AN ONOMASTIC APPROACH TO THE HOLY QURAN: A CORPUS BASED STUDY OF PROPHETS' NAMES

Muhammad Jawad Nasir (Kanzul Madaris Board International)
M Phil Scholar, Department of English, NUML University (Faisalabad Campus)
Email: *kanz.english@gmail.com*
Dr. Muhammad Farukh Arslan
Lecturer, Department of English, NUML University (Faisalabad Campus)
Email: *Farukhgill99 @gmail.com*

Abstract
The current study explored the frequency, structural distribution, and discourse roles of prophets' names in the English translation of the Holy Qur'an, The Treasure of Faith, using a corpus-based quantitative approach. This English translation, by Mufti Abdul Nabi Hamidi (South Africa), was based on Kanz-ul-Iman, the renowned Urdu translation by Ahmad Raza Khan. The results showed that some prophets, like Moosa and Ibrahim (peace be upon them), were mentioned repeatedly and consistently, whereas other prophets, such as Hazrat Yusuf, Hazrat Shuʿayb (peace be upon them), and localized figures like Hazrat Idrees, Hazrat Yasa, and Hazrat ʿUzair (peace be upon them), appeared less frequently. The analysis also revealed distinct positional distribution patterns, including continuous, episodic, and localized occurrences, suggesting that prophetic names were strategically positioned to support particular themes within Qur'anic discourse. The case of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was especially noteworthy: although he was mentioned numerous times with alternative names, titles, attributes, and descriptive references, this highlighted the distinction between lexical frequency and thematic centrality. Overall, the findings demonstrated that frequency and distributional analysis revealed important aspects of narrative organization, thematic focus, and rhetorical structure in Qur'anic translation. This study also provided directions for future research, including incorporating prophetic titles and honorifics, examining surah-based or thematic patterns, integrating qualitative methods, applying the approach to other Islamic texts, and exploring pedagogical applications to enhance understanding of narrative prominence and thematic organization.
Keywords: prophets' names, corpus linguistics, frequency analysis, concordance plots, narrative structure

1. Introduction

The Holy Quran is a glorified and highly dignified book of Allah Almighty. It contains rulings pertaining to Halal and Haraam, guidance through advice and admonition, incidents and parables of the Ambiya (Prophets) and previous Ummahs, and descriptions of Paradise and Hell. The comprehensiveness of the meanings of Quranic Ayahs is vast, akin to an ocean of knowledge, which cannot be fully explored until the Day of Judgement (Al-Aazami, 2003).

Reflecting on this vastness, the Beloved and Blessed Rasool ﷺ said:

"The Islamic scholars will never be satiated whilst exploring the Quranic subjects, it will not become tattered after being recited again and again and the strange and miraculous topics of the Holy Quran will never end." (Mishkat, Kitab Fadaail-ul-Quran, Al-Fasal-us-Saani, pp. 186)

The Quran is a well-organized religious text in which the Prophets form a central part, delivering moral teachings, theological doctrines, and historical role models. Instead of presenting the lives of the Prophets in a linear chronological order, the Quran portrays their personalities through recurring references that are spread across multiple chapters and thematic contexts. The frequency, placement, and purpose of these references vary, indicating that their repetition is

deliberate rather than accidental. A lexical and structural analysis of the use of Prophets' names, therefore, provides valuable insights into the organization of narratives in the Quran and how the text communicates its guidance.

Beyond their textual function, the names of prophets are not merely functional elements of communication; they are closely intertwined with cultural, social, and personal identities. As Sikandar, Umar, Arslan, and Faizullah (2025) state, names reflect these identities across societies and vary significantly, shaped by diverse historical, linguistic, and social contexts. They are not only markers of individual identity but also carry deep symbolic and cultural meanings, reflecting familial ties, social hierarchies, and communal heritage. Moreover, names serve as indicators of religion, gender, social status, and personal aspirations. In this context, examining the distribution and repetition of prophetic names in the Quran is not only a matter of linguistic interest but also a way to explore how the text encodes religious, moral, and social meaning through these enduring cultural markers.

Corpus linguistics has developed in recent years as a useful methodological tool to study textual patterns in large volumes quantitatively and using empirical means. Corpus-based studies, using frequency lists, graphene plots, etc., allow researchers to find the patterns of repetition, clustering and dispersion, which might not be noticed directly on close reading. Although corpus linguistics has been extensively used when examining literary, political, and religious texts, the systematic quantitative study in Quran discourse especially with English translations are relatively scarce.

This research paper fills this gap by adopting a quantitative method of corpus research in order to study the frequency, distribution as well as the discourse roles of names of prophets in English translation of the Holy Quran. The research methodically extracts all the instances of the names of prophets and examines their distribution through out the text by identifying them using a corpus of 1,032,764 characters. Concordance plots are used to display patterns of frequency, and to distinguish among types of prophets, including continuous, episodic and localized prophets.

1.1. Research Questions
1. What are the frequency patterns of prophets' names in the English translation of the Holy Quran?
2. How are these names structurally and positionally distributed from the beginning to the end of the text?
3. To what extent do concordance plots reveal distinct positional distributions (e.g., localized, episodic, or continuous) for the names of the prophets?

2. Literature Review
Allah Almighty has sent numerous prophets (anbiyāʾ), beginning with Hazrat Adam and culminating in Sayyid-ul-Mursaleen Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ (peace be upon him). While the Holy Qurʾan affirms the existence of many prophets, it explicitly names only some of them. As Allah Almighty states in the Quran:

And indeed, We sent many Messengers before you, amongst them are those whose accounts We have related to you, and amongst them are those whose accounts We have not related to you….[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran) 40:78.]

The prophets whose names are clearly mentioned in the Qurʾan are as follows: (1) Hazrat Adam, (2) Hazrat Nuh, (3) Hazrat Ibrahim, (4) Hazrat Ismaʿeel, (5) Hazrat Ishaaq, (6) Hazrat Yaʿqub, (7) Hazrat Yusuf, (8) Hazrat Musa, (9) Hazrat Harun, (10) Hazrat Shuʿaib, (11) Hazrat Lut, (12) Hazrat Hud, (13) Hazrat Dawud, (14) Hazrat Sulaiman, (15) Hazrat Ayyub, (16) Hazrat Zakariyah, (17) Hazrat Yahya, (18) Hazrat Esa, (19) Hazrat Ilyas, (20) Hazrat Al-Yasaʿ, (21)

Hazrat Yunus, (22) Hazrat Idris, (23) Hazrat Zul-Kifl, (24) Hazrat Saleh, (25) Hazrat 'Uzair and (26) Sayyid-ul-Mursaleen Hazrat Muhammad. (peace be upon them) (Azami, 2012).

