

# Iltifat, Grammatical Person Shift and Cohesion in the Holy Quran

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## Abstract

While discourse analyses go back to the second half of 1950s, related researches in the rhetoric field represent initiative interests? centuries before by Islamic rhetoricians. Among the topics ?Iltifat? as the ?grammatical person shift in one or a sequence of sentences? has been quite controversial within the area; which considers the discourse participant shift among the speaker, addressee and absentee. Following a brief introduction to the topic of Iltifat, the present paper is aimed to present its common categories and sub-categories, and its importance from the point of discourse analysis, which is then followed by the consideration of possible defective results of the grammatical person shift on cohesiveness of Quran. In preparing the research 20 surahs of the holy book have been randomly selected, which have been analyzed on the basis of the application of an integrative approach of Halliday and Hasan (1976) and De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) towards cohesion. As a result the research demonstrates the holy book?s cohesiveness and the high Quranic usage of reference and specifically personal reference within the grammatical person shift amongst all the cohesive elements that are studied in detail in the paper. The matter is presented together with the 8 resulted subdivisions of Iltifat in Quran on the basis of the research, as follows: grammatical person shift, number shift, person and number shift, number and gender shift, shift in the addressee, function shift, dual Iltifat and finally sequential Iltifat.

**Index terms**— Rhetoric, Grammatical person shift/Iltifat, Cohesion, Reference, Antecedent, Participants.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

he frequently observed occurrence of unexpected shifts from one pronoun to the other might be considered as a disconcerting feature within the Qur'?nic style. The matter has been regarded as solecisms or simply been ignored by some scholars (e.g. Noldeke among others); while in Arabic rhetoric, Muslim specialists (e.g. Siuty 1363) refer to the phenomenon as Iltifat -literally known as 'conversion', or 'turning one's face to'; i.e. "the change of speech from one mode to the other, for the sake of freshness, variety, causing interest, renewing matter and avoiding boredom for the listener ". The word came to be used for turning the speech matter to talk about something before continuing with the original subject.

II. BACKGROUND : TYPES AND CONDITIONS OF ILTIFAT

## 5 METHOD

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40 The point notified in the classification number I. is the most commonly known and called Iltifat prior to the other  
41 types. In fact a departure from the normally expected usage of language in a particular context for a particular  
42 rhetorical purpose is observed in all these classifications. As of to the first three types the focus of the present  
43 research is on grammatical person shift.

44 Matter has also been discussed in regard to the conditions on Iltifat. Two conditions have been considered: the  
45 first condition notifies that the pronoun turns to refer to the same person/thing from which it turned. The other  
46 suggested condition stipulates that the transition should be between two independent sentences. This perhaps  
47 resulted from the observation of a limited number of examples, and was thus rightly refuted by reference to many  
48 other examples that do not involve two independent sentences III.

### 49 5 METHOD

50 In rejecting Iltifat as an incohesive marking factor in the text of Quran, the present research is aimed to investigate  
51 cohesion in the Holy book. In preparing the research the following 20 surahs have been randomly selected: Al  
52 Anfal, Hud, Ar Ra'd, An Nahl, Ta ha, Al Ahzab, Ya seen, Az Zumar, Al Fath, Al Hujraat, At Tur, Al Hadid, As  
53 Saff, At Talaq, Al Muzzammil, Al Qiyama, Al Insan, Al Fajr, Al Bayyina and At Takathur. Within the process  
54 of investigation and for the sake of cohesion explanation matter within the corpus, the approach of Halliday  
55 and Hasan (1976) has been examined together with De Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981) approach. The study  
56 results in a selection of an integrated approach of both the above, which has been described in detail within the  
57 present paper.

58 By the application of the integrative approach, the research moves towards investigating cohesion with the  
59 focus of Iltifat in the corpus. To analyze the gathered patterns within the surahs, the research presents the data  
60 within tables. Among the 20 surahs in the corpus, 19 included Iltifat while the point was missing in one surah  
61 (Al Bayyina). To represent the gathered data 2 tables have been shown for each surah. Among the 2 tables  
62 representing the data analysis of each surah, the first illustrates the verse numbers including Iltifat (the shift  
63 being shown by underlying the related elements), together with their translations.

