

## The Role of Repetition in Textual Consistency - An Applied Study of the Poem (Born To Die) By Abu Al-Atahiya

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### Abstract

"This study seeks to uncover the role of repetition in Abu al-Atahiya's poem, (Born to die). Repetition is well-known as a tool of lexical cohesion that establishes a semantic dimension between the three core textual elements: the sender, the receiver, and the message. Furthermore, it enhances the text's aesthetic structure and deepens its coherence. The active presence of this textual device in the poem has significantly reinforced both cohesion and coherence, thereby intensifying its semantic density and unifying the text into a cohesive whole.

**Keywords:** Répétition, cohésion, cohérence, Interconnectedness, Text.

### 1. Introduction

Text linguistics represents a pivotal stage in the objective and methodological evolution of contemporary linguistics. As a specialized branch, it investigates both spoken and written texts, emphasizing the intricate organization and interconnectedness of textual components that constitute a meaningful whole. This shift has facilitated a paradigm transcending traditional sentential grammar to embrace the broader domain of textual analysis. This expansive domain is governed by central concepts, encompassing formal linguistic structures as well as non-linguistic, pragmatic, and contextual dimensions. Because sentence-level grammar has proven insufficient to fulfill the analytical requirements of linguistic researchers<sup>1</sup>, text linguistics has carved out an independent trajectory, adopting a novel conceptual mission that surpasses traditional boundaries. Rather than merely describing and analyzing phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels through established, objective methodologies, its primary focus has shifted toward linguistic communication—including its participants, conditions, conventions, characteristics, implications, interactional dynamics, and patterns of usage. Furthermore, it examines the multi-faceted impact of textual forms on the recipient, alongside audience typologies, textual openness, and the multiplicity of readings and interpretations.

Characterizing a given text or discourse as cohesive obliges the analyst to adopt a linear approach. This involves tracking pronominal and deictic references—whether anaphoric or cataphoric—while examining diverse cohesive devices such as conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, comparison, and adversative relations. This rigorous tracking serves to demonstrate that the text or discourse (and linguistic data in general) constitutes an integrated, cohesive whole<sup>2</sup>. Given the vital significance of cohesion, various theoretical frameworks have structured its conceptual parameters and delineated its practical mechanisms. Recognizing the value of these models for the reader, this study provides a

concise overview of them prior to addressing the specific cohesive device under investigation, aiming to maximize academic utility and implementation.

The methodology of this study is structured into an introduction, a conclusion presenting the core findings, and three main sections. The first section classifies cohesive devices, reviewing the systemic framework of cohesion outlined by **M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan**. It then addresses the seven standards of textuality established by **Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Dressler**, given their critical importance to cohesion and coherence, before examining **Michael Hoey's** forms of repetition. The second section provides a lexical and conceptual definition of repetition, clarifying its typologies, significance, and functional role in generating textual cohesion and coherence. The third section is dedicated to the empirical application, analyzing **Abu al-Atahiya's poem titled "Born to Die" (Lil-mawti ma talidun)**.

This section outlines the rationale for selecting this specific poem and extracts all instances of repetition, illustrating their significance in establishing cohesion and coherence throughout the text. Methodologically, this research synthesizes a descriptive-objective approach with a statistical method; it surveys scholarly perspectives on the forms and importance of repetition in ensuring textual integrity, while quantitatively auditing the types of repetition within the poem to support the empirical analysis. Given the nature and scope of this topic, the study addresses the following central research questions:

- What are the textual cohesion relations delineated by Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan?
- Are the seven standards of textuality proposed by de Beaugrande and Dressler sufficient to establish the textuality of a text?
- What are the forms of repetition identified by Michael Hoey?
- What role does repetition play in achieving textual cohesion within Abu al-Atahiya's poem *"For Death You Give Birth"*?

## 2. Classification of Cohesive Devices

### 2.1 Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan's System of Cohesion Classification

Through their investigation into the sources of cohesion, **M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan**, in their seminal book *[Cohesion in English]*, offered foundational attempts to define the features that distinguish a "text" from a "non-text." They conceptualize the text as a semantic unit whose constituent parts are interconnected through explicit (direct) cohesive devices. These devices vary from one text to another depending on the genre and the author, shifting in both frequency and type. Crucially, these devices serve a functional role; they are not merely syntactic units joining sentences to generate a linear sequence, but functional components that contribute to the formation of the text as a unified semantic whole<sup>3</sup>. It is evident here that textual cohesion relations, according to their framework, are fundamentally semantic relations realized through both the grammatical and lexical systems. Consequently, they divide cohesion into two primary types: **grammatical cohesion** and **lexical cohesion**. The cohesive devices responsible for weaving and constructing this network of semantic relations across sentences consist of: **reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion**.

### 2.2 The Seven Standards of Textuality by Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Dressler

In their quest to delineate the "textuality" of texts, De Beaugrande and Dressler introduced a framework comprising seven standards of textuality in their influential book *Introduction to Text*

*Linguistics* (1981). The researchers initiated their inquiry by examining the communicative role that texts perform within human interactions. Their conclusions took the form of prerequisites that must be met for a text to achieve textuality. According to their definition, a text is a «communicative occurrence that must satisfy all seven standards of textuality collectively; should any of these standards be breached, the text ceases to be communicative and loses its status as a text »<sup>4</sup> These seven standards are:: Cohesion, Coherence, Intentionality, Acceptability, Informativity, Situationality, and Intertextuality<sup>5</sup>.

### 3. Forms of Repetition according to Michael Hoey

In his book *Patterns of Lexis in Text* (1991), Michael Hoey focused heavily on the various forms of repetition within text to demonstrate the cohesive bonds that generate structural integrity. He identified the typologies of repetition as follows: *[Note: You can insert Hoey's specific types here, such as: Simple Lexical Repetition, Complex Lexical Repetition, Simple Paraphrase, Complex Paraphrase, Substitution, Co-reference, and Ellipsis.*

Accordingly, the aforementioned frameworks underscore the vital importance of cohesion, which is realized through the grammatical and lexical relations that interconnect the structural components of the text's surface structure. This, in turn, facilitates linear sequence and continuity among its constituent parts. Repetition (*Réitération / Reiteration*) is a mode of linguistic structuring that falls under the second category of textual cohesion: **lexical cohesion**, alongside **collocation**. It achieves textual integrity when the second, repeated lexical item refers back to the first. Here, it is essential to specify what repetition entails:

#### 3.1 Lexical Reiteration

As previously indicated, lexical devices are among the key instruments of cohesion, performing a vital function in ensuring textual integrity. These devices are divided into two primary categories:

The first is **reiteration**, which is a form of lexical cohesion that requires the repetition of a lexical item, or the occurrence of a synonym, near-synonym, a superordinate item, or a general word. This is precisely what De Beaugrande termed **recurrence**. As demonstrated, this repetition is classified into four distinct types:

- Repetition of the same word (Identical word repetition).
- Synonymy and near-synonymy.
- Superordinates (The inclusive word).
- General words.

The second major lexical device that fulfills a cohesive function is **collocation** (lexical affinity or co-occurrence). It is worth noting that Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan provided a detailed elaboration on its various forms and its functional role in generating textual coherence. To maintain clarity, a brief overview of some of these forms includes: *such as: antonymy, complementarity, part-whole relations, etc...* **association with a specific topic, opposition or antonymy, part-whole relations, part-part relations, co-hyponymy, words belonging to an ordered series, and words belonging to an unordered series.** Consequently, we shall examine the concept of repetition from lexical, terminological, and functional perspectives within the empirical framework of the selected analytical model.

