



A Linguistic Survey on Discourse Connectives across Mecca vs. Medina Suras

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Abstract. This descriptive analysis article seeks to investigate the discourse connectives inside and between verses of some Meccan vs Medinan suras. Since Arabic language has no punctuation mark, linguists pay much attention to discourse connectives in various stylistic-semantic and functional levels mostly because of their multifunctional meanings that leads to different annotations of suras. Therefore it seems that paying attention to formal vs semantic signals as well as stylistic variations can be helpful to distinguish Meccan vs Medinan suras.

Results show that the linking words *وَ*, *لَمْ*, *وَ*, *إِذَا* and *فَ* have the most frequency in both Mecca and Medina suras. Besides, the discourse connectives in Mecca and Medina verses are usually occurred in initial and middle positions, which concerning the Mecca verses, they are mostly applied in initial position, while they typically appear in the middle position in Medina ones. This issue can be justified given the length of Medina verses compared with Mecca verses.

Keywords: Text linguistics, discourse connectives, Mecca/ Medina suras.

1. INTRODUCTION

What comes to mind by hearing the terms Mecca/ Medina suras is that Mecca suras are first revealed in Mecca and Medina suras refer to the ones first revealed in Medina city. According to the majority of scholars, there are 86 Mecca and 28 Medina suras; however, different classifications have been presented. For example, the suras numbered 13, 22, 55, 76 and 98 are classified as Medina in Mashaf, and Eslahi classified the suras 111 and 112 as Medina, while they are classified as Mecca in Mosahaf Mesri [1]. Researchers specified some criteria to recognize Mecca and Medina verses that each one alone cannot be a comprehensive criterion, but these criteria are determining to some extent. There are some well-known criteria in determining Mecca or Medina verses and Quranic verses such as the date of revealing, the geography of revealing, kind of addressing and the contents of verses. Moreover, there are some other features to identify Mecca or Medina verses such as length of verses. Also, the harsh tone that addressed Mecca people who were those of rebellion and resistance against God, in contrast to the mild and soft tone of Medina verses that have most used for true believers [2]. It is said that this property is not comprehensive at all, hence, can be applied to some.

Therefore, since the language is primarily a social endowment formed in the context of situation and its components systematically interact with each other, paying attention to the face and content signs, and also to tone of verses can help identify the Mecca verses from Medina ones and resolve the ambiguities in this field. On the other hand, due to different circumstances of the revelation areas of the verses, it is expected that the sentences have structural differences in terms of discourse connectives used in them.

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This important issue caused that in this study, discourse markers in the text of some Mecca and Medina verses of Quran are investigated and compared with each other in terms of types; frequency and position (initial, middle, final) of their occurrence. Now the following questions arise:

1. What is the difference between Mecca and Medina verses in terms of the type and frequency of discourse connectives used in them?
2. In what position (initial, middle, final) are discourse connectives located in the mentioned verses?
3. Can discourse connectives used in the structure of sentences of Mecca and Medina sentences be a suitable criterion to identify two types of verses?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Since in text linguistics, the main features of each text is its continuity, all linguistic agents that play a main role in the coherence of texts become important. Cohesion as a factor to link super-segmental components of the texts in one hand and the role texts in semantic system on the other, relates to the speech method in the contextual system and includes various grammatical and linguistic tools (reference, conjunction, deletion, substitution), vocabulary (repetition, coherence) and meaning [3], among which conjunctions, as the tool of coherence in the text, has been studied by researchers from different aspects.

A general feature of discourse markers is their ability to express ideas in relation to the text. Contextual role is important in the coherence and textuality. This role is discussed further in the written discourse. Halliday's textual roles are related to the textual sources that the speaker has in creating coherence. As its name suggests, textual meaning relates to the context: the text before and after the situational context [4]. Discourse markers such as *for example, therefore, and, in addition*, show how the speaker transmits the relationship between the propositions A and B.

