this continuity, defined as a network of relationships, is realised by the linguistic resources – grammatical and lexical. The cohesiveness they establish, as mentioned above, is constructed semantically despite being realized by lexico-grammatical devices. Being a semantic component, cohesion expresses the relations of meaning that exist within a text and define it as such. The realization of these relations depends on the fact that the "INTERPRETATION of some elements in the discourse" is decoded by the interpretation of another element.[63] When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up and the two elements are potentially integrated into a text. At the core of this, cohesion is the range of possibilities for linking structurally unrelated elements to one another, whether in the sentence immediately preceding or in a previous sentence.[64]

The linguistic resources (of cohesion) exist in every language.[65] As mentioned above, the cohesive system, which is the semantic component of the textual metafunction,[66] consists of two components: one grammatical consisting of four elements, substitution, reference, ellipsis and conjunction; and one lexical consisting of repetition and collocation. It is suggested these systems evolved as a resource to transcend the boundaries of the clause to provide interconnectedness or cohesion between sentences that are structurally independent of one another.

Ellipsis as a Grammatical Cohesive Device

As explained earlier, the ellipsis is discussed in all linguistic theories; their approaches, which are different, are based on the concept there is an omission in the speech, written or spoken.

In analysing and studying ellipses, two key features or dimensions dominate the overall phenomenon: structure and function. As for structure, the elliptical elements have three types: nominal, verbal and clausal; on the other hand, the type of function the ellipsis serves is either endophoric or exophoric.

Because I treat ellipses from an SFL perspective, the brief account given here is principally restricted to that view. Ellipses, generally speaking, occur when something, which is structurally necessary, is left unsaid; that is, there is a sense of incompleteness associated with it. The unsaid, Halliday stresses, implies something is understood despite this. This is because "there is always a great deal more evidence available to the hearer for interpreting a sentence

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[61]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 4, emphasis in original.
[62]   Ibid., 298.
[63]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 4, emphasis in original.
[64]   Ibid., 14, 23.
[65]   Ibid., 10, 18; Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context*, 48.
[66]   Halliday and Matthiessen, *Introduction*, 30-31, 114.

than is contained in the sentence itself."[67] This implies an item is elliptical if its structure does not express all the features that have gone into its makeup – all the meaningful choices that are embodied in it – because "an elliptical item is one which, as it were, leaves specific structural slots to be filled from elsewhere."[68] The 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. This means that in the preceding part of text (i.e., sentence or clause), the presupposed item (an indicator using Arabic terminology) is present.[69]

Central to the recoverability of the elliptical element is the concept of the presupposition in the sense that something in the structure "is to be supplied, or 'understood.'"[70] That 'something' is presupposed in a preceding text, "which then serves as the source of the missing information."[71] It follows that the place of ellipsis is endophoric, inside text, and primarily anaphoric[72] so as to establish cohesive relation through holding text parts together. In comparison, the exophoric, outside text, ellipsis has a non-cohesive function.[73]

When compared with other devices of cohesion, the ellipsis resembles substitution in that they embody the same fundamental relation between parts of a text; but their patterns and structural mechanisms are different.[74] In other words, they differ in the way the relation is carried out. An elliptical element is one that leaves a specific structural slot to be filled from elsewhere; in substitution, an explicit 'counter' is used instead as a place marker for what is supposed, whereas in an ellipsis nothing is inserted into the slot; that is, the ellipsis is simply 'substitution by zero.'[75]

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The works that deal with the ellipsis in the Qurʾān are too extensive to be covered by a simple study. The results are presented here in three sections: section one presents analysis of the largest *sūra* in the Qurʾān (Q2) and the only complete story ever narrated in the Qurʾān (Q12). The second section shows the analysis of Moses' story mentioned in eights *sūras* of the Qurʾān. The third section critically reviews the results of five studies analysing nine *sūras* in

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[67]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 142.
[68]   Ibid.
[69]   Ibid., 144.
[70]   Ibid.
[71]   Ibid., 143.
[72]   Cataphoric falls back on an item mentioned after the elliptical element, while anaphoric falls on an element mentioned before the elliptical element.
[73]   Occasionally, the presupposition in an elliptical structure may be exophoric, which has no place in cohesion. Neither complete clausal ellipsis nor exophoric ellipsis contributes anything new to the discourse. Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 157-158.
[74]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 142.
[75]   Ibid., 143-144, 146.

the Qurʾān, showing how much of these supposed elliptical elements conform to SFL principles I believe are essential to understand ellipses in the Qurʾān.