64 Table 2 for each surah indicates the verse numbers, Iltifat (person, gender, number changes), the element being  
65 shifted, the cohesive element (with different possible parts of speech; verb, noun, adjective, pronoun ?), cohesive  
66 type (as defined in section 3. Within this classification, the grammatical factors include: reference, substitution  
67 and ellipsis (Ibid: page number); among which referential ties are created when an item in one sentence refers  
68 to an item in another one, for interpreting of which the sentential reference is required. Pronouns are considered  
69 as the main referring resources in texts. Substitutional cohesive ties within the grammatical factors are created  
70 by the usage of words or phrases that are substituted in the same grammatical slots, as of items elsewhere in  
71 the text; e.g., one, so, and do are such examples in English. Ellipsis creates cohesiveness via omission; that is  
72 interpreting elliptical forms require moving elsewhere within the text or discourse context for filling the blanks.

73 Conjunctional strategies explicitly tie the meanings of utterances, by coordinating or subordinating the  
74 meanings of sentences together. Halliday and Hasan notify four categories of conjunctions, as follows: additives  
75 (and, or, in addition?), adversatives (but, however, nevertheless?), causals (so, consequently, for this reason?)  
76 and temporals (then, after, finally?).

77 Lexical factors are notified as containing recurrence and collocation. Among which recurrence uses the  
78 repetition of words, or pointing of words to each other in various ways. Synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy and  
79 metonymy can be notified as recurrence strategies. On the other hand, collocation and the tendency of words  
80 occurring together is also considered a lexical strategy.

81 b) The Approach of De Beaugrande and Dressler ??1981) De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) discuss cohesion  
82 basically on the base of syntax as a system that imposes organizational patterns upon the surface text, by using  
83 devices for showing how already used patterns can be reused, modified, or compacted (p. ??); i.e., an emphasis on  
84 the function of syntax in communication. Due to the grammatical dependencies of usually nonadjacent elements,  
85 syntax is to provide the patterns into which current materials fit. Hence, the major units of syntax can be  
86 considered as patterns of well-marked dependencies in closely-knit patterns, as follows: phrase (a head with at  
87 least one dependent element), clause (a unit with at least one noun and agreeing verb), and sentence (a bounded  
88 unit with at least one non-dependent clause). They also define the coherence in the above units as being able to  
89 be utilized in a short span of time as patterns of knowledge in regard to current processing tasks. For long-range  
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93 Iltifat, Grammatical Person Shift and Cohesion in the Holy Quran stretches of text, the re-using, modifying,  
94 or compacting devices are notified, that are considered in regard to stability and economy in respect to both  
95 materials and processing matters. The re-using patterns are defined (*Ibid*) in the forms of recurrence, as the  
96 straightforward or partial repetition of elements/patterns; parallelism, as repeating a structure while with new  
97 elements; and paraphrase in repeating the content but conveying it with different expressions. Compacting  
98 patterns include pro-forms are seen to be used to replace contentcarrying elements by short placeholders with no  
99 independent content, and ellipsis with omitting some surface constituents of the structure. Signaling relations in  
100 displaying text cohesion may be reflected in the tense/aspect ordering influences in usage,i as well as junction  
101 among events and situations. The junctive expressions are seen in four major types of: conjunction links-with  
102 the same status in the textual worldii, disjunction links-with alternative status of which only one can be true  
103 in the textual worldiii, contrajunctionhaving the same status but appearing incongruous or incompatible in the  
104 textual worldiv, and subordinationwhen the status of one depends on that of the otherv.

105 De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) further discuss the functional sentence perspective as the ordering of  
106 expressions to show the importance or newness of their content yields in demonstrating cohesion. The mere  
107 placement of materials in the earlier or later stretches of clauses and sentences suggests the relative priorities and  
108 degrees of informativity of underlying content. Intonation within the spoken texts is also considered as a way in  
109 signaling importance or newness of content and cohesion.

## 110 7 c) The Integrative Approach

111 As mentioned earlier, the cohesive ties are divided by Halliday and Hasan (1976) into grammatical, conjunctive  
112 and lexical types. To simplify the matter, the present research classifies the conjunctive ties under the grammatical  
113 ones and therefore cohesion falls into two general types of grammatical and lexical ones. De Beaugrande and  
114 Dressler's (1981) cohesive devices too come under this categorization. Each of the two types, include subdivisions  
115 as notified below. Due to the fact that Arabic language is the matter of analysis here and the importance of  
116 derivative words within it, derivation is added as a lexical factor in the approach. Furthermore, the research  
117 points repetition as constituting of both grammatical and lexical factors. Hence, in the case of repetition of  
118 a sentence, clause or grammatical structure, the matter is considered a grammatical tie. On the other hand,  
119 using the same word or verb inflections are considered as lexical cohesions. Accordingly, the integrative approach  
120 selected within the research can be summarized as below: ?