1. Allah Almighty states regarding Hazrat Adam (peace be upon him):

And Allah Almighty taught the names of all things to Adam…[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:31]

2. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Nuh (peace be upon him):

Indeed, Allah has chosen Adam, and Nooh,… [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 3:33]

3. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him):

And (remember) when the Lord of Ibrahim tested him by (His) certain words (i.e. commands), so he fulfilled (all of) them…… [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:124]

4. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Ismaʿeel (peace be upon him):

….and We emphasised to Ibrahim and Isma'eel…[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:125]

5. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Ishaaq (peace be upon him):

..and Is-haaq.. [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:133]

6. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Yaʿqub (peace be upon him):

And Ibrahim instructed the same religion to his sons, and Ya'qoob (did the same)… [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:132]

7. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Yusuf (peace be upon him):

Remember when Yusuf said to his father,… [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 12:4]

8. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Musa (peace be upon him):

And (recall) when We made a promise of forty nights with Moosa (for him to receive the Tawrah)… [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:51]

9. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Harun (peace be upon him):

…and Haaroon (Aaron)…. [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 4:163]

10. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Shuʿaib (peace be upon him):

And to Madyan, We sent Shu'ayb from their community….[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 7:85]

11. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Lut (peace be upon him):

And when Our angels came to Loot (in the form of handsome young boys)…. [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 11:77]

12. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Hud (peace be upon him):

And (We) sent Hood to the people of 'Aad from their own community…. [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 7:65]

13. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Dawud (peace be upon him):

…and Dawood (David) killed Jaaloot, and Allah bestowed upon him kingdom and wisdom…[The Treasure of Faith [Translation of Quran), 2:251]

14. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Sulaiman (peace be upon him):

… and Sulaimaan did not disbelieve; yes, the devils disbelieved….[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:102]

15. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Ayub (peace be upon him):

…and Ayyoob…[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 4:163]

16. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Zakariyah (peace be upon him):

. ...and gave her under the guardianship of Zakariyya....[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 3:37]

17. Allah Almighty says regarding Yahya (peace be upon him):

. ....and Yahya....[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 6:85]

18. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Esa (peace be upon him):

....and We gave clear signs to 'Eisa; the son of Mary, and helped him with the Holy Spirit (i.e. Jibra'eel)... [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:87]

19. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Ilyas (peace be upon him):

... and Yahya, and 'Eisa and Ilyaas; they are all worthy of Our proximity. [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 6:85]

20. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Al-Yasaʿ (peace be upon him):

... and Yasa'...[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 6:86]

21. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Yunus (peace be upon him):

...and Yunus (Jonah) [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 4:163]

22. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Idris (peace be upon him):

.... and Idrees...[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 21:85]

23. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Zul-Kifl (peace be upon him):

...and Zul-Kifl...[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 21:85]

24. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Saleh (peace be upon him):

And We sent Saalih to the (tribe of) Thamood from their own community. ...[The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 7:73]

25. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat ʿUzair (peace be upon him):

And the Jews said, 'Uzair is the son of Allah... [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 9:30]

26. Allah Almighty says regarding Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him):

(The Beloved Prophet) Muhammad is not the father of any man amongst you. Yes, he is the Messenger of Allah and the Final amongst all the Prophets. [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 33:40]

All prophets share an equal status as messengers of Allah. However, Allah Almighty has granted certain prophets higher ranks or special distinctions based on their unique excellences. Among them, the Final Prophet, Sayyidul-Mursaleen (The Leader of the Prophets) ﷺ, holds the most elevated status and is recognized as the best of all creation. (Azami,2012)

As Allah Almighty says in the Quran:

These are Messengers; that We have exalted one above the other; amongst them is one with whom Allah spoke, and one is he whom (Allah) elevated in rank above all. And We gave 'Eisa; the son of Maryam clear signs and We helped him with the Pure Spirit (i.e. the angel Jibra'eel). [The Treasure of Faith (Translation of Quran), 2:253]

The Qurʾan affirms that Allah Almighty has exalted some messengers above others. For instance, Allah spoke directly to Prophet Musa (peace be upon him), granting him a unique distinction among the prophets. Prophet 'Eisa (Jesus), the son of Maryam (peace be upon him), was endowed with clear signs and was supported by the Pure Spirit, i.e., Angel Jibra'eel (peace be upon him) who accompanied him throughout his mission. Above all, the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was elevated in rank over all other prophets due to his unique qualities: as he is the Beloved of Allah, the Messenger sent to all humanity, the Seal of the Prophets, and the leader of the most distinguished community. In addition, he was granted abundant miracles and numerous unparalleled qualities. (Hamidi, 2023)

It is not correct to specify an exact number of Prophets (peace be upon them) sent down by Allah Almighty, the Most Wise, for the guidance of mankind, because the narrations on this matter vary. The safest way is to believe and say that Allah Almighty sent more or less 124,000 prophets (peace be upon them). (Hamidi,2013)

The prophets occupy a central position in the Qurʾān as transmitters of divine guidance and as exemplary role models for humanity. Classical Qurʾānic exegesis, particularly in the narratives of the prophets (Qasas al-Anbiyāʾ), emphasizes that these accounts serve multiple purposes, including strengthening faith, illustrating divine justice, and imparting moral and spiritual lessons. In addition, the prophets were sent to resolve disputes, teach worship and divine laws, spread knowledge and wisdom, establish the true religion, demonstrate mercy, ensure justice, oversee and guide societal affairs, and deliver glad tidings to believers while warning disbelievers (al-Ṭabarī, 1997; Qasim, 2020).

Beyond their theological significance, the names Prophet function as enduring symbols of religious identity and spiritual affiliation in Muslim societies. As Noor, Arslan, Latif, and Noor (2025) argue that Names are among the earliest and most enduring symbols of identity. Across cultures, naming is a deeply embedded sociocultural act through which individuals are positioned in relation to religious, ethnic, ideological, and generational discourses. In Muslim societies, names often serve as expressions of Islamic devotion, cultural lineage, and spiritual intent in addition to personal recognition (Noor, Arslan, Latif, & Noor, 2025). In this context, the names of the prophets (peace be upon them) operate not merely as identifiers but as markers of devotion, moral alignment, and connection to Qurʾanic exemplars. This symbolic significance underscores the importance of examining the distribution, repetition, and salience of prophetic names within the Qurʾanic narrative, particularly when considering their representation in translation.

Corpus linguistics has become an increasingly popular method for studying the Qurʾan over the past two decades. Initiatives such as the Quranic Arabic Corpus (Dukes, 2010) provide annotations of words, roots, and named entities, allowing quantitative analysis of lexical frequency, syntactic structure, and semantic roles. Similarly, Boudlal et al. (2018) demonstrated that corpus-based tools can identify stylistic, rhetorical, and thematic features in religious texts, including repetition, clustering, and positional tendencies. Nevertheless, most corpus research focuses on the Arabic text; comparatively few studies examine English translations, where translation choices can affect the visibility, frequency, and distribution of prophetic names (Khan, 2017).

Frequency analysis as a primary tool of corpus linguistics has been applied to religious texts to identify narrative focus and thematic prominence. Kilgarriff (2001) argued that thematic significance is often reflected in word frequency, while Stubbs (2001) noted that word distribution can indicate narrative emphasis or rhetorical purpose. Abdul-Rahman (2015) applied this approach to Qurʾanic concepts such as mercy, punishment, and guidance, showing that repetition correlates with thematic salience. Applying similar methods to prophetic names allows researchers to determine which figures are central or episodic, and whether their mentions are clustered or dispersed. Concordance analysis and visualization further help classify occurrences as continuous, episodic, or localized (Biber et al., 1998).