Section One: Analysis of Q2 and Q12

Table 1: Elliptical Elements in Sūra al-Baqarah

Āyah no.	Elliptical element	Relation	Presupposed element
22	Made	Anaphoric	And (made) the heaven your canopy.
77	Know	Anaphoric	And (know) what they reveal?
128	Make	Anaphoric	and (make) of our progeny a people Muslim.
132	Enjoined	Anaphoric	And so (enjoined) Jacob.
196	Make an offering	Anaphoric	But if he cannot (make an offering).
219	How much they are to spend	Anaphoric	Say: (spend) what is beyond your needs.
239	Pray	Anaphoric	Guard strictly your prayers If ye fear an enemy, (pray) on foot, or riding.
260	I believe	Anaphoric	He said: Do you not then believe? He said: Yea, I believe.
265	It receives (rain)	Anaphoric	If it receives not heavy rain, then it (receives) light moisture.

In a *sūra* containing 287 *āyahs*[76] there are only nine instances of textual ellipsis. Further studies need to figure out why the ellipsis, as a textual cohesive element, is not employed extensively. Of course, the plethora of studies carried out based on syntactic rules, usually adopted in Arabic, tell a different version of the ellipsis story. Due to lack of space, I cannot report even a tenth of these studies.

Table 2: Elliptical Elements in the Story of Joseph

Āyah no.	Elided element	Relation	Presupposed element
43, 46	Cows; 7 years	Anaphoric	In the same clause complex
44	Vision	Anaphoric	In *āyah* 43
48	Years	Anaphoric	In *āyah* 47
81	The king's cup	Anaphoric	In *āyah* 72

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[76]   The length and structure of an *āyah* is related to a *sūra*, but this is not an invariable rule. See Issa Boullata, "Literary Structures of the Qurʾān," in *Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān*, ed. J. D. McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2003). *Āyahs* even within a single *sūra* vary in length, differing from what is normally found in metric composition with prosodic feet to produce the exact symmetry of versification. In other words, this variation in length is expressed in the variation of the number of clauses. Some *āyahs* comprise only one word; others are one clause simplex, known in Arabic linguistics as a sentence (nominal and verbal), or clause complex and even of mega clauses complex, as in "the debt" *āyah* in Qurʾān 2:282, which is a whole paragraph consisting of 11 sentences of chained clauses where its parts (sub-clauses) are closely linked and coordinated by '*wa*' ('and') and '*fa*' ('then'). In other terms, a single *āyah* can be made up of several clauses and a sentence can include multiple *āyahs*.

Sūra Joseph, Q12, consisting of 111 *āyahs*, has five instances of textually interpreted ellipses, where there is a presupposition in a preceding text, as Table 2 shows. Such ellipses establish a semantic relation between the preceding and following texts and that contributes to the cohesiveness of text as a whole unified.

Section Two: Analysis of the Moses Story in Eight Sūras

Table 3 shows the analysis of Moses story mentioned in eight *sūras*, with a total of 342 *āyahs*. The most noted finding is in Q7 with six cases of ellipses whose presupposed elements are mentioned anaphorically in a precedent *āyah* or the same clause complex and anteriorly; this of course establishes cohesive ties among the clauses of the structure. In Q26, only one instance in *āyah* 42 whose presupposed element was in the preceding *āyah*; the same was found in Q28 where the elliptical element had its presupposition in the same clause complex.