In addition, Anderson [5] argues that the characteristic of all discourse markers is that each shows a degree of subjectivity, since each utterance shows the speaker's intention to transfer something to another one. Discourse markers induce the listener what kinds of inferential processes are involved in the interpretation of the utterance [5]. According to the information structure of discourse markers they occupy, discourse markers can be inserted in the various beginning, middle and ending positions.

Regarding the place of occurring discourse markers, Freezer (1999) conducted some studies and the results showed that these language items mostly tend to occupy the first position of sentence [6]. This is referred to as a discourse marker. In fact, to clearly of unclearly transmits what the builder of the text in his/her mind, he/she has a wide range of selected text and communicate with the audience according to the communicative norms. Similarly, Fuller (1986) argues that the builder of the text makes the audience ready for deducing the assumptions not stated using implications. In Arabic language, for the lack of a regular punctuation system and using it in a very flexible legal framework that Arab authors will follow [7, 8, 9], explicit discourse markers has much considered that plays a role at different pragmatic, semantic and syntactic roles [10].

This is while the multirole nature of cohesive tool can be led to interpreting more than one role in a text [5].

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ancient Arabic linguistic studies in the field of syntactic are largely focused on the structure of sentences, among this, attention to cohesive agents of omission and linking words from the syntactic and rhetorical view can be observed. For example, semantic scholars of Ancient Arabic gave a particular importance to implicit and explicit markers.

The first serious attempt to understand the Quran based on the principle of coherence was done by Mohammad ibn Omar Fakhr-al-din Razi in his well-known book entitled *Mafatih al-qaib* (606) and many other researchers such as Aboubakr Abdollah Neyshabouri, Mohammad Abdollah Badraddin Zarkeshi, Abu Ja'far Ahmad, Ibrahim ibn Zubayr and others have emphasized the necessity of identifying coherence in the Quran, but few of them implemented the theory of order in their works. Moreover, Alkhalil (2005) asserts that linking words are used in both written and spoken discourses of Arabic language [11].

In a similar study Miri Hussein (2009) argued that the highest linking words used in the standard Arabic language are *لكن*, *بينما*, *بل*, *ف*, *و* and markers of *لاييك*, *بتالي*, *لاييك*, *لاهابس* which introduce the type of spoken Syria Arabic [12]. El Tahri (2010) studied the internal structure of Chapter II. For this reason, cohesive elements of repetition are used in the speech. He maintains that the inclusion, placement and structural composition of combinational units are drawn in this verse [13].

In an interdisciplinary study, Alseyf (2012) examined the explicit linking words in the Standard Arabic language in the field of machine translation and in addition to create the first corpora of Arabic discourse (Arabic- Leeds language database), he identified and described accurately the markers and discourse markers of Arabic language [14]. Therefore, according to formal and content signs and also the differences in tone of the verses, it can contribute to understand the meaning and more accurately interpret the verses and resolve doubts in this regard. Obviously, Quranic text is a coherent system of the short or long verses and is formed of interconnected units of meanings and linguistic units that are tied together based on textual coherence factors. Accordingly, this study in an effort to emphasize more on the elements of contextual coherence in Quran interpretation, the study of discourse markers in an equal number of Mecca and Medina verses (8 Mecca verses and 13 Medina verses).

4. METHODOLOGY

According to Marcu (1999), schema and sentences are the main units of dialogue that express mental issues such events, facts or propositions, and when two discourse units with two or more discourse signals are connected together, a longer textual cycle is achieved. Therefore, discourse relations will be more effective in readability and explicitness of discourse [15]. Cohen (1971) argues that the mentioned relations facilitate the ability to rapidly link discourse markers and identify the relations that are not inferred in the absence of linking words [16]. In the classification of discourse

analyzed in the following Tables in terms of the type and number of discourse relations that played a role.