#### 3.2 The Concept of Repetition

##### A. Lexical Definition (Language)

In *Lisan al-Arab*, Ibn Manzur states that the etymology of *al-tikrar* (repetition) in the Arabic language is derived from *al-karr*, meaning "retrogression or returning." To return (*karra 'anhu*) means to go back. Repeating something (*karrara al-shay'*) implies reiterating it time after time. One repeats a statement to someone (*karrartu 'alayhi al-haditha*) when iterating and echoing it. *Al-karr* denotes returning to something, from which *al-tikrar* is derived. *Al-karrah* signifies resurrection and the renewal of creation after demise. Furthermore, *al-karkarah* refers to a rumbling sound reverberating within the chest. *Al-karr* also denotes the thick rope used to ascend palm trees, or a heavy rope in general. Additionally, *al-karr* is that which binds the two wooden frames (*dhilfatan*) of a camel saddle together, specifically the leather strip into which these frames are inserted<sup>6</sup>.

Thus, the linguistic root of repetition originates from *al-karr* in the sense of returning. Ibn Faris notes in *Maqayis al-Lughah*: «The consonants *Kaf* and *Ra* form a sound root indicating gathering and reiteration. From this, *karrartu* is derived, which signifies your return to something after the initial instance.»<sup>7</sup>.

Following this survey of the lexical significance of the root *k-r-r*, it becomes clear that its meanings revolve around several key dimensions<sup>8</sup>:

- **Returning (Regression):** It is observed that the relationship of repetition encompasses anaphoric reference (*backward reference*) by returning to a previously mentioned textual entity and reiterating it.
- **Resurrection and Renewal of Creation After Demise:** This mirrors a communicative scenario where a speaker utters consecutive sentences, and after a prolonged discourse, the listener is on the verge of forgetting the opening remarks. The speaker then returns to repeat earlier statements, thereby reminding the listener, resurrecting the sentence, and renewing it just as it was fading from memory.
- **Binding the Two Sides of the Saddle:** This physical binding achieves cohesion between the two parts, which metaphorically embodies the core concept of textual integrity and structural cohesion.

We deduce from this overview that repetition serves as a crucial mechanism for formal and semantic cohesion across texts in general. It actively contributes to establishing referential tracking, which prompts us to study it as a pivotal device that facilitates both **cohesion** and **coherence** simultaneously.

## B. Terminological and Morphological Definition (Convention)

Terminologically, *al-tikrar* is the verbal noun (*masdar*) of *karrara*, meaning to iterate and reiterate. Morphologically, it takes the weight of *taf'al* (with a fathah on the *Ta*), which is an anomalous, non-analogical form, unlike the standard *taf'il* weight<sup>9</sup>. This was the view championed by Sibawayh. Conversely, the Kufan school argues that it is the verbal noun of the intensified form (*fa'ala*), wherein the *Alif* substitutes for the *Ya* of the standard *taf'il* paradigm. **Abu al-Baqaa al-Kafawi** posits that *al-tikrar* is «a trilateral verbal noun that denotes hyperbole, much like *al-tardad* (reiteration) derived from *radda* according to Sibawayh. Alternatively, it is an augmented verbal noun originally formatted as *al-takrir*, where the *Ya* inverted into an *Alif* according to the Kufans; it is also permissible to pronounce it with a kasrah (*ti\_fal*), making it a noun derived from *al-takarrur*»<sup>10</sup>.

Our exposition of the etymological and morphological origins of the root *k-r-r* reveals two distinct terms that differ in structure, derivation, and underlying morpho-semantic features. The first term follows the weight of *taf'al* (with a fathah) or *tif'al* (with a kasrah) to denote emphasis and hyperbole.

The second term is *al-takrir*, which conforms to the standard *taf'il* weight. Regardless of these structural or etymological nuances, the morphological divergence does not negate their semantic unity. Both terms converge on the core meaning of repetition, where the signifier directly mirrors the signified, «as when you say: *Hurry, hurry!*—where the underlying meaning is iterated while the lexical form remains identical.»<sup>11</sup>.

On this basis, repetition manifests textually through diverse linguistic units of varying structural lengths, while simultaneously assuming multi-layered semantic forms. Structurally, repetition extends across a continuum of linguistic scales, encompassing **graphemic/phonemic repetition (the letter), lexical repetition (the word), and sentential repetition (the sentence)**.

This implies «that the speaker introduces an utterance and then repeats it identically, whether the meaning remains congruent or diverges; alternatively, the speaker may introduce a meaning and subsequently reiterate it, provided that the first and second meanings are congruent. If the linguistic forms and meanings are identical, the utility of its inclusion lies in emphasizing that matter and reinforcing it within the recipient's psyche—the same applies if the meaning is identical. Conversely, if the two linguistic forms are identical but the meanings differ, the utility of its employment lies in indicating two distinct meanings»<sup>12</sup>.

An examination of the works of classical Arabic scholars as they addressed the phenomenon of repetition reveals that they were keenly aware of the functional role repetition plays in achieving structural cohesion. **Al-Zamakhshari** posits that «the utility of emphasis (*al-ta'kid*) lies in the fact that when you repeat, you reinforce the emphasized element and its attachments within the listener's psyche, securing it in their heart. By doing so, you dispel any lingering doubts that might trouble them, or eradicate any perceived inattentiveness or distraction regarding the matter at hand»<sup>13</sup> From this perspective, the distinction between repetition (*al-tikrar*) and emphasis (*al-ta'kid*) becomes evident; repetition is more eloquent and intensive than mere emphasis, elevating its user toward the highest echelons of stylistic eloquence (*al-fasahah*). **Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi** remarks: «Those who deny its status as an eloquent stylistic device, under the illusion that it yields no utility, are mistaken. On the contrary, it is among the merits of eloquence, particularly when its components are structurally interconnected»<sup>14</sup>.

Among the sublime aesthetic descriptions attributed to repetition is the statement by **Ibn al-Atheer**: "Know that this category represents one of the vital bastions of the science of eloquence (*'ilm al-bayan*), and its conceptual approach is highly sophisticated. Its definition is the conceptual indicator of a signifier representing an iterated signified"<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, **Al-Sijilmasi (d. 704 AH)** classified repetition as the tenth category among the stylistic genres of the science of eloquence, rhetoric, and embellishment (*'ilm al-bayan wa san'at al-balaghah wa al-badi'*), defining it as: «the iteration of a numerically or generically identical linguistic form, or a numerically or generically identical meaning, within a discourse two or more times. Reiteration (*al-takrir*) is the designation for a predicate through which one entity resembles another in their shared essence. Therefore, it constitutes a higher genus under which two distinct species fall: the first is verbal reiteration (*al-takrir al-lafzi*), which we shall term homomorphy (*mushakalah*); the second is semantic reiteration (*al-takrir al-ma'nawi*), which we shall term correspondence (*munasabah*). This is because it either repeats the linguistic form or repeats the meaning. Iterating the form is verbal reiteration (homomorphy), while iterating the meaning is semantic reiteration (correspondence) »<sup>16</sup>.