Table 3: Story of Moses as Narrated in Eight Sūras

Sūra no.	Relation	Presupposed element
Q5:20-26		None
Q7:103-156; 159-171	Anaphoric in *āyahs* 114, 115, 116, 142, 156, 163	In *āyahs* 113, 107, 115, 142, 156, 163
Q10:75-95		None
Q14:5-9		None
Q18:60-82		None
Q26:10-68	Anaphoric in *āyah* 42	In the same clause 41
Q28:3-48	Anaphoric 27 in *āyah*	In the same clause 27
Q40:23-45		None

Section Three: Critical Review of Nine Sūras analysed in Five Studies

Table 4 is a review of five studies in which the ellipsis is analysed in accordance with the syntactic rules and rhetorical interpretation (omission of information). The number mentioned in the table refers to the supposedly elliptical elements found in whole *sūra* and not the number of the *āyahs* that contain an elliptical element. Only in Q11, three cases could be considered elliptical; however, the presupposed element in one of them (54) is cataphoric and has no role in cohesion. The other two (100 and 105), though anaphoric, are inside the same sentence; that is, not connecting different parts of the clause. In Q18, only two instances (18, 25) have anaphoric presupposition. In a study on two *sūras*, Q20 (44 *āyahs*) and Q27 (39 *āyahs*), none of them has a presupposed element mentioned in a preceding text. Finally, a study analysing Q6, Q19 and Q21 that mentioned passages of the Abraham story, with a total of 54 *āyahs*, only one instance in Q21:66 fulfilled the requirement of a textually based ellipsis. The elliptical elements, totalling 154 *āyahs* in these five articles, are based on syntactical and rhetorical considerations.

Table4: Review of Six Studies that reported the Existence of an Ellipsis[77]

Sūra no.	No. of āyahs supposedly elliptical	Relation	Presupposed element
Q4[78]	11		None
Q11[79]	44	Anaphoric	*Āyahs* 54, 100 and 105
Q18[80]	15	Anaphoric	*Āyahs* 18 and 25
Q20[81]	44		None
Q27[82]	39		None
Q6:75-83[83]	19		None
Q19:41-50[84]	08		None
Q21:52-70[85]	18	Anaphoric	*Āyah* 66
Q26:72-84[86]	09		None

TEXTUALLY BASED ELLIPSIS IN THE QURʾĀN

First, by text-based ellipsis, I mean ellipses studied and analysed in light of an SFL point of view that sees it as a grammatical device contributing to the cohesiveness of text by virtue of the ties that are established between the different parts of the text. I should also point out the ellipsis, analysed according to the governance theory where operators govern the operands, is dominant and prevalent in all the published studies. Finally, this study is a humble effort to highlight SFL's basic understanding of the ellipsis, where the presence of a presupposition ('indictor' in Arabic terminology), existing somewhere in a preceding text, is essential in the recoverability of elliptical elements.

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[77] Three of these articles discussed Q4, Q11 and Q18, separately; Q20 and Q27 were discussed by the fourth article. The fifth article studies the story of Abraham in Q6, Q19, Q21 and Q26.

[78] Rahima Oucif, "Ḍahirat al-Ḥaḏf Fi al Qurʾān. Taṭbiq ʿalā Surat an-Nissā" [The Phenomenon of Ellipsis in the Qurʾān: An Application on Surat an-Nissā], *Journal of alIʾhya* 6, no. 21 (2018), https://www.asjp. cerist.dz/en/article/52909. The *āyahs* analysed are: 1, 22, 23, 26, 46, 59, 73, 90, 160, 170 and 176.

[79] Majdi Abu Lihya, "An-Naḏm al Qurʾāni Fi Surat Hud. Dirasa Islubiya" [The Qurʾānic Construction in Surat HUD. A Stylistic Study] (Master's diss., Islamic University of Gaza, 2009), https://ebook. univeyes.com/94280. The *āyahs* analysed are: 1, 3, 8, 10, 13, 17, 24, 25, 28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 50, 54, 57, 60, 61, 63, 65, 66, 69, 74, 78, 80, 84, 86, 88, 89, 91, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 105, 110, 120.

[80] Shuaib Mahmudi, "Bunyat an-Naṣ Fi Surat al-Kahf. Muqārabah Naṣṣiya lil Itisāq Wa Siyāq" [The Structure of Surat al-Kahf: A Textual Approach to Cohesion and Context] (Master's diss., Mentouri University of Constantine, 2010), https://ebook.univeyes.com/100717. The *āyahs* analysed are: 5, 10-11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 25, 37, 45, 48, 49, 71.