1.2.Gap in Existing Literature

Although prophetic narratives in the Qurʾān have been extensively studied, a significant gap remains in the application of quantitative, corpus-based approaches to English translations. Previous research is predominantly Arabic-centric and qualitative, with limited attention to systematic

frequency and distributional analysis. Moreover, most studies focus on individual prophets rather than offering a comparative examination of all prophetic names. This absence of comprehensive, corpus-driven analysis in English translations represents a notable gap in the current scholarship.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative, corpus-based research design grounded in the principles of corpus linguistics. It investigates the frequency and distributional patterns of prophetic names in the English translation of the Holy Qurʾān. The quantitative approach enables an objective measurement of lexical occurrences, while corpus tools facilitate the analysis of frequency trends and positional distribution within the text. Patterns identified through computational analysis are often not readily observable through manual reading, highlighting the value of a corpus-based methodology.

3.2 Corpus Selection

The corpus is composed of an entire translation of the Holy Quran in the English language and contains about 1,032,764 characters. The reasons as to why this translation is selected as a standard one are that it is standardized, readily available, and can be analyzed systematically in terms of lexicon. Single translation would have methodological consistency and avoid differences in styles among translators.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was systematic and replicable. A comprehensive list of prophets' names was compiled based on references in the Qur'an. The spelling and orthography of each name were carefully verified in the selected English translation.

3.3.2 Correlation with the Arabic Quran.

To be textually faithful, the location of the names of prophets in the English version was made to match the location of their events in the Arabic Quran. All names added by the translator in an attempt to explain the meaning or the pronouns, especially those given in bracket were not counted in the analysis. This measure was so as to guarantee that the proper names of prophets in the corpus that are not explicitly stated in the Arabic version of the Quran were not included in the corpus in English.

For this purpose, the Arabic book *Al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras li-Alfāẓ al-Qurʾān* was consulted to verify authentic instances of prophetic names in the Arabic text. Additionally, Arabic online sources, including Maktaba Shamila, were used to cross-check these references and confirm their positional accuracy within the corpus.

3.3.3 Frequency Extraction

The frequency of prophetic names was extracted using corpus analysis software such as AntConc. The software generated raw frequency counts, concordance lines, and concordance plots, which were then used to conduct detailed frequency and distributional analyses.

3.4 Analytical Framework

The quantitative analysis is designed based on three research questions dimensions.

3.4.1. Frequency analysis

Frequency analysis was conducted by counting the number of occurrences of each prophet's name in the corpus to determine their relative lexical prominence. Based on frequency patterns, the prophets were classified into high-frequency figures (e.g., Moosa, Ibrahim), mid-frequency figures (e.g., Nooh, Yusuf, Adam), and low-frequency personalities (e.g., Idrees, Yasaʿ, Zul-Kifl). This classification reflects lexical prominence within the corpus only.

3.4.2. Distribution Analysis

The distribution of prophetic names in the Qurʾānic corpus was examined using concordance plots. Based on these plots, distributional patterns were classified as Continuous, Episodic, Localized, Front-Loaded, Late-Biased, and Episodic Low-Frequency. This analysis helps determine whether a prophet functions linguistically as a recurring reference throughout the text or primarily as a figure confined to specific narrative contexts. Additionally, cluster and gap analyses were conducted to identify sections with dense concentrations of mentions and extended gaps without references. These patterns were interpreted in terms of their linguistic and structural significance, rather than their theological meaning.

3.5 Visualization Techniques

The primary visualization tool used was concordance plots, which mapped every occurrence of a prophet's name throughout the corpus. These plots allowed for the identification of points of narrative focus, comparison of the distributional patterns of different prophets, and distinction between episodic and recurring figures. The interpretations were made following conventional corpus-based discourse analysis methods.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

The reliability and validity of the study were ensured through several measures: using a single, fixed corpus; correlating findings with the original Arabic Quran; applying standardized search parameters for all names; and manually verifying all frequency results. While the interpretations were primarily based on quantitative evidence, these steps enhance the transferability of the study.

4. Findings and Analysis

This paper examines the frequency and distribution of prophets' names in the English translation of the Holy Qur'an to understand the narrative focus, thematic prominence, and textual structure. Using the corpus of *The Treasure of Faith*, consisting of 1,032,764 characters, the names of twenty-six prophets were identified, and their frequencies recorded. Concordance plots were then generated to analyze the distribution of these mentions throughout the text.

4. 1. Frequency of Prophets' Names

The following table shows the frequency of all the names of prophets in the corpus:

Word List of the Names of the Prophets in the English Translation of the Holy Quran.		
S/N	Name	Frequency in Quran
1	Moosa (Moses)	136
2	Ibrahim	69
3	Nooh	43
4	Loot	27
5	Yusuf	27
6	Adam	25
7	'Eisa	25
8	Haaroon (Aaron)	20
9	Sulaimaan (Solomon)	17
10	Is-haaq	17
11	Dawood (David)	16
12	Ya'qoob	16
13	Isma'eel	12
14	Shu'ayb	11