Classical Arabic scholars were deeply invested in elucidating the utility of repetition and determining its significance. **Al-Zarkashi** asserts that it yields several benefits: "The first is emphasis. Know that reiteration is more intensive and eloquent than emphasis, an example of which is found in the words of the Almighty: **‘And (remember) when the angels said: “O Maryam (Mary)! Verily, Allâh has chosen you, purified you (from polytheism and disbelief), and chosen you above the women of the ‘Ālamîn (mankind and jinn) (of her lifetime) Al-Imran (the family of Imran) Verse:42.**

**Secondly:** Heightening alertness to that which precludes suspicion, thereby ensuring the discourse is received with full acceptance; an instance of this is found in the Almighty's saying: **‘And the man who believed said: “O my people! Follow me, I will guide you to the way of right conduct [i.e. guide you to Allâh’s religion of Islâmîc Monotheism with which Mûsâ (Moses) has been sent]. 39. “O my people! Truly, this life of the world is nothing but a (quick passing) enjoyment, and verily, the Hereafter that is the home that will remain forever’ Ghafir or Al-Mu’min(The Forgiver or The Believer) Verse:38.39.**

For this reason, the vocative was repeated... **Thirdly:** When the discourse becomes prolonged and there is an apprehension that its initial part might be overlooked, it is reiterated to refresh the addressee's memory and renew its cognitive impression; a case in point is the Almighty's saying: **‘Then, verily! Your Lord — for those who emigrated after they had been put to trials and thereafter strove hard and fought (for the Cause of Allâh) and were patient, verily, your Lord afterward is, Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’ An-Nahl(the bees) Verse: 110... Fourthly:** In contexts of glorification and awe-inspiring dread; an instance of this is found in the Almighty's saying: **‘The Inevitable (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)! What is the Inevitable? And what will make you know what the Inevitable is? Al-Hhaqqah (The Inevitable) Verse: 1.2.3 ... Fifthly:** In contexts of solemn warning and intimidation; an instance of this is found in the Almighty's saying: **‘Nay! You shall come to know! 4. Again nay! You shall come to know! 5. Nay! If you knew with a sure knowledge (the end result of piling up, you would not have been occupied yourselves in worldly things) At-Takathur (The piling Up – The Emulous Desire) Verse:3.4.5... Sixthly:** In contexts of exclamation and wonderment; an instance of this is found in the Almighty's saying: **‘So let him be cursed: how he plotted! 20. And once more let him be cursed: how he plotted’ Al-Muddathir (The One Enveloprd) Verse:19.20... Seventhly:** Due to the multiplicity of grammatical modifiers (or semantic referents); an instance of this is found in the Almighty's saying: **‘Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny?’ Ar-Rahman (The Most Gracious) Verse:13.**

"For even if these blessings are numerous, each one remains contextualized by what precedes it. Indeed, Allah the Almighty addressed both humankind and jinn (*al-thaqalayn*), enumerating the divine blessings created for them. Thus, whenever a specific category of these blessings is introduced, an acknowledgment is demanded, necessitating gratitude. These blessings manifest in diverse genres and myriad forms"<sup>17</sup>.

Evidently, repetition in the Holy Qur'an manifests in numerous forms and structures to align harmoniously with the contextual environment of the Qur'anic verses, reflecting the supreme echelons of eloquence. Consequently, repetition becomes a sophisticated rhetorical phenomenon that can only be fully discerned by those who closely scrutinize and contemplate classical Arabic discourse.

It is also observable that the structural forms of repetition enhance the interconnectedness among the repeated components. This is achieved by establishing a conceptual bridge between them; the discourse initiates a specific linguistic or semantic element, which is then emphasized through continuous reiteration across successive textual structures or sequential chains of speech. This occurs via anaphoric reference back to the initial indexical element introduced at the baseline of the text, thereby maximizing formal cohesion and semantic coherence. In this sense, repetition «aims to consolidate textual integrity and is deployed to realize reciprocal relations among the constituent parts of a text... In addition to fulfilling specific semantic functions, it effectively secures textual integrity through the continuum of a given element from the inception of the text to its conclusion. This continuum—be it a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph—binds the components of the text together, inherently reinforced by other cohesive mechanisms»<sup>18</sup>.

### 3.3 Reiteration of the Identical Lexical Item

When **Tammam Hassan** discussed the concept of linkage (*al-rabt*), he conceptualized it as a formal linguistic marker (*qarinah lafziyyah*) that denotes the structural connectivity between two interrelated elements. Professor Tammam Hassan indicated that this linkage materializes through various modes, including: returning pronouns (*al-damir al-'a'id*), particles, identical lexical reiteration, semantic reiteration, demonstrative pronouns, the definite article (*al*), or the subsumption of one interrelated element within the generality of another. Remarkably, **Dr. Tammam Hassan** posits that identical lexical reiteration constitutes a more powerful cohesive link than pronominal substitution. He argues: «Linkage is also achieved through identical lexical reiteration, as in the saying: (*East is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet*). Thus, reiterating the referent with its explicit wording provides a stronger cohesive link than substituting it with a returning pronoun, because the explicit wording is structurally more potent than its pronominal metonymy»<sup>19</sup>.

This potent characteristic establishes identical lexical reiteration as the underlying baseline (*asl*) of linkage within referential tracks, given that «the baseline of linkage is to be achieved through lexical reiteration, as it is more evocative for recollection and offers a stronger guarantee for tracking the referent»<sup>20</sup> Consequently, this makes the pattern of identical lexical reiteration a baseline in connectivity; however, the Arabic language may deviate from this baseline. This is because «the deviation of Arabic from the baseline of connectivity to alternative modes of referential tracking operates in accordance with the principle of syntax economy (*al-ikhtisar*), which stems from the pursuit of phonetic and structural lightness (*talab al-khiffah*). Furthermore, connectivity via identical lexical reiteration—much like other phenomena in Arabic—is contingent upon the avoidance of ambiguity (*amn al-labs*). If the clarity of the referent is compromised during lexical reiteration, Arabic systematically shifts toward alternative non-reiterative modes of connectivity»<sup>21</sup>.

Our classical scholars early on discerned that the imperative for utilizing non-reiterative links was driven by two core motivations: conciseness (*al-iyjaz*) and the avoidance of ambiguity (*amn al-labs*). Regarding this, **Ibn Ya'ish** notes: «Pronominal systems were entirely introduced to achieve a degree of conciseness and to safeguard against ambiguity. As for conciseness, it is self-evident because a single bound particle spares you the insertion of an entire explicit noun, functioning as an integral component of that noun. As for ambiguity, it arises because explicit nouns often exhibit high lexical polysemy and shared designations. If you say: *Zayd came, then Zayd acted*, it might be erroneously assumed that the second Zayd is distinct from the first. Explicit nouns lack inherent morphological states to differentiate them when ambiguity occurs; rather, ambiguity is resolved in most contexts

through qualifiers, as in your saying: *I passed by Zayd the tall, or the cloth-merchant*. Pronouns, conversely, carry no ambiguity; hence, they dispense with qualifiers because their immediate contextual conditions render qualifiers redundant. These accompanying conditions encompass the physical presence of the speaker, the addressee, mutual observation, or the prior mention of the absent referent, which conceptually elevates the absent entity to the status of a present, observed one»<sup>22</sup>.

It is understood from this excerpt that **Ibn Ya'ish** illustrated and expounded upon the mechanics of connectivity through identical lexical reiteration. He demonstrated that non-reiterative connectivity (i.e., through pronouns) is devoid of the verbosity and potential ambiguity inherent in explicit lexical repetition. From this, I deduce that while the baseline was originally centered on identical lexical reiteration, the language deviates from this baseline toward pronominal systems to achieve syntactic conciseness and safeguard against ambiguity<sup>23</sup>.