[81] Salimah Hathaq, "al-Ḥaḏf wa Dalālātuhu Fi AlQurān. Suratā Ṭāhā wa Naml Inmudḡān" [Ellipsis and its Signification in the Qurʾān. Surat Taha and an-Naml as an Example] (Master's diss., University of Larbi Ben M'hidi of Oum El Bouaghi, 2013), http://bib.univ-oeb.dz:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/6139.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Lubna AlʿArfaj, "Alḥaḏf Wa ʾaṯarahu ʿala alʿMana Fi Namāḏij Min Quṣat Ibrāhim Maʿ Qawmihi" [The Type of Ellipsis and its Influence on Meaning in some Passages of Abraham Dialogue with his People] (Master's diss., University of Umm Al-Qura, 2012), https://ebook.univeyes.com/96321.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid.

The aim of this section is to show that the Qurʾān employs ellipses, in SFL terms, albeit on a smaller scale; that is, it is not frequent as a cohesive grammatical device. The first interesting thing I notice in the Qurʾān is the case of interrogatives[87] "which include these two kinds of questions." The polarity question[88] 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.' A distinctive 'yes' particle used is (بَلَى), as these following āyahs show: Q2:260; Q6:30; Q36:81; Q39:71; Q40:50; Q43:80; 46:34 and 57:14.[89]

The types of ellipses are nominal, verbal and clausal. First, I 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; and in Q26: 61-62, the noun Moses, mentioned in āyah 61, is omitted in āyah 62."[90] These two examples show the

deletion of a single noun; however, there are cases of nominal phrases in the following two examples: in Q5:5, the nominal phrase (حِلٌّ لَكُمْ)[91] in the fourth clause is deleted because it is mentioned in the second and third clauses; in Q6:12 the nominal phrase (مَا فِي السَّماواتِ وَالْأَرْضِ), mentioned in the first clause, is omitted from the second clause.[92]

Second, the verbal ellipsis, which means the deletion of a verb, "occurs in these āyahs: Q16:24, 30, the verb (أَنْزَلَ) in the second clause (sentence) is omitted because it is mentioned in the first clause of the āyah"[93]; in Q43:87, the verb (خَلَقَهُمْ), mentioned in the first clause of the āyah, is omitted from the second clause. Finally, the clausal ellipsis, which means the deletion of a clause (sentence) can be found in Q17:49-50, the clause (أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقاً جَدِيداً) in āyah 49 is not mentioned in āyah 50. In Q7:113-114, the clause (أَإِنَّ لَنا لَأَجْراً إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغالِبِينَ) (And the magicians came to Pharaoh. They said, "Indeed for us is a reward if we are the predominant") in āyah 113 is omitted in āyah 114 (قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ) (He said, "Yes, and, [moreover], you will be among those made near [to me]").

It is worth noting that deletion can occur within the same noun phrase. This is especially noticeable in the phrase (مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ و ما فِي الْأَرْضِ), which occurs 25 times in the Qurʾān,[94]

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and in which the relative phrase (ما في) is omitted from the structure.[95] Some of these examples are mentioned by Ibn Hishām.[96]

How the Qurʾān Compensates for the little use of the Ellipsis

These four tables illustrate that the ellipsis, as seen from the SFL perspective, is not frequent in the Qurʾān. The question is how to explain this. To compensate the role of the ellipsis, the Qurʾān employs two strategies. The first strategy is a cohesive element, i.e. Reference; the second, a non-cohesive, is related to certain stylistic techniques.

The Role of Anaphorical Personal Pronouns

Reference is the second cohesive device that contributes to the cohesiveness of a text. It is mainly realised by pronominal pronouns.[97] The personal pronouns serve a referential purpose by establishing anaphoric relations with the nouns mentioned earlier in the sentence. The most noticeable are the subject (agent) pronouns present in verb endings, indicated by syntactic inflection, which allude to its respective subjects (agents) that they replace and substitute; that is, a 'speaker or person addressed' or to a 'person or thing extraneous to the speaker.'[98]

For example, in the story of Joseph, the frequently used form of the implied (suppressed) pronoun is the third person pronoun (singular and plural) of the perfect (simple past) verb. These pronouns are frequent in speech denoting verbs (particularly, saying verbs).