| 15	**Saalih**	9
16	**Zakariyya**	7
17	**Hood**	7
18	**Yahya**	5
19	**Muhammad**	4
20	**Yunus**	4
21	**Ayyoob**	4
22	**Idrees**	2
23	**Yasa'**	2
24	**Ilyaas**	2
25	**Zul-Kifl**	2
26	**'Uzair**	2
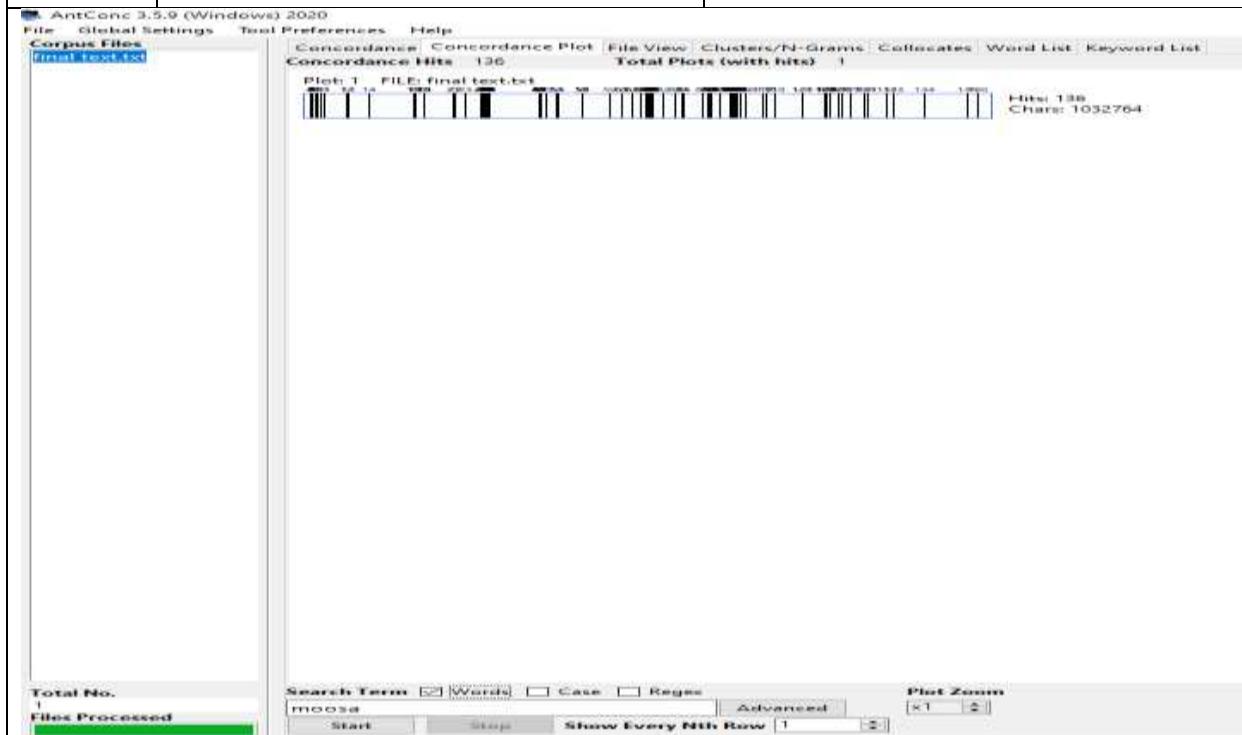
4. 2.1. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Moosa (peace be upon him) occurs 136 times in the corpus. Its distribution is continuous, with no prolonged gaps and several dense clusters throughout the text. Based on these frequency counts and distribution patterns, The Name of Moosa (peace be upon him) can be regarded as a central and repeatedly referenced figure in the Quranic corpus according to quantitative evidence alone.
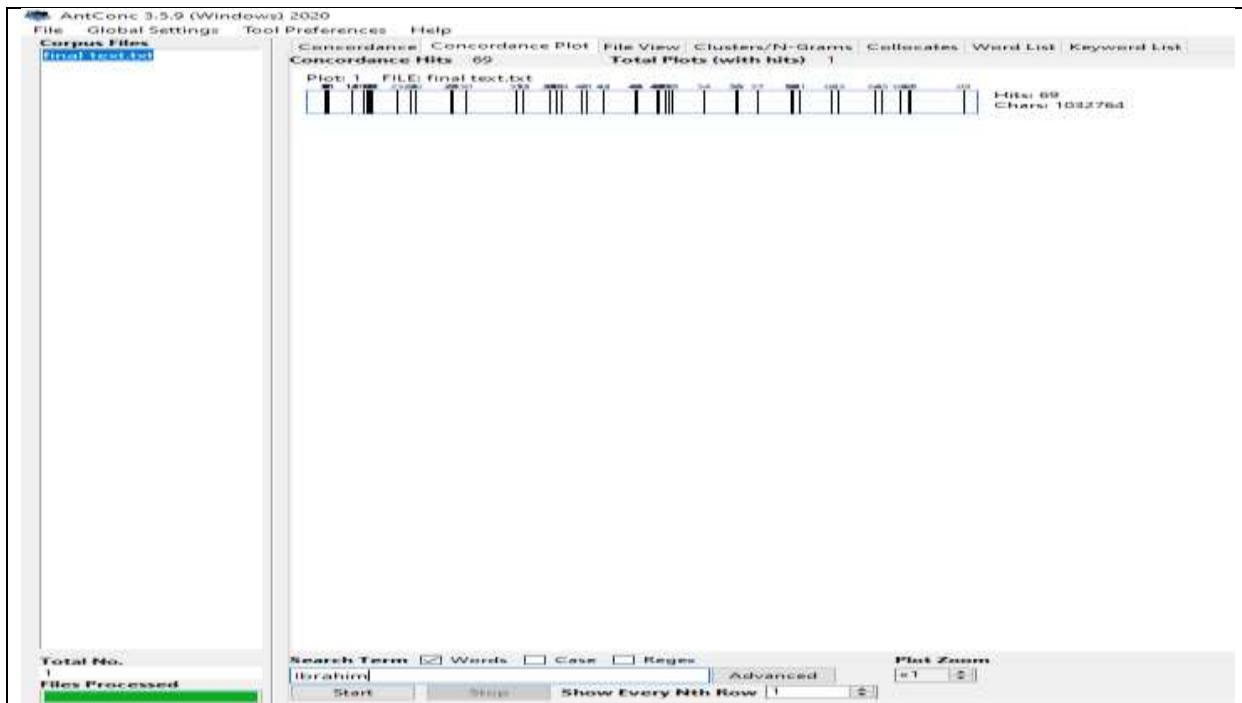
4. 2.2. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) appears 69 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic-continuous, characterized by a widespread presence throughout the text that is punctuated by distinct dense clusters and intermediate intervals. This pattern indicates that while the name of Hazrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) is a significant and recurring figure according to the frequency data, his mentions are somewhat more concentrated in specific narrative sections rather than being uniformly distributed across the entire corpus.
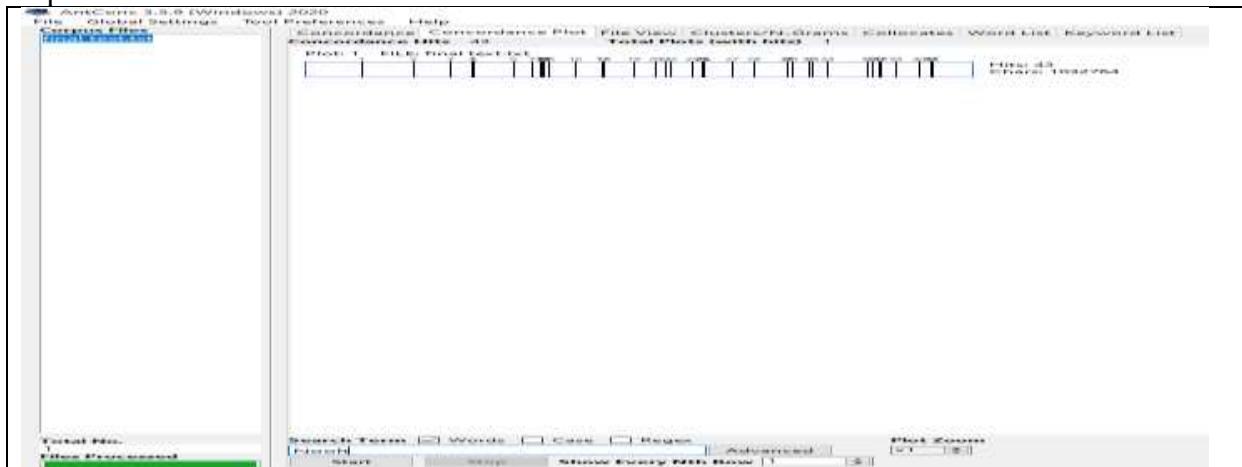
4. 2.3. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Nooh (peace be upon him) occurs 43 times in the corpus. His mentions are episodic, appearing at specific points in the text with intervals between occurrences. Based on the frequency and distribution patterns, the name of Hazrat Nooh (peace be upon him) can be seen