## 121 8 DATA ANALYSIS

122 In order to clarify the process of analysis, one surah (Fajr) is analyzed as an example which is illustrated in two  
123 sample charts here. The first chart shows verses including Iltifat, and the second one demonstrates the Iltifat  
124 Cases and Cohesive Elements in this surah. ????? ? ????? ??? ??? ? ? ????? ??? ? ????? ? ??? ? ??? ? ????? ????  
125 ????? ? ??? ? ??? â???" ??? ? ? ??i?"?"? ??? ??? ? ? ??i?"?"? ??? ? ????? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ???  
126 ??? ????? ??? ? ??? 2 nd , M, PL â?"?" 2 nd , M, SG prn ??"?" â?"?" prn " ? ?"

127 9 ??????

128 The research results illustrate the points summarized below:

129 -Importance of gender and dual number in the grammatical person shift in Arabic, which does not exist in  
130 English language, while play an important role in translating from English to Arabic.

131 -Al-Bayyina Surah, within the corpus showed no instances of exhibiting Iltifat. -Existence of different kinds  
132 of reference within the verses containing Iltifat; with the exception of the second part of Taha surah-verse 49, in  
133 which no cohesive elements were observed at all.

134 Iltifat, Grammatical Person Shift and Cohesion in the Holy Quran -Data analysis clarifies that the most and  
135 least cohesive devices to be used within the corpus are reference (specifically personal reference) and substitution,  
136 respectively, in grammatical person shifts. Moreover, the results show that in spite of the importance of co-  
137 reference in Iltifat, agreement in person, number and gender between pronoun and antecedent as an element of  
138 cohesion is contradicted.

148 (or, do they (3 rd , PL, M) have a ladder on which they listen? Then let any of them that has listened bring  
 149 a clear authority. Or, has he daughters, and you (2 nd , PL, M) sons?)-At Tur: 38-39. c) Reminding majesty  
 150 and power: ???? ?i»?"? (we (1 st , PL) created them, and we strengthened their joints, but, when we will, we  
 151 shall indeed exchange their likes. This is indeed a reminder, so that he who will, takes a path to his lord. ?? ?  
 152 ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 153 ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
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 155 ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?i»?"? (it? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
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 158 ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?i»?"? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 159 (so it tasted the mischief of its (3 rd , SG, F) action, and the end of its matter was loss. Allah has prepared  
 160 a severe punishment for them (3 rd , PL, M). So those possessing understanding fear Allah. believers, Allah has  
 161 sent this down for you as a reminder,) -At Talagh: 9-10 5. Addressee shift : which goes under three categories;  
 162 a) Fixed pronoun: apparently there is no shift in the referential pronouns, but contemplating the meaning it is  
 163 understood that the antecedents are different.?? ???? ???? ?i»?"? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 164 ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
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 166 ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?i»?"? " ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?  
 167 (2 nd , PL, M), know that it has been sent down with the knowledge of Allah, and that there is no god except  
 168 he. So, have you (2 nd , PL, M) surrendered?)-Hud: 14 b) Changing pronoun: both pronoun and the antecedent  
 169 shift.?? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 170 ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?  
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 172 ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?  
 173 (prophet Muhammad) as a witness and as a bearer of glad tidings and warning, so that you (2 nd , PL, M),  
 174 believe in Allah and his messenger and that you f support him, revere him (prophet Muhammad), and exalt him  
 175 (Allah), at the dawn and in the evening.)-Al Fath: 8-9 c) Change in addressee : in a sequence of a surah the  
 176 addressees shifts from time to time." ???? ???? ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 177 ???? ???? ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 178 are mentioned in Surah Al Ahzab. 6. Function shift : the structure of sentence changes from active voice to  
 179 the passive voice or vice versa.?? ???? ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 180 ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 181 ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
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 183 ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 184 ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?i»?"? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
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 189 ???? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
 190 ???? ? ??? ?  
 191 (And it was said (3 rd , SG, M, Passive): 'earth, swallow up your waters. heaven, cease! 'The water subsided  
 192 and the matter was accomplished. And the ark came to rest upon (the mountain of) aljudi, and it was said (3 rd  
 193 , SG, M, Passive): 'be gone, evildoing nation! 'he said (3 rd (those who believe, and whose hearts find comfort  
 194 in the remembrance of Allah (3 rd , SG, M). is it not with the remembrance of Allah that hearts are satisfied? as  
 195 such, we (1 st , PL) have sent you forth to a nation before whom others have passed away in order that you recite  
 196 to them what we have revealed to you. yet they disbelieve the merciful (3 rd , SG, M). say: 'he is my lord. there  
 197 is no god except he. in him I have put my trust, and to him I turn. 'other messengers were mocked before you  
 198 but I respited the unbelievers, then I seized them. And how was my retribution! What, he who stands over every  
 199 soul for what it has earned, yet they made partners for Allah (3 rd , SG, M). Say: 'name them. Or would you  
 200 tell him of that which is unknown in the earth to him? Or in outward speech only? 'Indeed, their devising seems  
 201 fair to the unbelievers, for they are barred from the right way. None can guide those whom Allah leads astray.  
 202 The likeness of paradise which the righteous have been promised (3 rd , SG, M, Passive) beneath it rivers flow,  
 203 its produce and shade are eternal. Such is the payment of the righteous. But the payment of the unbelievers is  
 204 the fire.)-Ar Ra'd: 28-34 This type is also divided into two categories; a) Linear : Iltifat (the sending down of the  
 205 mighty, the most merciful (3 rd , SG, M) ? we (1 st , PL) have bound their necks with fetters up to their chin,  
 206 so that their heads are raised and cannot be lowered? you only warn he who follows the remembrance and fears  
 207 the merciful (3 rd , SG, M) in the unseen. Give to him glad tidings of forgiveness and a generous wage? surely,  
 208 it is we ?? (3 rd , PL, M) who believe and do good deeds from the darkness into the light. Who ever believes  
 209 in Allah and does good deeds he (3 rd , SG, F) will admit to gardens underneath which rivers flow where they  
 210 shall live for ever and ever. for those (3 rd , PL, M), Allah has made a goodly provision.)-At Talagh: 11 V.