Table 5: Frequency of Nouns Substituted by Suppressed Pronouns

Joseph	Father	Joseph's brothers
Āyahs: 4, 23, 26, 33, 37, 42, 47, 50, 55, 59, 62, 69, 77, 79, 89, 90, 92, 99, 100	Āyahs: 5, 13, 18, 64, 66, 67, 83, 84, 86, 94, 96, 98	Āyahs: 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 61, 63, 65, 71, 73, 75, 77, 78, 80, 81, 85, 88, 90, 91, 95, 97

These pronouns, the third person pronoun, singular and plural, *he* and *they*, the most implied pronouns in this story, serve two functions simultaneously. First, they could be considered as a type of substitution; and second, they establish an anaphoric referential relation, which contributes to the cohesiveness of the text. However, this referential relation is more relevant since this "relation within the text" constitutes a link between its parts[99] and, as such, it contributes to the story's cohesion. It is worth mentioning here that the cohesive relation of

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[95]   Examples in Qurʾān 2:116; 3:29, 83; 4:170; 5:12, 93; 10:55; 16:52; 24:41, 64; 29:52; 31:26; 45:36; 57:1; 59:24.

[96]   cf. footnote 21.

[97]   In Arabic, Reference refers to the use of personal pronouns that "stand on their own as substitutes for nouns or noun phrases." Karin Ryding, *A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 298. Beside the pronominal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns contribute to the cohesiveness of the Qurʾānic texts.

[98]   Alfred F. L. Beeston, *Written Arabic: An Approach to the Basic Structures* (Cambridge University Press, 1968), 39, 46.

[99]   Halliday and Hassan, *Cohesion*, 89-91.

Reference is the most noticeable device employed in the Qurʾān;[100] its contribution to the cohesion of the Qurʾānic text(s) is remarkable.

Narrative Techniques

Generally, a Qurʾānic narrative or story is strongly related to its thematic unity.[101] For example, the vision of Joseph and its centrality to the plot are the uniting threads of his entire story. As for the plot, it is organised in a style known as "involution & evolution in reverse,"[102] which promoted the use of tightly structured scenes, since a story "has a coherent plot and is completely free from digression and loose joints."[103] This is also shown in the story of Abraham, for example, in Q19:41-50, and Moses in different passages mentioned in different *sūras*, in particular Q18:60-82 and Q28:14-29.

This technique, however, is better interpreted in terms of brevity and terseness, a feature of a live communication "delivered orally to its audience…full of dialogue between interlocutors."[104] The Qurʾānic story, in developing and carrying its plot, employs the report (narrator's text) and dialogue (characters' text) techniques.[105] Taken together, they contribute largely to the story's cohesive structure.

The 'reduction' (الاختصار) or concision (الايجاز) is a mechanism frequently employed by the Qurʾān to leave gaps in a story that condenses certain 'events', "touching them only in passing. Interestingly, the rhetoricians sometimes turn to such 'omitted events' mentioned in a different text (mostly *sūra*) far from the text in question as in Q21:57-58, where the 'omitted' information is mentioned in Q37:90-93. Sometimes the 'omitted' information is mentioned inside the same *sūra* but in different separated *āyahs*; for example, in Q7, the 'material deleted' (i.e. the staff) in *āyah* 115 is mentioned in *āyah* 107[106]"; and in *āyah* 152 is found in *āyah* 138. This is an exegetical-based interpretation where exegetes used their imagination to furnish the

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[100]   This subject is well elaborated in "Arabic linguistic tradition under the notion of 'personal pronoun falling back on interpreter (referent) or antecedent (عود الضمير) in both linguistic and exegetical works." In contemporary literature as reference (الإحالة), where its pertinent points bear relevance to many of SFL notions. The role this device plays in the cohesion of the stories of Moses and Abraham in the Qurʾān is striking. Zaid Alamiri, "What Makes the Qurʾānic Narratives Cohesive? Systemic Functional Linguistics-Based Analysis of Reference Role: Some Reflections," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 16 (2016).