5.1. Data Regarding Mecca Suras

5.1.1. The Land

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (6) Middle (3)	9	Expansion:background, conjunction, reformulation	3
فَ	Initial (1)	1	Contingency: cause.result	1
ثُمَّ	Initial (1)	1	Contingency: cause.result	1

5.1.2. The Daw

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	Connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (13) Middle (1)	14	Expansion: background, conjunction, comparison:contrast,expansion: exemplification, contingency:cause.result	5
فَ	Initial (5) Middle (4)	9	Expansion: exemplification, logical sequence: temporal, expansion: reformulation, contingency: cause.result	4
أما	Middle (2)	2	Expansion: conjunction, comparison: contrast	2
إذا	Middle (3)	3	Logical sequence: temporal	1

5.1.3. THE ENVELOPER

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (7) Middle (1)	8	Expansion: conjunction, exemplification, reformulation	3
فَ	Initial (2)	2	Logical sequence :cause.reason, contingency: cause.result	2
ثُمَّ	Initial (1)	1	Logical sequence: temporal	1
لِ	Initial (1)	1	Logical sequence:cause.reason	1

5.1.4. THE CONSTELLATIONS

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (7) Middle (3)	10	Expansion: background,conjunction	2
فَ	Middle (1)	1	Contingency:cause.result	1
ثُمَّ	Middle (1)	1	Logical sequence:temporal	1
إذا	Initial (1)	1	Expansion: conjunction	1
بِ	Initial (2)	2	Expansion: conjunction	1

5.1.5. THE RENDING

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (10) Middle (1)	11	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation,contingency: cause.result,comparison: contrast	4
فَ	Initial (6) Middle (1)	7	Logicalequence:cause.reason, expansion:reformulation, conjunction,contingency: cause.result	4
اما	Middle (2)	2	Expansion:conjunction, comparison: contrast	2
اذا	Initial (1) Middle (1)	2	Logical sequence: temporal	1
بل	Initial (1)	1	Expansion: reformulation	1

5.1.6. THE FROWNED

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (8) Middle (2)	10	Expansion:conjunction, exemplification	2
فَ	Initial (6)	6	Contingency:cause.result, expansion:reformulation, logical sequence: temporal	3
اما	Initial (1) Middle (1)	2	Comparison: contrast	1
أَوْ	Initial (1)	1	Expansion: conjunction	1
لِ	Initial (1)	1	Contingency: cause.reason	1
ثم	Initial (4)	4	Logical sequence:temporal	1

5.1.7. NOAH

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (10) Middle (18)	28	Expansion:conjunction, exemplification,reformulation, Contingency:cause.result, Comparison:similarity,contrast	6
فَ	Middle (4)	4	Contingency:cause.result, logical sequence: temporal	2
من قبل	Middle (1)	1	Logical sequence: temporal	1
اذا	Middle (1)	1	Contingency: condition	1
لِ	Initial (1)	1	Contingency: cause.reason	1
ثم	Initial (3)	3	Logical sequence:temporal	1
الا	Middle (4)	4	Expansion: exception	1

5.1.8. THE PEN

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (9) Middle (10)	19	Expansion:conjunction, comparison:contrast,logical sequence: temporal	3
فَ	Initial (10) Middle (5)	15	Expansion:conjunction, contingency:cause.reason, cause.result, logical sequence: temporal,comparison: contrast	5
من قبل	Middle (1)	1	Logical sequence: temporal	1
إذا	Initial (1) Middle (1)	2	Contingency:condition, expansion: conjunction (adv)	2
بل	Initial (1)	1	Expansion:conjunction-alternative	1
لو	Initial (1) Middle (2)	3	Logical sequence:temporal	1
إلا	Middle (1)	1	Contingency: condition	1
ك	Initial (1) Middle (2)	3	Comparison:similarity	1
ب	Initial (1)	1	Expansion: conjunction	1
كما	Middle (2)	1	Comparison:similarity	1
بعد	Middle (2)	1	Comparison:contrast	1