Given that the baseline of connectivity lies in identical lexical reiteration, substituting the repeated wording with a pronoun may occasionally weaken the cohesive bond, resulting in structural ambiguity or opacity. This phenomenon is vividly illustrated through the explicit repetition of the phrase (*the believing men and believing women*) instead of substituting it with an indexical pronoun or relying on the bound pronoun in the phrase (*promised them*) in the words of the Almighty: **‘The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ’ (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise. 72. Allâh has promised the believers — men and women, — Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allâh. That is the supreme’** At-Taubah(The Repentance)s Verse:71.72.

Thus, the reiterated phrase (*the believing men and believing women*) establishes an anaphoric reference back to the initial indexical element, ensuring its continuity and binding the text's conclusion to its inception. "Notice also that repeating (*the believing men and believing women*) after a long textual distance, rather than utilizing the pronominal form (*promised them*), followed by the repetition of the Divine Name (*Allah*), serves to reinforce this connectivity"<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, this linkage "yields a structural echo designed to emphasize the steadfastness of the initial position and to prompt the recipient's recollection of it." Lexical cohesion, on the other hand, represents a distinctive facet of textual integrity; it stands apart from other cohesive mechanisms since it does not operate on the basis of a presupposing and a presupposed element, as seen in previous devices, nor does it rely on a formal, syntactic tool to bind textual components together<sup>25</sup>. Rather, lexical cohesion is realized within the text via two primary mechanisms: **reiteration** and **collocation**.

#### 4. Repetition and its Functional Role in Text

**Mohammed Khatabi** defines it by stating: «Reiteration is a form of lexical cohesion that requires the repetition of a lexical item, or the occurrence of a synonym, a near-synonym, a superordinate item, or a general word»<sup>26</sup> This is precisely what De Beaugrande termed **recurrence**. The reiterated expression maintains the exact same referent, meaning that repetition «sustains reference to the identical entity within the textual world. Consequently, the conceptual consistency of the text is consolidated through this explicit continuity».<sup>27</sup>



Thus, the multiplicity of repetition constructs a conceptual bridge and a shared foundation across sentences, contributing to textual unity and integrity. Psychologically, «the effect of lexical reiteration is to focus attention; repeated elements are bound to be imprinted on the memory. Consequently, the processing operation becomes easier, provided that the point of contact within the text-world model with textual continuity remains clear»<sup>28</sup>

To further elucidate, we can cite **Michael Hoey (1991)** regarding the function of repetition and its role in cohesion. He pointed out that clusters of repeated words across sentences contribute to linking the propositional content of sentences situated in different parts of the text<sup>29</sup>. Furthermore, repetition is considered a core variable correlated with comprehension capacity, given that comprehension is accelerated when repetition utilizes identical lexical forms. The structural types of reiterative links manifest in diverse forms, which can be outlined briefly as follows<sup>30</sup>:

#### 4.1 Typologies of Repetition

The general rule underlying all types of reiterative links is that they allow the speaker or writer to predicate something new about the repeated entity. **Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan** proposed four distinct types of repetition:

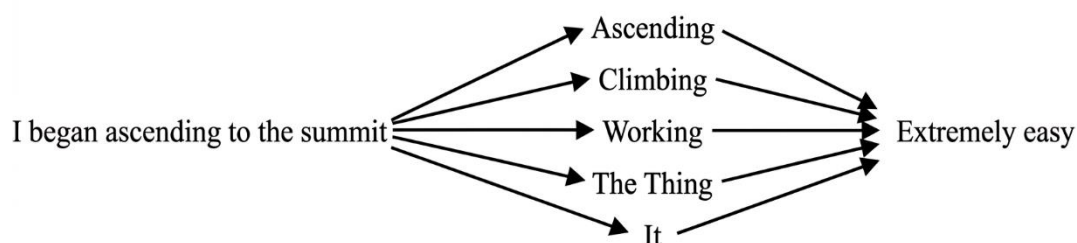
- Repetition of the same word (Identical word repetition).
- Synonymy and near-synonymy.
- Superordinates.
- General words.

At this juncture, it is essential to elaborate on these typologies, beginning with the first category:

**Identical Word Repetition:** This category subsumes three sub-types:

- Direct repetition (also termed total repetition or *simple lexical repetition*).
- Partial repetition (also termed *complex lexical repetition*).
- Lexical polysemy (homonymy).

Direct repetition of a lexical item signifies that the speaker continues to address the same referent, ensuring its tracking and continuity throughout the text; that is, repeating the lexical item without any morphological modification. An illustrative example of this is provided by Professor **Mohammed Khatabi**<sup>31</sup>:



The word (*as-su'ud* / *climbing*) serves as an identical repetition of the word introduced in the first sentence; (*at-tasalluq* / *ascending*) is a synonym for (*as-su'ud*); (*al-'amal* / *action*) is a superordinate noun or a general word under which "climbing" or the act of climbing can be categorized; and (*ash-shay'* / *thing*) is a general word that similarly encompasses (*as-su'ud*).<sup>32</sup>

**Partial Repetition:** This refers to utilizing the core constituent elements of a word (the morphological root) while shifting it into a different grammatical category—such as: (*yanfasilu* / *separates*) and

(*infisalan / separation*), or (*yahkumu / governs*), (*hukm / governance*), and (*hukumah / government*). In this mechanism, two distinct lexical items share a single lexical morpheme.

**Lexical Polysemy (Homonymy):** This is a form of lexical repetition that diverges from the conventional understanding of reiteration. In polysemy, two identical lexical forms are utilized to convey two entirely different meanings, such as (*walla / departed*) and (*walla / appointed/governed*). Here, we observe that the two words match in their phonological and orthographic form but differ in semantic substance, as illustrated in the following anecdote: A traveler arrived from Persia to visit a friend, who said to him: "*You were at the Governor's court; so, over what thing did he appoint you (wallaka)?*" He replied: "*He turned (wallani) his back to me*".<sup>33</sup>

#### 4.2 Synonymy and Near-Synonymy

Synonymy constitutes another key mechanism for ensuring textual integrity by employing words that share a common semantic core. The strategic choice to utilize synonymy instead of direct lexical repetition serves to eliminate stylistic monotony and reader fatigue, as the chosen synonym infuses the propositional content with lexical variation<sup>34</sup>. De Beaugrande and Dressler termed this phenomenon **paraphrase**, defining it as the repetition of content through a shift in linguistic expressions—such as (*yaktashifu / discovers*) and (*yakhtari'u / invents*). Commenting on this device, Professor Hilmi Khalil pointed out that synonymy is bifurcated into two categories:

- **Near-Synonymy:** This occurs when the semantic overlap between two or more words is strikingly apparent, yet subtle nuances restrict their interchangeability. Consequently, one word might fit a specific contextual environment while the other proves incompatible, despite their shared core meaning. A prime example is the pair (*bayt / house-home*) and (*manzil / residence-house*); while we can metaphorically say: "*The Arab League is the house of the Arabs (Bayt al-'Arab)*," it is contextually impermissible to say: "*The Arab League is the residence of the Arabs (Manzil al-'Arab)*."
- **Absolute Synonymy:** This manifests when two or more words achieve total and absolute congruence regarding both their external real-world referents and their underlying connotative dimensions. This type is exceedingly rare in natural languages and is best exemplified by the pairing of borrowed foreign loanwords with their coined Arabic equivalents, such as: (*hatif / telephone*) and (*tilifun*), or (*radiu / radio*) and (*mizya' / broadcasting receiver*).

#### 4.3 The Superordinate (The Inclusive Word)

The superordinate relation implies that one lexical item denotes a hypernymous class (a broader category), while the other denotes a hyponymous element (a specific instance) within that class. A clear example is the cohesive link established between the words (*dawlah / state*) and (*al-Jaza'ir / Algeria*). Here, "Algeria" serves as a specific, subordinate instance of the more generalized, inclusive word "state." Thus, the broader term is designated as the **superordinate (hypernym)**, while the more specific term ("Algeria") is designated as the **hyponym (subordinate word)**.