[101]   The same holds true, though to a lesser degree, to stories of Abraham, for example, mentioned in Qurʾān 19:41-50, and other stories as well as to the stories of Moses in Qurʾān 18:60-82. Mustansir Mir, "Qurʾān as Literature," *Religion & Literature* 2 (1988): 59.

[102]   Mustansir Mir, "The Qurʾān Story of Joseph*:* Plot, Themes, and Characters," *The Muslim World* 76 (1986): 2.

[103]   Mustansir Mir, "Irony in the Qurʾān: A Study of the Story of Joseph," in *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qurʾān*, ed. Issa Boullata (London: Routledge, 2000), 184.

[104]   Muhammad Khallafallah, *al-Fan al-Qadṣaṣṣy Fi al-Qurʾān al-Kareem* [The Narrative Art in the Qurʾān] (Cairo: Sina lil našar & Dar alintišār alʿArabi, 1999), 337.

[105]   Anthony Johns, "The Qurʾānic Presentation of the Joseph Story: Naturalistic or Formulaic Language?" in *Approaches to the Qurʾān*, ed. G. Hawting and ʿA. A. Shareef (London: Routledge, 2013), 41.

[106]   The respective word – the staff – which is mentioned in *āyah* 107 ("So Moses threw his staff, and suddenly it was a serpent, manifest"), is omitted in āyah 115 ("They said, O Mosses, either you throw [your staff], or we will be the ones to throw").

'omitted information cases.'[107] Examples of this type are too numerous, but include: Q2:73; Q7:111-112, 117, 160; Q12:45; Q18:79; Q20:91-93; Q27:28-29; Q28:7; Q39:22 and Q57:10. In this regard

> 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.[108]

A closely related point is the exophoric ellipsis in which an elliptical item, whose antecedent is not retrievable from a text, can be understood in light of external context. Because the supposedly elided element lies outside the text, it does not contribute to the text's cohesion.

To summarise, the ellipsis, in classic and contemporary Arabic linguistic scholarship, the Qurʾānic included, is orientated by intra-sentence relations explained in light of the theory of operation as a mechanism of linguistic interpretation (*taʾwil*) whose function is limited to a virtual proposition that indicates the presence of unannounced elements, the operators, in the underlying original utterance. The textual aspect of the ellipsis, viewed from the SFL perspective as an internal relation that contributes to the cohesion of text, is absent in the Arabic linguistic scholarship. The present study is a new avenue to functionally address the phenomenon of the ellipsis in the Qurʾān.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The ellipsis, in the Arabic linguistic tradition, is a tool of interpreting the linguistic reality to conform to syntactic rules. The theory of governance was the underlying basis of all studies carried out on the ellipsis. Because it has a formal basis and works within the limits of the sentence, the ellipsis does not contribute to text cohesiveness.

2. The results reported here show that SFL-based analysis of the ellipsis, as a grammatical cohesive device, is not employed frequently in the Qurʾān.

3. To compensate for this, the Qurʾān uses two techniques: one is a cohesion-based device, Reference, and the other is a stylistic device.

4. The pragmatic ellipsis, so to speak, based on terseness and brevity, is erroneously assumed to be within the domain of the ellipsis.

5. A text-based analysis, in light of SFL principles, is more productive than the traditional approach in which paradigmatic relationships between text elements, important for text cohesion, if not completely absent, are not elaborated adequately or even addressed.

6. The results reported here are preliminary observations; a thorough SFL-based analysis of the ellipsis in the Qurʾān is required.

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[107]   Ahmad Ṣaḥn, "Rūʾya Qurʾāniya ʿan al-Ḥaḏf" [A Qurʾānic Perspective on Ellipsis] *Journal of Basra Arts* 61 (2012), 3; ʿAbdullah Jād Alkareem, *Al-ikhtiṣār Simat al-ʿArabiya* [Briefing is the Characteristic Feature of Arabic Language] (Cairo: Maktabat al-ʾādāb, 2006), 42.

[108]   Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion*, 143-144, italics in original. Ibn Hisham states not every instance of a missing element is necessary an ellipsis, in particular in the narratives. Carter, "Elision," 122.

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