## 211 10 CONCLUSION

To conclude the paper with a short summary, the research has demonstrated the holy book's cohesiveness and the high Quranic usage of reference and specifically personal reference within the grammatical person shift amongst all the cohesive elements that are studied in detail in the paper, on the basis of the integrated approach. The matter is presented together with the 8 resulted subdivisions of Iltifat in Quran on the basis of the research, as follows: grammatical person shift, number shift, person and number shift, number and gender shift, shift in the addressee, function shift, dual Iltifat and finally sequential Iltifat. The research also results in notifying exaggeration, reproach, reminding majesty and power, upbraiding, and annunciation as the explaining matters of the usage of Iltifat in the holy book. <sup>1 2 3 4</sup>

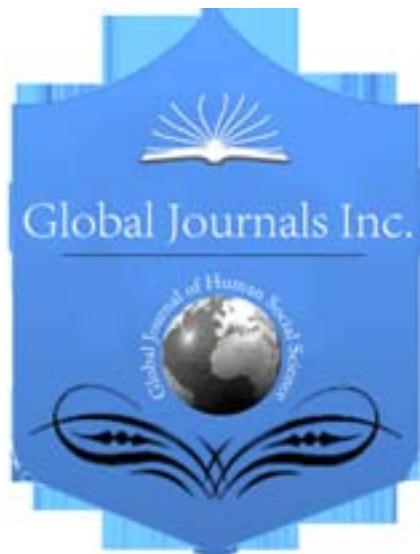


Figure 1:

1

verse? ?????? ??? ???? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ????  
14 ? ??? ??? ??? ? ???? ???? ? ???? â???  
17 ?????? ??? ???? ? ???? ?????? ? ? ???? ?  
20 ??? ???? ???? ? ? ???? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ?  
num-????? ?????? ??? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ?  
ber ??? ? ??? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?  
??? Verse

â???" ??? ? ? ??i»?"? ??? ??? ? ? ??i»?"? â???" and your lord comes  
??? ? ??? ? ??i»?"? ??? ? ??? ? ??i»?"? with the angels, rank upon  
????? ??? ?????? ??? ? ???

and you ardently love wealth. (2 nd , PL, M) (2 nd , PL, M) indeed, your lord is ever watchful. (2 nd , SG, M) â??" no! but you show no good to the orphan, Translation

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Figure 2: Table 1 :

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<sup>3</sup>The verbless sentences which contain the time of past, present and future altogether.