A hyponym may, in turn, function as a superordinate for narrower categories beneath it. For instance, if we take the term (*al-ka'inat al-hayyah / living organisms*), it encompasses bacteria, animals, plants, and so forth. In this scenario, "living organisms" is the hypernym, and "animal" is the hyponym. However, the word "animal" further branches out to subsume other hyponyms, such as reptiles and mammals. Furthermore, "mammals" includes subordinate classifications, such as marine mammals and humans. This hierarchical categorization represents another systematic method for interconnecting words within a text to generate structural and semantic cohesion.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4.4 General Words

General words constitute a small, specialized set of lexical items characterized by generalized reference, utilized as a cohesive mechanism to interconnect words within a text. This category includes nouns such as (*mushkilah* / *problem*), (*su'al* / *question*), (*fikrah* / *idea*), (*amr ma* / *affair-matter*), or (*makan* / *place*), as well as nouns like (*qissah* / *story*), (*khitab* / *speech*), (*waraqah* / *paper-manuscript*), and (*kitab* / *book*). Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan categorize general words into the following subclassifications:

- **Nouns denoting humans:** such as (*an-nas* / *people*), (*al-shakhs* / *person*), (*al-rajul* / *man*), (*al-mar'ah* / *woman*), and (*at-tifl* / *child*).
- **Nouns denoting places:** such as (*makan* / *place*), (*mowdi'* / *spot-location*), (*nahiyah* / *direction-quarter*), and (*ittijah* / *orientation*).
- **Nouns denoting facts or abstractions:** such as (*su'al* / *question*), (*fikrah* / *idea*), (*shay'* / *thing*), (*amr* / *matter*), and (*mowdu'* / *topic*).

These words are finite in number and perform a referential function analogous to a form of synonymy. Due to their inherently generalized meanings, their interpretation is achieved by reference to another specific textual element, underscores their vital role in weaving textual connectivity.

What distinguishes lexical cohesion is that its scope is not restricted to a closed set of linguistic elements; rather, the entire lexicon remains available for deployment, rendering this mechanism exceptionally diverse and expansive, subject primarily to the speaker's stylistic choices. «Lexical connectivity is realized through vocabulary selection within the framework of item-to-item reference; that is, it operates as a mode of **phoric cohesion** established at the level of the *lexis*. Connectivity occurs via the continuity of meaning, which imparts the status of textuality upon the text. Consequently, lexical elements move systematically to construct the core topic of the text. Furthermore, they repeatedly present data crucial for interpreting their structurally related lexical counterparts, thereby ensuring uninterrupted comprehension for the listener or reader».<sup>36</sup>

Having expounded upon the theoretical frameworks governing repetition as a cohesive device, we shall now proceed to the empirical application. We will analyze the structural patterns of repetition within our selected model: **Abu al-Atahiya's poem titled "Born to Die" (Lil-mawti ma talidun).**

#### 5 Prelude to the Poem (Contextual Background)

Frivolity, libertinism, wine-drinking, and luxury (*al-lahw wa al-mujun*) emerged as negative socio-cultural phenomena in early Islamic society, catalyzed by the assimilation between Arab and non-Arab civilizations during the Abbasid era. As this hedonistic decadence intensified, religious zeal was awakened among certain poets and reformers. They raised the banner of asceticism (*al-zuhd*), aligning themselves with the righteous factions in an attempt to counteract the hedonistic current spearheaded by the libertine factions.

Abu al-Atahiya stands as the foremost pioneer of ascetic poetry (*Shaykh shu'ara' al-zuhd*). In his poem "*For Death You Give Birth*", he deploys his artistic repertoire of vocabulary, phrasing, and imagery to establish the following philosophical axioms:

- **The absolute inevitability of death** and the ultimate transience of all earthly existence.
- **The exhortation to renounce worldly pleasures** and proactively prepare for the Hereafter.

Poetic texts are inherently rich in diverse structural patterns of repetition, particularly when provided with a fertile thematic ground such as asceticism. On this basis, we selected this poem by Abu al-Atahiya, who championed the ascetic movement during the Abbasid period. We aim to

analyze his poem to uncover the aesthetic dimensions generated by repetition, determining its impact on shaping semantic and psychological nuances, and its functional role in establishing textual linkage and cohesion. This is reinforced by the fact that the investigated phenomenon—repetition—is perfectly congruent with the thematic requirements of asceticism, coupled with the poet's renowned expertise in this genre.

Furthermore, specific pedagogical and academic motivations prompted our selection of this text: this poem is officially prescribed in the educational curriculum for second-year secondary school students (both the Literary-Philosophical and Experimental Sciences streams).<sup>37</sup> Through this analysis, we seek to examine the reiterative frameworks within the poem, as they constitute the artistic tools structuring the text and reflecting its internal aesthetic loci. This requires linking these reiterative structures to their pragmatic context, which serves as the primary driver in stylistic analysis. Ultimately, textual comprehension hinges upon grasping the complex relations, networks, and structural bonds that integrate the text, shaping its internal artistic architecture.

### **An Elegy on Mortality: 'Born to Die' by Abu al-Atahiya<sup>38</sup>**

#### **Structural Distribution of Repetition in the Poem**

The architectural patterns of repetition within the poem are distributed according to the following classifications:

| <b>Types of Repetition</b>                           | <b>The Word or the Phrase</b>                                                     | <b>Frequency</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Total Repetition (Lexical Recurrence)                | ( <i>Allah</i> ) God                                                              | 02               |
|                                                      | Death                                                                             | 09               |
|                                                      | The Worldly Life                                                                  | 06               |
|                                                      | How is it that I see                                                              | 02               |
| Etymological Repetition                              | The Morphological Root <i>b-d-r</i> ( <i>I take</i> )                             | 02               |
|                                                      | The Lexical Root <i>kh-w-f</i> ( <i>to fear</i> )                                 | 02               |
|                                                      | The Morphological Root <i>kh-l-q</i> ( <i>to create</i> )                         | 02               |
|                                                      | The Morphological Root <i>ḥ-b-s</i> ( <i>to jail</i> )                            | 02               |
|                                                      | The Morphological Root <i>gh-m-s</i> ( <i>to dip</i> )                            | 02               |
|                                                      | The Morphological Root <i>w-ṣ-f</i> ( <i>to describe</i> )                        | 02               |
| Repetition of Pronominal Forms: Independent Pronouns | The Detached Accusative Pronoun <i>Iyyāka</i>                                     | 02               |
|                                                      | The Independent Second-Person Singular Subject Pronoun <i>Anta</i> ( <i>you</i> ) | 03               |
| Alliteration                                         | The Negative Particle <i>Lā</i> ( <i>not</i> )                                    | 05               |
|                                                      | The Negative Particle <i>Mā</i> ( <i>did not</i> )                                | 04               |

|                                        |                                                                             |    |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|                                        | The Emphatic Particle <i>Inna</i><br>(indeed)                               | 02 |
|                                        | The Conditional Particle <i>In</i><br>(if)                                  | 02 |
|                                        | The Instigative Particle<br><i>Hallā</i>                                    | 02 |
| Repetition of Universal<br>Quantifiers | The Universal Quantifier<br><i>Kull</i>                                     | 02 |
| Identical Phrasal Repetition           | Why do I see the children of<br>this world                                  | 02 |
| Partial Phrasal Repetition             | The Conditional Contextual<br>Particle <i>Idā</i><br>If I described to them | 02 |