5.2. DATA REGARDING MEDINA SURAS

5.2.1. THE CLEAR SIGN

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (2) Middle (3)	5	Expansion:conjunction, Comparison:similarity	2
إلا	Middle (2)	2	Expansion: exception	1
حتى	Middle (1)	1	Logicalsequence:temporal	1

5.2.2. AFTERNOON

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (11) Middle (13)	24	Comparison:contrast, expansion:conjunction, exemplification, contingency:cause.result	4
فَ	Initial (2) Middle (1)	3	Logicalsequence:temporal, contingency:cause.reason, cause.result,expansion:conjunction	4
إذا	Middle (3)	3	Contingency:condition, expansion: conjunction (adv)	2
ثم	Middle (1)	1	Contingency:cause.result	1
إلا	Middle (1)	1	Expansion: exception	1

5.2.3. THE WOMAN TESTED

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Middle (29)	29	Expansion:exemplification, conjunction,contingency: cause.reason	3
فَ	Middle (6)	6	Contingency:cause.result, expansion:conjunction	2
إذا	Middle (3)	3	expansion: conjunction (adv)	1
اذ	Middle (1)	1	Expansion: conjunction(adv)	1
حتى	Middle (1)	1	Logical sequence:temporal	1
الا	Middle (1)	1	Expansion: exception	1

5.2.4. THE MUSTERING

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (4) Middle (30)	34	Expansion:conjunction, contingency:cause.result, comparison:contrast	3
فَ	Middle (9)	9	Contingency:cause.result, cause.reason, expansion:conjunction, exemplification	4
لو	Initial (1) Middle (2)	3	Contingency: condition	1
اذ	Middle (1)	1	expansion: conjunction	1
كى	Middle (1)	1	Expansion:conjunction-alternative	1
لِ	Initial (1) Middle (3)	4	Contingency:cause.reason	1
أَوْ	Middle (2)	2	Expansion:conjunction-alternative	1
كَ	Initial (2) Middle (1)	3	Expansion: exemplification, Comparison:similarity	2
ثم	Middle (1)	1	Contingency:cause.result	1
الا	Middle (1)	1	Expansion: exception	1

5.2.5. THE DISPUTER

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (1) Middle (30)	31	Expansion:conjunction, contingency:cause.result, logical sequence:temporal	3
فَ	Initial (1) Middle (16)	17	Expansion:conjunction, comparison: contrast, logical sequence:temporal, contingency: cause.result	4
قَبْلَ	Middle (2)	2	Logical sequence: temporal	1
اِذَا	Middle (5)	5	Contingency:condition, expansion: conjunction (adv)	2
ثُمَّ	Middle (3)	1	Contingency:cause.result, logical sequence:temporal	2
لَوْ	Middle (1)	1	Contingency: condition	1
اِلَّا	Middle (5)	5	Expansion: exception	1
كَمَا	Middle (4)	4	Comparison:similarity	1
لِ	Initial (1)	1	Contingency:cause.reason	1
كَمَا	Middle (2)	2	Comparison:similarity	1
اِذَا	Middle (1)	1	Expansion:reformulation	1

5.2.6. THE FORBIDDING

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (5) Middle (16)	21	Expansion:conjunction, exemplification, comparison:contrast, contingency:cause.result	4
فَ	Middle (5)	5	Logicalsequence: temporal, contingency: cause.result	2
اِذَا	Middle (2)	2	Expansion:conjunction(adv)	1

5.2.7. THE EARTHQUAKE

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (3)	3	Logical sequence:temporal, expansion:conjunction, comparison:contrast	3
فَ	Initial (1)	1	Contingency:cause.result	1
اِذَا	Initial (1)	1	Expansion:conjunction(adv)	1
بِ	Initial (1)	1	Expansion: conjunction	1
لِ	Middle (1)	1	Contingency:cause.reason	1