as a recurring figure at definite moments, contributing to episodic narrative meaning rather than appearing consistently throughout the corpus.
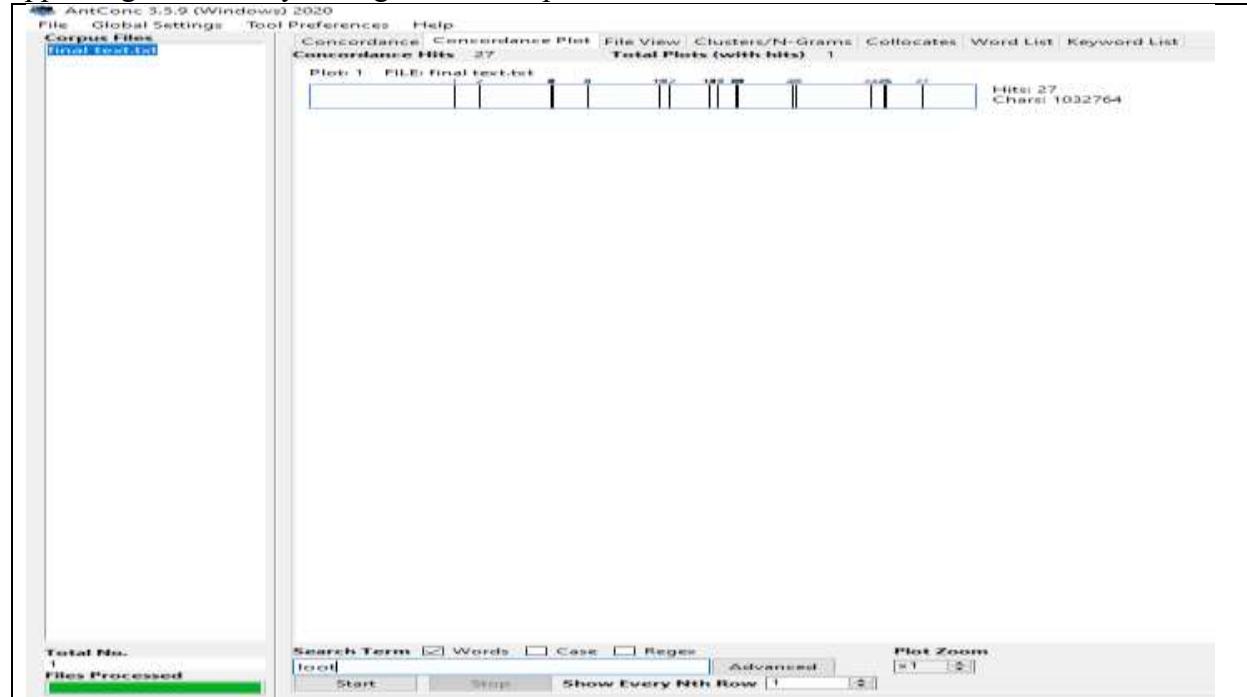

4. 2.4. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Loot (peace be upon him) occurs 27 times in the corpus. His mentions appear at the beginning, middle, and end of the corpus, with large gaps between clusters. Based on the frequency and distribution patterns, the name of Hazrat Loot (peace be upon him) is referenced in specific sections, reflecting a narrative structure that relies on distinct episodes rather than a continuous thread throughout the corpus.
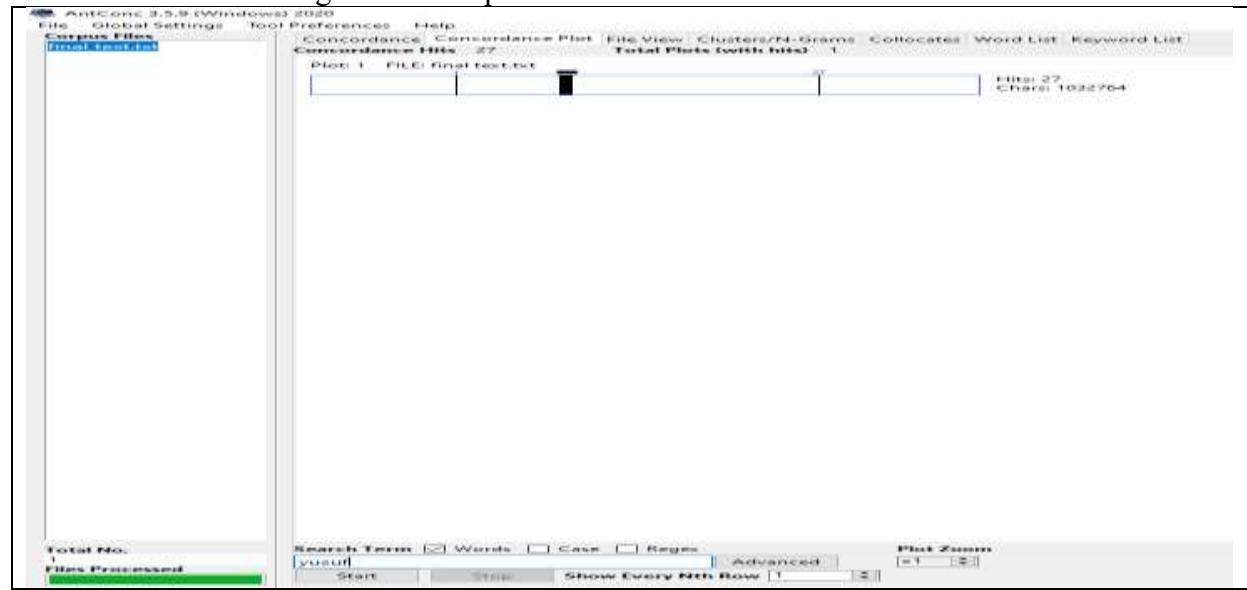
4. 2.5. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) occurs 27 times in the corpus. His mentions are highly localized, appearing as a single dense block in the central portion of the corpus. Based on these frequency and distribution patterns, Yusuf appears in one specific narrative section, reflecting a localized episodic meaning.
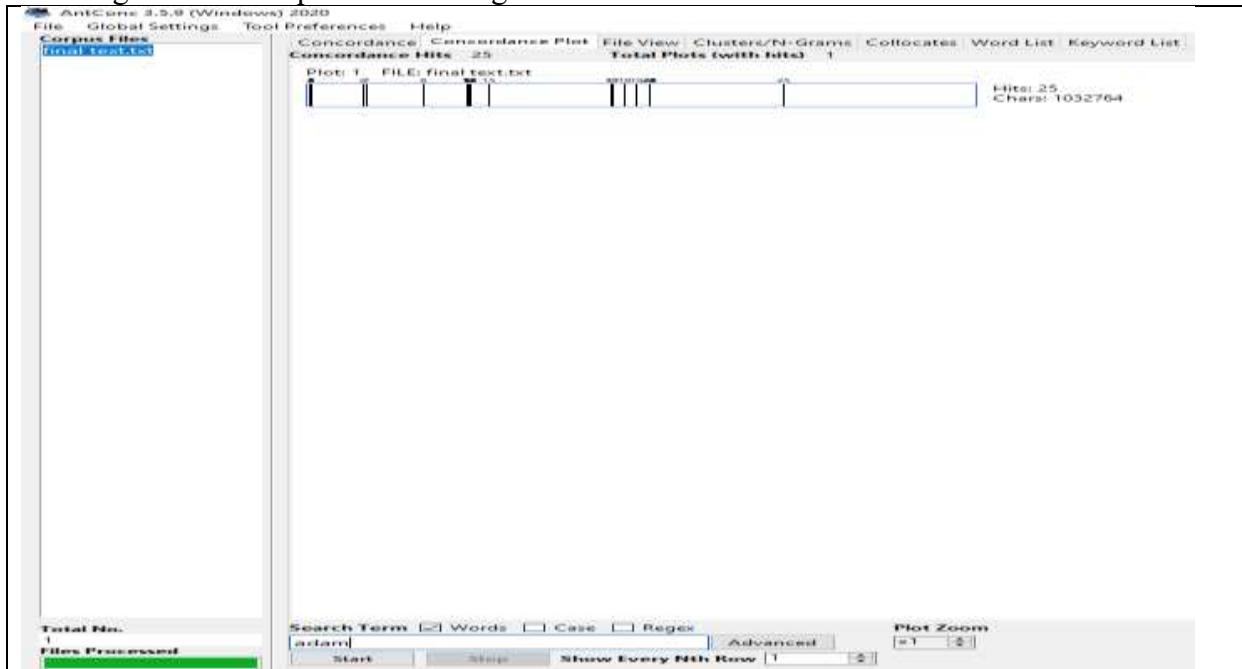
4. 2.6. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) appears 25 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is front-loaded, as mentions are confined exclusively to the first half of the text. This specific episodic pattern identifies Adam (peace be upon him) as a foundational figure; his presence establishes key themes at the beginning of the narrative but does not recur continuously throughout the remainder of the corpus.
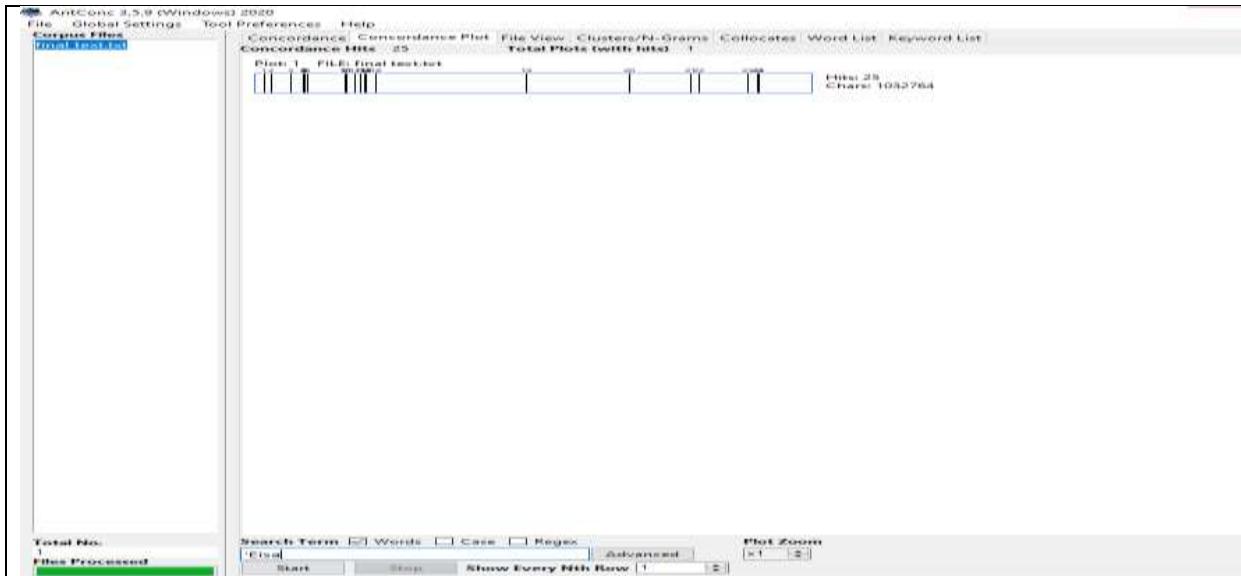
4. 2.7. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Eisa (peace be upon him) appears 25 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic or discontinuous, characterized by distinct clusters in the earlier sections, followed by significant gaps and only rare occurrences towards the end of the text. This pattern indicates a strong initial emphasis on his narrative presence, which diminishes rather than recurring continuously across the remainder of the corpus.