The initial observation regarding **Abu al-Atahiya's** poem is that its reiterative structures significantly diverge from the stylistic conventions of Pre-Islamic poetry. In Pre-Islamic verse, poets reiterated phrases primarily because «repetition in those specific contexts was deeply intertwined with the poet's psychological state and the nature of nomadic Bedouin life. Undoubtedly, the poet recognized that repetition stirred zeal within the hearts of his compatriots, inciting them to combat; hence, it was deployed for this purpose»<sup>39</sup> Despite the formal surface-level similarity between the two eras, the manifestations of repetition fundamentally differ due to the divergence in thematic nature. Asceticism (*al-zuhd*) constitutes an expansive domain yet remains a highly specialized subject driven by distinct psychological conditions and complexities. It is the byproduct of a philosophical outlook on existence through which the poet attempts to defend his doctrine and exhort people to embrace it. Consequently, he resorts to repeating words and utterances that he believes possess a profound resonance and impact on the recipient's psyche. He thus «insists upon a vital dimension of the expression, prioritizing it over others... shedding light on a sensitive crux within the utterance to unveil the speaker's core preoccupation. In this sense, repetition carries a valuable psychological significance».<sup>40</sup> Therefore, our analysis of the levels of repetition will systematically track the tabulated data, commencing with lexical repetition (nouns)—foremost among which is the noun *death* (*al-mawt*), which bears a pivotal thematic weight within the poem's structure and is intrinsically linked to the poet's psychological dimension. This explains his insistence on its repetition, followed by verbal repetition and its connotative implications in the text. We will then examine the repetition of particles and pronouns, which play a major role in generating textual connectivity on one hand, and elucidating the poet's intentionality (*maqsadityah*) on the other, before investigating the structural recurrence of specific sentences and phrases to trace their semantic value and role in ensuring textual cohesion and coherence.

### 5.1 Lexical Repetition (Nouns)

As previously outlined, a distinct boundaries exists between phrasal repetition and lexical repetition. While the former proliferated extensively in Pre-Islamic poetry, the latter occurred rarely. This discrepancy is directly attributable to the thematic nature and the psychological impulses that govern a poet while weaving vocabulary and phrasing. Accordingly, a defining characteristic of



ascetic poetry is that it «draws its semantic configuration and deep underlying structure from an eternal, primordial cosmic dialectic. One pole of this dialectic aligns rigidly with the temporal world (*al-dunya*) in a strict binary opposition with the Hereafter (*al-akhirah*) in its religious conceptualization. Language centers entirely around this antithesis, and the structural mechanisms of the poem across its multiple levels cooperate to forge a network of acoustic, rhythmic, syntactic, morphological, and semantic relations within the developing poetic architecture to activate this binary framework. Repetition emerges as an integrative mechanism that binds the two poles of this antithesis, enveloping them in a harmonious rhythmic cadence, and embellishing that cadence with patterns of binary contrasts that accentuate this opposition. This illuminates the structure with a vivid clarity that draws the recipient toward the core intent of the text, imparting sufficient poeticity to preserve it within the specific genre of verse».<sup>41</sup>

In **Abu al-Atahiya's** text "**Born to Die**", he deploys diverse patterns of repetition that unveil the psychological dynamics dominating his consciousness, clarifying the underlying motives for reiterating specific words over others. This is because «the psychological impulse is among the most prominent catalysts for repetition, distinguished by its manifest visibility across texts, as it represents a re-emergence of that which has settled deep within the heart and preoccupied the psyche to the exclusion of all else».<sup>42</sup> The poet repeats the explicit lexical item *death* (*al-mawt*) nine times, alongside a single occurrence of its synonym *demise* (*al-maniyyah*), rendering almost no poetic verse devoid of this specific item, in addition to the pronominal structures referring back to it. This high lexical density underscores the central binary framework upon which the poem is constructed: the conflict between the absolute inevitability of death and the innate human desire for survival and longevity. Death operates as the supreme driving agency and a constant thematic fixture in **Abu al-Atahiya's** poetry, constituting a core cornerstone linked to the major societal transformations and contradictions that the poet witnessed in his environment. Simultaneously, it reflects the internal experience of asceticism within the poetic self. Yet, prior to this exploration, an urgent question forces itself upon us: Does **Abu al-Atahiya's** constant invocation of death represent a mode of escapism from his social reality, or is it a deliberate desire to unveil the reality of this transient world, serving as an ascetic call to renounce its fleeting pleasures?

The poet weaves semantic layers and interconnects core ideas by relying heavily on the reiterative cadence of the word *death* (*al-mawt*). He initiates this repetition within both the hemistich (*sadr*) and the codicil (*'ajuz*) of the first verse to establish its absolute reality and demonstrate its sweeping hegemony and tyrannical omnipotence. This subduing death cannot be repelled by the most vigilant sentinels or the royal guards (*al-'asas*) encamped around palaces; nor can it be conquered by jinn or humankind. Before it, all creations stand equal—whether kings or commoners, wealthy or impoverished, powerful or frail, free or enslaved, elders or youths, males or females.<sup>43</sup> Since death exerts its absolute dominance over humanity without exception, the poet systematically pivots the locus of address toward his own psyche in the fourth verse. He dissociates from his inner self another persona that must be admonished and reminded of the transience and dissolution of the temporal world. The poet proclaims:

***Why do I not preempt this death while respite remains? / Why do I not preempt it as long as I retain a breath of life?***

Accordingly, the poet exhorts himself to proactively prepare for death through righteous deeds. He then reiterates the explicit noun *death* in the fifth verse, preceding it with a vocative particle (*ya / O*)

to awaken the oblivious individual who falsely claims to fear death, while in reality harbor no genuine dread. He notes:

***O you who fear death! Had you truly been fearful of it / Your tears would have been bursting forth across the continuum of time.***

At this juncture, the poet resorts in the sixth verse to elevating the threshold of admonition and intimidation, confronting this oblivious claimant with a definitive, inescapable moment—the moment of the death-rattle (*al-hashraja*) and the departure of the soul, wherein no creature possesses any agency or power. The poet declares:

***Does it not terrify you—a Day from which there is no defense— / When you are fully submerged within the agonies of death?***

The poet reinforces his repetition of *death* in the seventh verse, metaphorically depicting it as a ravenous predator preying upon God's creation, from whose talons no human can ever escape. He says:

***Beware, beware of the worldly life and its fleeting pleasures / For death therein is a ravenous beast preying upon God's creation.***

The poet's invocation of the temporal world (*al-dunya*), coupled with his stern warning through the repetition of the detached pronoun (*iyyaka / beware*), serves as an acute reminder that death is covertly embedded within this life, lying in ambush for both the poet and humanity. This structural mechanism transforms the repetition of *death* into «an active tool that projects the covert psychological anxiety and turbulence harbored within the poet, shifting the textual discourse from a direct cautionary warning into a poetic discourse charged with aesthetic value».<sup>44</sup> From the seventh verse onward, the poet introduces a novel lexical item, repeating it across the subsequent verses: *the temporal world (al-dunya)*, which he characterizes as the absolute matrix of evils and a deceptive enjoyment (*mata' al-ghurur*).