5.2.8. IRON

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (4) Middle (55)	59	Expansion: conjunction, exemplification, reformulation, comparison:contrast, contingency:cause.reason	5
فَ	Middle (10)	10	Expansion:conjunction, logicalsequence:temporal, contingency: cause.result	3
ثُمَّ	Initial (1) Middle (3)	4	logical sequence:temporal	1
لِئَلَى	Initial (1)	1	Contingency: cause.reason	1
لِ	Initial (2) Middle (4)	6	Contingency: cause.reason	1
كَ	Middle (3)	3	Comparison: similarity	1

5.2.9. THE HYPOCRITES

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (4) Middle(13)	17	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation	2
فَ	Middle(4)	4	Contingency:cause.reason, cause.result,logseq:temporal	3
حَتَّى	Initial (1)	1	Contingency: cause.result	1
إِذَا	Initial (1) Middle(1)	2	Expansion:background, conjunction(adv)	2

5.2.10. MUTUAL FRAUD

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (2) Middle(29)	31	Expansion:conjunction,reformulation, comparison:contrast, logical sequence:temporal	4
فَ	Initial (2) Middle(10)	12	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation,contingency:cause.result	3
ثُمَّ	Middle (1)	1	Logical sequence: temporal	1
إِلَّا	Middle(1)	1	Expansion: exception	1

5.2.11. RANKS

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (4) Middle (13)	17	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation, comparison:contrast, contingency:cause.reason	4
فَ	Middle (5)	5	Temporal, contingency:cause.result	2
لَوْ	Middle (2)	2	Comparison:contrast	1
كَ	Middle (1)	1	Comparison:similarity	1
كَمَا	Middle (1)	1	Expansion:exemplification	1
لِ	Middle (1)	1	Contingency:cause.reason	1
إِذَا	Middle (2)	2	Expansion: background	1

5.2.12. DIVORCE

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (4) Middle (24)	28	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation, Contingency: cause.result	3
فَ	Initial (2) Middle (8)	10	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation,Log.sq.:temporal, Contingency:cause.result,condition,	5
حَتَّى	Middle (1)	1	logicalsequence:temporal	1
إِلَّا	Middle(2)	2	Expansion: exception	1
أَوْ	Middle (1)	1	Expansion:conjunction (alt)	1
لِ	Initial (1) Middle (4)	5	contingency:cause.reason	1

5.2.13. CONGREGATION

Discourse Connectives	Position	Total	connective type and frequency	#Relation
وَ	Initial (2) Middle (13)	15	Expansion:conjunction, reformulation, contingency:cause.result, comparison: contrast,	4
فَ	Initial (1) Middle (4)	5	Expansion:conjunction, contingency:cause.result, log sq:temporal	3
بِمِثْلِ	Middle (2)	2	Comparison: contrast, Log sq: temporal	2
كَ	Middle(1)	1	Expansion: exemplification	1
أَوْ	Middle (1)	1	Expansion:conjunction (alt)	1

According to the tables of research findings' data, in answering to the first and second question of the study in that what the differences are in Mecca and Medina verses in terms of the kind and type of discourse markers and in what position they are located in the sentences (initial, middle, final), the results are analyzed in the following tables.