4. 2.8. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Haaroon (peace be upon him) appears 20 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as mid-centric or episodic, characterized by a heavy concentration in the middle sections of the text, with mentions being scattered or non-existent elsewhere. This pattern indicates that Haaroon (peace be upon him) appears in isolated bursts,

signifying that his narrative role is primarily focused within the central portion of the corpus rather than being evenly sustained.

4. 2.9. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Sulaimaan (peace be upon him) appears 17 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by minimal mentions that are predominantly located in the later sections of the text. This pattern suggests that Sulaimaan (peace be upon him) appears sporadically, with the narrative focus emerging in the subsequent parts of the corpus rather than maintaining a constant or continuous representation.
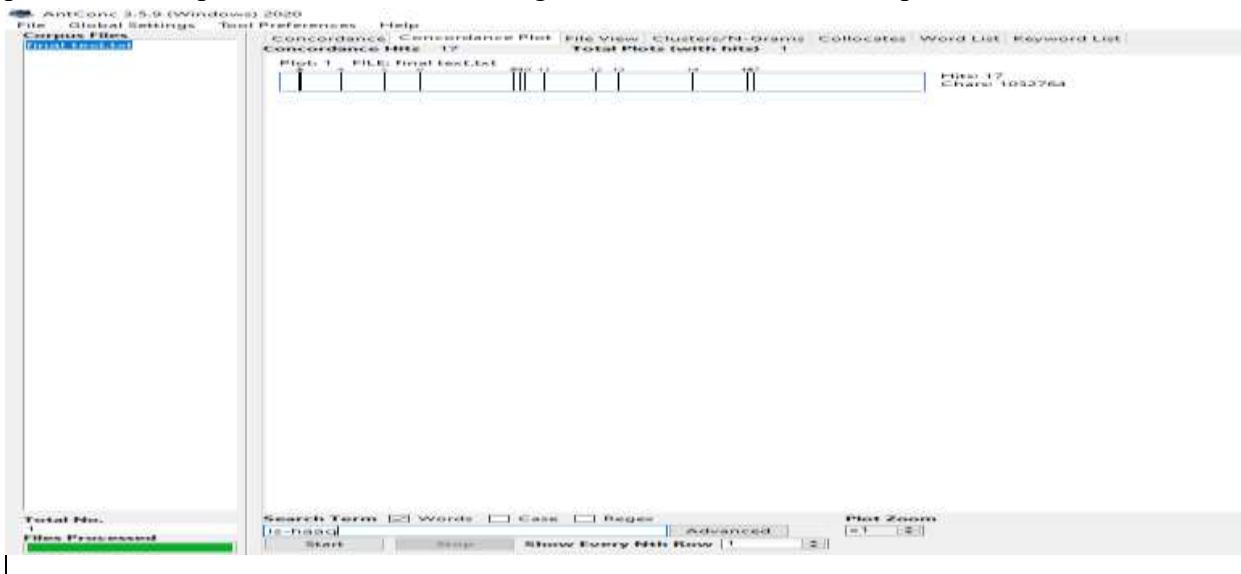
4. 2.10. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Isḥāq (Isaac) (peace be upon him) appears 17 times in the corpus. The distribution of these occurrences is episodic and mid-centric, with mentions concentrated mainly

in the middle sections of the text and relatively fewer references toward the beginning and the end. This uneven distribution indicates that the proper name Isḥāq does not function as a continuously recurring reference but appears primarily within specific narrative units. Quantitatively, this pattern reflects an episodic, mid-centric distribution rather than a uniform spread across the corpus.