Furthermore, there is a structural repetition of syntactic formulas in the eighth and ninth verses, where the poet reiterates the particle *Inna* alongside its explicit noun and predicate (*inna* and its adjuncts). He pairs this syntactic paradigm in the eighth verse with the conditional particle (*law / if*) to illustrate the absolute impossibility of human agency in repelling death. Conversely, he pairs the formula in the ninth verse with the detached personal pronoun (*anta / you*) to unveil the intrinsic human perception of death—a perception deeply marred by dread and aversion, particularly when man recognizes that death is a final reservoir and a watering-place (*hawd and wurd*) in which he must inevitably be submerged and drink. He says:

***If all creations in this temporal world strived collectively / To withhold this death from you, they could never withhold it. Indeed, death is a watering reservoir that you deeply detest / Yet within a fleeting moment, you shall be fully submerged in it.***

In these two verses, the poet continues to rely on the underlying concept of repetition but deploys the semantic synonym *demise (al-maniyyah)*. By the tenth verse, the poetic discourse reaches a climax of questioning and profound bewilderment. To manifest this state, the poet explicitly repeats the noun *the temporal world (al-dunya)* twice: once in the first hemistich and once in the second. The impetus for this repetition stems from his astonishment at those he designates as "the children of the temporal world" (*banu al-dunya*). This structural description metaphorically conceptualizes the world as their maternal origin, rendering them her most loyal and subservient creations; they fail to comprehend its

ultimate transience and deceptive nature, fiercely feuding over its worthless debris (*hutam*) as though they were celebrating a wedding festival (*'urs*). He proclaims:

***What is the matter with me? I see the children of this world feuding / As though this temporal world were a wedding feast for them.***

The poet sustains this reiteration of *the world* in the eleventh verse, structurally annexing it to its "children" (*dunyahu-hum / their world*). He demonstrates that upon the mere mention of its deceptive charms and superficial allure, they laugh and rejoice; conversely, they grieve and scowl the moment the Hereafter is invoked. He states:

***Whenever I describe their temporal world to them, they laugh / But if I describe their Hereafter to them, they scowl.***

The poet seals his poem with an interrogative and exclamatory structure, repeating the noun *the temporal world* to express astonishment at its children, to whom Allah has unveiled the true reality of their "mother" within the Holy Qur'an, yet they remain intensely attached and clinging to her. Paradoxically, the poet attributes "siblings" (*ikhwah*) to the children of the world to illustrate that the vast majority of mankind has been deceived by her allure and swept away by her current. Having witnessed this universal convergence toward worldly pleasures, the poet sought to induce asceticism by invoking the destroyer of delights and the scatterer of communities (*hadim al-ladhadhat*), asserting that enduring bliss lies not in leaning toward this base, transient world, but in fleeing forward toward the Hereafter—the ultimate abode of reward and permanence. Ultimately, his deep-seated anxiety regarding death might be «an inverted expression of his profound attachment and adherence to life».<sup>45</sup> given that discoursing on death serves as a prominent symbol of escaping reality and the agonizing tribulations of existence. Alternatively, this discourse on death may serve as a pathway to uncovering the true essence of life, for the solitary human experience that symbolically resonates with absolute loneliness is the experience of death.

In addition to the conceptual layers conveyed by the poet through the explicit vocabulary of death, the mechanism of repetition—with its multifaceted semantic modes and evocative connotations—infuses vitality into the textual arteries of the poem. It imparts a profound poetic aesthetic that offsets the dry abstractness typically associated with philosophical and conceptual themes, which are inherently more suited for prose discourse. Furthermore, repetition anchors the discrete textual components together, sculpting the poem into a highly integrated, cohesive artistic masterpiece; it effectively «creates an underlying nexus among the verses, through which they constitute a fully unified and integrated architecture».<sup>46</sup>

## 5.2 Verbal Repetition (Repetition of Verbs)

The recurrence of verbal meanings in any given poet's repertoire cannot be evaluated arbitrarily; verbs are systematically deployed in accordance with immediate thematic necessity or the overarching contextual environment. Thus, if a poet employs a certain verb across disparate poems, it does not necessarily imply structural repetition, nor does such spontaneous, unintentional occurrence carry analytical significance.<sup>47</sup>

Rather, what invites analytical scrutiny is the deliberate recurrence of a verb within a single verse or throughout the entirety of a single poem. In such instances, the repetition invariably fulfills a calculated rhetorical purpose or conveys a specific conceptual weight. The poet reiterates consciously and purposefully, aiming to establish cohesive links among the lexical terms and phrases to which this repeated verb refers, while simultaneously steering the conceptual intake to influence the

recipient. This phenomenon is vividly manifest throughout **Abu al-Atahiya's** poetry. Because he restricted his poetic output—for the most part—to the genre of asceticism, his repetition of verbs serves as a strategic semantic densification (*takthif*) across past, present, and imperative tenses, either within a single verse or stretching across the entire text.

For instance, we find that the poet repeats the imperfective (present tense) verb *preempt* (*ubadiru*) twice: once in the first hemistich (*sadr*) and once in the second (*'ajuz*). The poet attributes the action to his own persona, driven by a desire to exhort his psyche to proactively prepare for death. This structural recurrence intensifies the thematic sense of alertness and readiness through the duplication of the incitement particle (*halla* / *why do I not*). In each instance, this particle is immediately succeeded by the imperfective verb (*ubadiru*), followed by the central lexical pivot *death* (*al-mawt*), whose structural presence is further reiterated via pronominal tracking. This reference is embedded within the object pronoun attached to the repeated verb in the second hemistich (*ubadiru-hu* / *I preempt it*). Here, a highly sophisticated network of relations emerges among the vocabulary and phrases, mediated by verbs and nouns that function as indexical markers tracked by the repeated elements. This mechanism contributes significantly to micro-structural cohesion within the single verse first, and macro-structural connectivity across the entire poem second. The poet states:

***Why do I not preempt this death while respite remains? / Why do I not preempt it as long as I retain a breath of life?***

Among the morphological roots reiterated by the poet is the root *kh-w-f* (to fear) in the fifth verse. The poet pairs it with a vocative framework to arrest the recipient's attention and awaken their sensory awareness. While this stylistic choice harbors an element of empathy and compassion for the claimant who professes fear, it simultaneously carries a tone of reproach and censure; the fear he claims contradicts his actual conduct. **Abu al-Atahiya** contents himself in the first hemistich of this verse with introducing the active participle *fearful* (*kha'if*), delineating the explicit cause of dread, which is *death*. He then reinstates the identical participle (*kha'ifah-u*) within the same hemistich, annexing it to an object pronoun that refers back to death. This provides manifest evidence of the structural cohesion and textual weaving (*sabk*) generated by the intersection of lexical repetition and referential pronominal tracking. He declares:

***O you who fear death! Had you truly been fearful of it / Your tears would have been bursting forth across the continuum of time.***

### 5.3 Repetition of Particles and Pronouns

In addition to the lexical and verbal manifestations of repetition that perform distinct semantic and formal functions—such as maintaining textual connectivity and cohesion—other structural phenomena must be highlighted for their critical role: the repetition of particles and pronouns. The poet does not deploy these elements arbitrarily; rather, they are reiterated with conscious deliberation to serve the overarching thematic purpose of the poem. Prominent among these are the negative particles (*la* / *no-not*), which appears five times, and (*ma* / *not*), which is repeated four times. This category of repetition is classified in contemporary stylistics as a phonostylistic pattern (*namat uslubi sawti*) that initiates within a micro-structural fragment and expands progressively to encompass macro-structural segments of the text.

This acoustic and structural expansion is highly visible in **Abu al-Atahiya's** poem. He initiates his text with the negative particle (*ma*) in the opening line:

***The defenses and sentinels cannot repel death / (Ma yadfa'u al-mawt...)***

He sustains its reiteration until the concluding verses in his phrase:

...*what they studied* / (*ma darasu*).