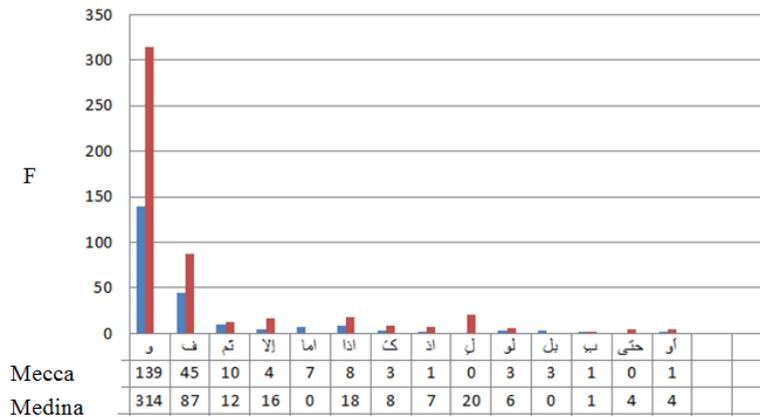


Figure 1. The frequency of discourse connectives in Mecca/ Medina verses

Based on the above figure (1), the discourse markers **وَ** and **فَ** have the highest frequency among all regarded elements. The next highest frequent ones are **ثم**, **إلا**, **إذا** that as is observed, in most frequencies, discourse markers in Medina verse are higher.

No final discourse connective was observed regarding the place of occurrence in neither of verses. The figure below shows the distribution of the elements in the initial and middle positions. The results show that discourse markers used in Mecca verses are mostly located in initial position; and in Medina verses they are mostly located in the middle position.

The following figure (2) compares the details of locating each discourse element in the Mecca verse. It can be seen that in most cases, the place of discourse markers have been at beginning of a chapter.

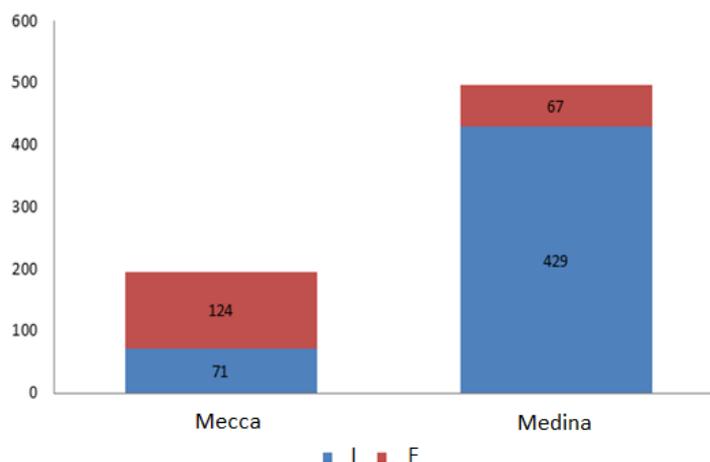


Figure 2. Frequency of initial vs. final connectives in Mecca/ Medina verses

Connectives used in Mecca verses are often found in middle position caused probably by the length of Mecca verses.

6. CONCLUSION

In this study, the way of applying discourse markers in Mecca and Medina verses of the Quran given the type, frequency and position are investigated. A list of the most frequent conjunctions and cohesive discourse relations of Arabic prepared and discussed. Then the regarded verses from Mecca/Medina verses are analyzed.

In answering the research's first question, it shows that the linking words *فَ*, *وَ*, *ثُمَّ*, *إِلا* have the most frequency in both Mecca and Medina suras. The difference in the frequency of other linking words is negligible. Therefore, the first assumption of this research in the frequency of occurring discourse markers used in Mecca and Medina verses of the study was not approved.

According to what was mentioned, with respect to the information structure they occupy, discourse markers can be placed in different beginning, middle and end positions. Reviewing the results for answering the research's second question shows that the discourse elements in Mecca and Medina verses are usually occurred in initial and middle positions, which concerning the Mecca verses, it is in initial position and regarding the Medina verses, it is appeared in the middle position. This issue can be justified given the length of Medina verses compared with Mecca verses. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

In answering to the third question, it must be said that based on the analysis results of Mecca and Medina verses in terms of the frequency and the place of occurrence, the discourse markers used in the verses show a significant difference. It seems that the result of this study is consistent with the opinion of Tabarsi in that formal signs and the tone of verses can be a criterion to detect Mecca/Medina verses. As a result, the research third hypothesis was confirmed in the framework of reviewed data and verses. However, to enhance the accuracy of analysis, it is better a more comprehensive study with more verses and selecting specific markers given the semantic content of verses is performed.

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