#### <sup>4</sup>Iltifat, Grammatical Person Shift and Cohesion in the Holy Quran

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verse	verse	Iltifat	shift	cohesive	cohesion	presupposition
number				element	type	
14	? ???? ???? ???? ???	2 nd	prn	????? prn	subordinate personal	previous verse
	? ???? ? ? ???? ???	,	M,	” ? ” ? ”???		previous verse
	? ??? ??? ??? ? ???	SG		”???		
	???? ? ???					
					reference	
				????		
17	â??” ????? ??? ? ?	â??”	â??”		definite	???????
	????? ????? ? ? ??? ?	2 nd	prn		reference	
	??? ? ??? ? ??? ???	,	M,		metatense	verse 5
	??? ??? ? ?? ??? ???	PL				
	???					
				”??”?		
				? ???	temporal	previous verse
				????	conjunction	
				????	adversative	previous verse
				prn ”??”?	conjunction	
					personal	verse 14
					reference	
				????	definite	???????
				?????????	reference	present
					tense	verse 16

20

22

Figure 3: Table 2 :

2. Number shift : illustrating mere number shifts :" ????? ? ??? ???  
??? ? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
????? ??? ? ??? ????  
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? ??? ? ??? ? ??? ?  
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??? ? ??? ? ??? ????  
???? ? ???" ???? ? ?  
??? ???? ? (and he ?  
?i?" ? ??? ???? ? ?  
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??? ???? ? ??? ? ??? . ?  
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bring forth every kind of plant)-Taha: 53.

d) Upbraiding:

but you (2<sup>nd</sup>, PL, M) show no good to the orphan) -

Al Fajr: 14, 17.

e) Annunciation:

The

research demonstrates

subdivisions of the grammatical person shift according to the verses analyzed, as presented below:

1. Grammatical person shift : person shifts without any change in number

” ? (or, do they (3 rd , PL, M) have a ladder on which they ???? ? ? ?? ? ? ?? ? ???? ? ? ? ? listen? Then let any of them that has listened bring a clear authority. Or, has he daughters, and you (2 nd , PL, M) sons?)-At Tur: 38-39.

Do not ask me about things of which you have no knowledge. I reproach you lest you become among the ignorant. 'it was said (3 rd , SG, M, Passive): 'o Noah, descend with peace from us and blessings on you and on the nations of those with you; and nations we shall give them enjoyment, and then from us they shall be visited with a painful punishment.')-Hud: 44, 46, 48

7. Dual shift : in one verse or a sequence of verses two types of Iltifat exist.

8. Serial shift : in sequence of verses persons shift continuously and different kinds of Iltifat follow each other.

Figure 6:

Figure 7:



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222 [Halliday and Hasan ()] , M A K Halliday , R Hasan . *Cohesion in English* 1976. Longman.

223 [Robinson ()] *Discovering the Quran: A Contemporary Approach to a Valid Text*, Neal Robinson . 2004.

224 [Haleem ()] *Grammatical Shift for the rhetorical purposes: Iltifat and related features in the Qur'an*, Abdel  
225 Haleem , MA S . [www.islamic-awareness.org](http://www.islamic-awareness.org) 1992.

226 [De Beaugrande and Dressler ()] *Introduction to Text Linguistics*, R De Beaugrande , W U Dressler . 1981.  
227 London: Longman.

228 [Welchsler and Zlati ()] *net i As an instance, Hebrew obtains a sequence of tenses that are to be used consecutively.*  
229 *ii E.g., moreover, also, in addition, besides, furthermore? iii E.g., either-or, whether or not? iv E.g., however,*  
230 *yet, S Welchsler , L Zlati . <http://jouitteau.samizdat>.* 1998. (Agreement in Discourse. nevert heless?  
231 v E.g., because, since, as, thus, while, therefore?)

232 [Saifullah] *Sudden Changes in Person and Number: Neal Robinson on Iltifat*, M S M Saifullah . [www.islamic-awareness.org](http://www.islamic-awareness.org)

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