Crucially, each time the poet invokes this negative particle, he structuralizes it in immediate conjunction with death: (*Death cannot be repelled* / *Death cannot be conquered* / *Death cannot be imprisoned*). This mechanism serves to accentuate the absolute inevitability of death, rendering this structural repetition an irrefutable rhetorical argument against those who are swept away by the fleeting pleasures of this transient world. Furthermore, his recurrence of this particle in the phrase (*ma darasu*) accentuates the people's renunciation of and obliviousness to the Holy Book of Allah. Indeed, the semantic value of emphasis (*at-ta'kid*) is «among the most renowned and prevalent semantic functions of repetition across its diverse manifestations».<sup>48</sup>

Within this framework of emphasis, **Abu al-Atahiya** expands his structural choices by introducing other particles that carry the same semantic weight. His phrases: (*no guard* / *no jinn* / *no human* / *no defense...*) emphatically reinforce that death is an omnipotent force subduing all creation. This cumulative emphasis is similarly underscored in his initial assertions: (*Indeed, all creations...* / *Indeed, demise...* / *Inna al-khala'iq* / *Inna al-maniyyah*). Such structural emphasis makes the reader perceive that «the poet's consciousness actively directed this repetition; he deliberately employed it to achieve his thematic purpose. Through the repetition of particles, he orchestrates—alongside the traditional prosodic meter (*al-bahr al-'arudi*)—an internal musical rhythm. This internal cadence mirrors, at the very least, the intense emotional tone intended by the poet».<sup>49</sup>

A comprehensive examination of every repeated particle in Abu al-Atahiya's text and its role in textual cohesion would overly expand the scope of this study; hence, our analysis is restricted to those particles that display the highest textual frequency, as their recurrence inherently fulfills a strategic function congruent with the poem's situational context. The poet's intense focus on the consonant *Sīn*, which serves as the rhyme letter (*rawiyy*) of the poem—reiterated 16 times as the rhyme ending, in addition to its structural presence within various internal words—is highly significant. This specific sibilant consonant is characterized by a sharp acoustic sibilance (*safir 'alin*) that textually evokes a turbulent psyche, signaling internal anguish, grief, and a sense of existential decline. It is «intimately intertwined with the psychological state experienced by the poet—a state that profoundly betrays sorrow and melancholy».<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the repetition of the incitement particle (*halla*) twice in the fourth verse (in both the hemistich and the codicil) acts as a structural catalyst through which the poet vigorously urges and drives his own persona to renounce its transgressions and prepare for death. This particle effectively links the two halves of the verse into a cohesive unit.

Moreover, pronominal repetition constitutes another major mechanism contributing to textual cohesion (*ittisāq*), systematically deployed to serve the poem's thematic architecture. Among these is the detached accusative pronoun (*iyyaka* / *beware*) in the seventh verse; its immediate duplication intensifies the warning against worldly illusions and underscores the urgency of preparing for the Hereafter, casting the poet in the role of a moral counselor and guide. He declares:

***Beware, beware of the worldly life and its fleeting pleasures / For death therein is a ravenous beast preying upon God's creation.***

This is further exemplified by the repetition of the detached nominative pronoun (*anta* / *you*) in the sixth and ninth verses, where the poet accentuates mankind's intrinsic aversion to death:

***Does it not terrify you—a Day from which there is no defense— / When you are fully submerged within the agonies of death?***



He also reinforces the reality that man has a predetermined lifespan that will inevitably catch up with him, sooner or later. The reiteration of the pronoun (*anta*) exposes the poet's underlying desire to strike dread into the heart of this oblivious human being. He states:

***Indeed, death is a watering reservoir that you deeply detest / Yet within a fleeting moment, you shall be fully submerged in it.***

#### 5.4 Phrasal Repetition (Repetition of Phrases)

The poet's reliance on this specific structural mode of repetition provokes critical inquiries at the emotive level, just as the thematic momentum generated by this recurrence unveils his underlying philosophical posture. Abu al-Atahiya initiates the tenth verse with a rhetorical question, for he already possesses the definitive answer to his inquiry. This state of bewilderment is triggered by mankind's fierce feuding over the fleeting luxuries of this transient world, alongside his astonishment at human beings who fail to ponder the Qur'anic revelations that expose the reality of the worldly life as a mere illusion (*mata' al-ghurur*).

The repetition of the phrase establishes a cohesive architecture that vividly reflects the interconnectedness of the verses. These recurrent interrogatives are a textual reflection of the anxieties unfolding within the poet's consciousness regarding the dual realities of life and death, or transience and permanence. Because he operates under the weight of this existential conflict, these interrogative structures serve to consolidate the reality of transience (*al-fana'*) in which the poet firmly believed. He states:

***What is the matter with me? I see the children of this world feuding / As though this temporal world were a wedding feast for them.***

Among the repeated phrasal paradigms is the structure manifest in the eleventh verse. The poet reiterates the phrase (*idha wasaftu lahum / when I describe to them*) while intentionally varying the conditional particle in the second phrase located within the codicil (*'ajuz*): (*in wasaftu lahum / if I describe to them*). This structural recurrence primarily enhances the semantic depth, maximizing the micro-structural connectivity and synthesis among the constituent parts of the poem within a highly harmonious syntactic framework. He declares:

***Whenever I describe their temporal world to them, they laugh / But if I describe their Hereafter to them, they scowl.***

Through this cumulative repetition, we discern that the poem possesses a thoroughly integrated, organic unity—manifested not merely at the thematic level, but equally across its internal architectural configuration.

#### 5.5 Conclusion

With these lines, I bring this research to its conclusion, having synthesized a diverse range of primary and secondary sources. After demonstrating—even if via concise indicators within the framework of this study—the pivotal mechanism of repetition and its active role in generating textual cohesion and coherence (*al-ittisaaq wa al-insijam*), the core findings deduced regarding the functions of repetition can be summarized as follows:

1. **A Mechanism of Phoric Connectivity:** Repetition operates as a primary cohesive link that shapes the aesthetic architecture of the text at both the lexical and conceptual levels. It successfully establishes a semantic interlacing (*al-tashabuk al-dalali*), which endows the device with high efficacy in ensuring micro- and macro-level textual cohesion and coherence.

2. **Regulation of Textual Informativity:** It plays a decisive role in regulating the threshold of informativity (*al-i'lamīyyah*)—whether elevating or lowering it—within the text. While excessive, redundant repetition tends to diminish textual informativity, we observed the exact opposite in this specific text. Here, repetition directly enhanced the level of informativity because the reiterated vocabulary, clauses, and pronouns were intrinsically tied to their immediate situational contexts, operating via a complex network of relations that dynamically connected preceding textual elements with subsequent ones.
3. **Bridges of Lexical Frequency:** We identified a highly remarkable pattern of repetition within the poem, manifested in lexical recurrence (the repetition of specific nouns). Through these repeated words, the poet constructed structural bridges across the discrete components and lines of the text. Concurrently, the variation in the underlying functions and objectives of these phrases—conditioned by their shifting contexts—fostered a semantic densification that transformed the text into a fully integrated, organic body.
4. **Reactivation of the Central Semantic Core:** Each time the explicit noun *death* (*al-mawt*) is structuralized and repeated, it directs the recipient back to the central semantic core upon which the poem's entire architecture is erected. Furthermore, it evokes a systematic paradigm of binary oppositions that successfully strips the text of structural monotony, causing the conceptual meanings to dynamically scatter (*tatashazza*) across the expansive artistic space of the poem.

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