4. 2.11. Quantitative Analysis

The concordance analysis shows that the name Dāwūd (David) occurs 16 times in the Qurʾānic corpus, indicating a relatively low lexical frequency. These occurrences are unevenly distributed and clustered in specific sections rather than spread uniformly throughout the text. The concordance plot confirms an episodic, section-specific pattern, suggesting that Dāwūd functions as an episodic narrative figure rather than a continuous thematic presence. This finding reinforces the distinction between frequency and narrative function, demonstrating that prophetic significance is reflected not only in how often a name appears but also in where and how it is distributed within the text. The observed pattern reflects textual organization and discourse strategy rather than theological hierarchy.
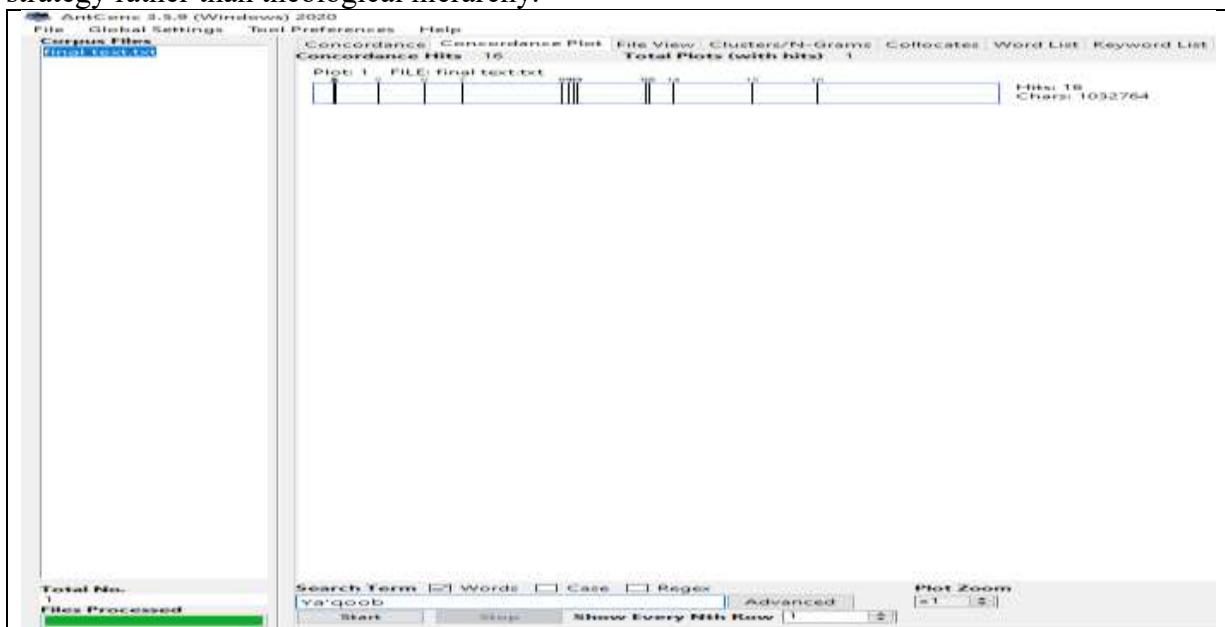
4. 2.12. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Yaqoob (peace be upon him) appears 16 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic and mid-centric, characterized by a primary concentration in the middle of the text, followed by only occasional references in subsequent sections. This pattern indicates that the narrative focus on Yaqoob (peace be upon him) is strongest in the central parts of the corpus, with his presence becoming less frequent rather than recurring consistently in the later stages of the text.
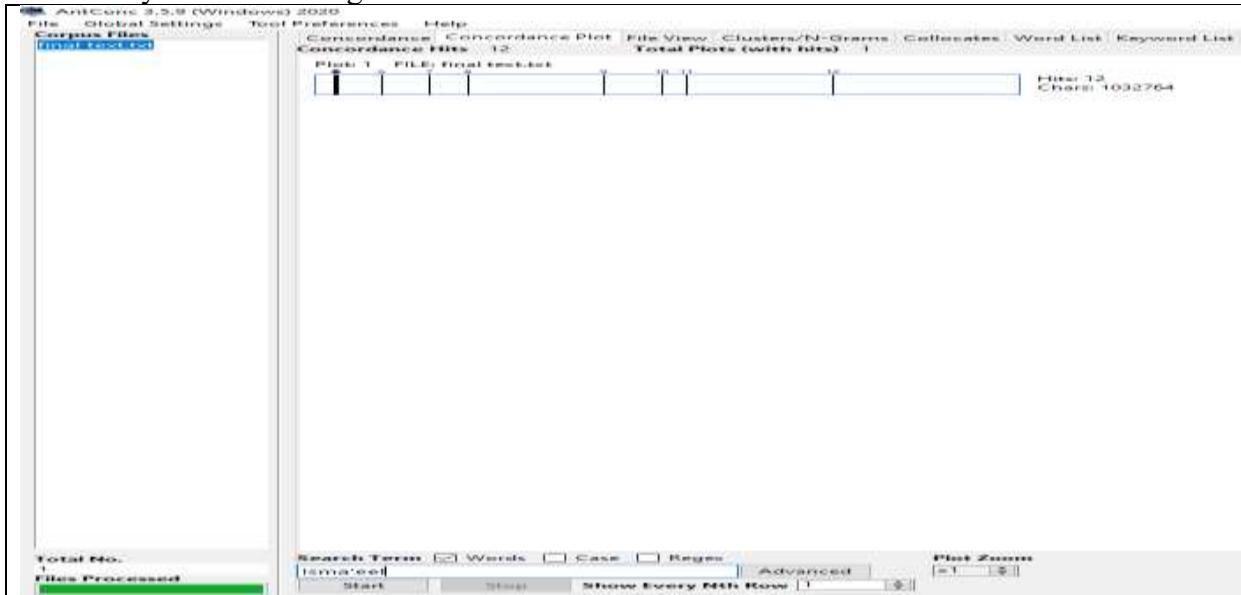
4. 2.13. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Isma'eel (peace be upon him) appears 12 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by sparse mentions located primarily at the beginning of the text and, to a limited extent, in the middle, with a complete absence in the final sections. This pattern indicates that the name of Isma'eel (peace be upon him) functions as a supporting episodic figure, serving mainly as a historical or genealogical reference rather than a central narrative focus throughout the corpus.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265

JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

Vol.8. No.4.2025

JOURNAL OF APPLIED
LINGUISTICS AND
TESOL

JALT
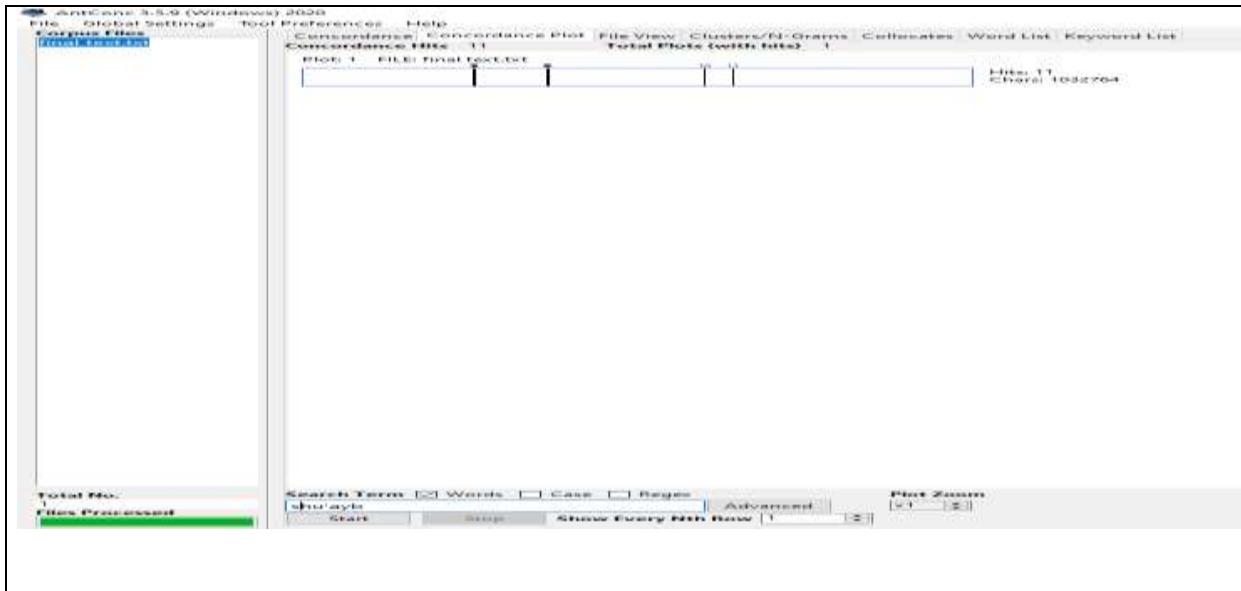
4. 2.14. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Shu'ayb (peace be upon him) appears 11 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic and mid-centric, characterized by mentions that are contained almost exclusively within the central portion of the text. This pattern indicates that Shu'ayb (peace be upon him) represents a specific episodic occurrence, with the narrative focus strictly limited to the middle sections of the corpus rather than appearing throughout.

4. 2.15. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Saalih (peace be upon him) appears 9 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by a mid-line presence where mentions are strictly limited to the middle third of the text. This pattern indicates that Saalih (peace be upon him) functions as a localized episodic figure, with his narrative role restricted to particular short episodes rather than a widespread recurrence.
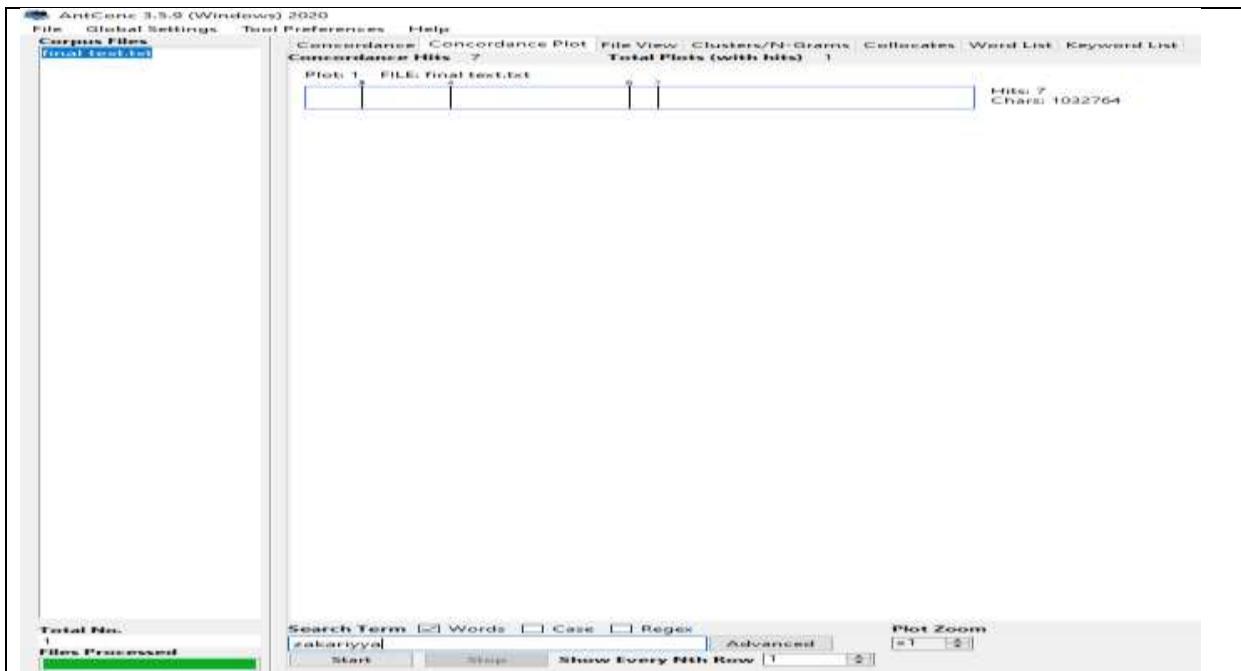
4. 2.16. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Zakariyya (peace be upon him) appears 7 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by a scarcity of mentions that appear in two distinct, short windows during the first part of the text. This pattern identifies Zakariyya (peace be upon him) as a marginal, historical or supporting episodic character, whose presence is intermittent rather than continuous or central to the overall narrative structure.
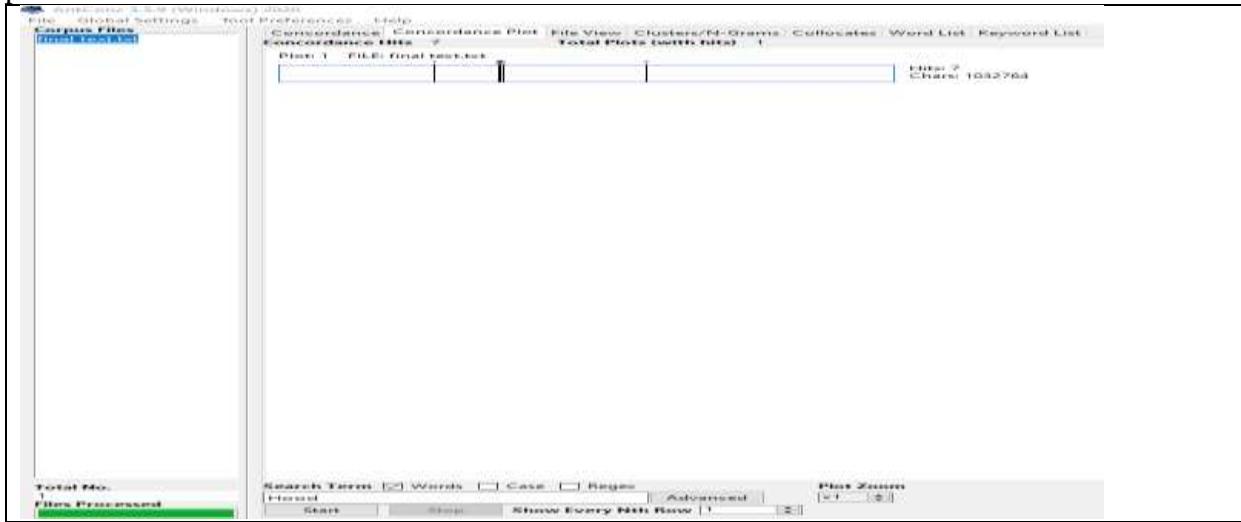
4. 2.17. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Hood (peace be upon him) appears 7 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by a centralized presence that is limited specifically to the third part of the text. This pattern indicates that Hood (peace be upon him) functions in an episodic manner, with references concentrated within a distinct narrative section rather than being dispersed throughout the corpus.
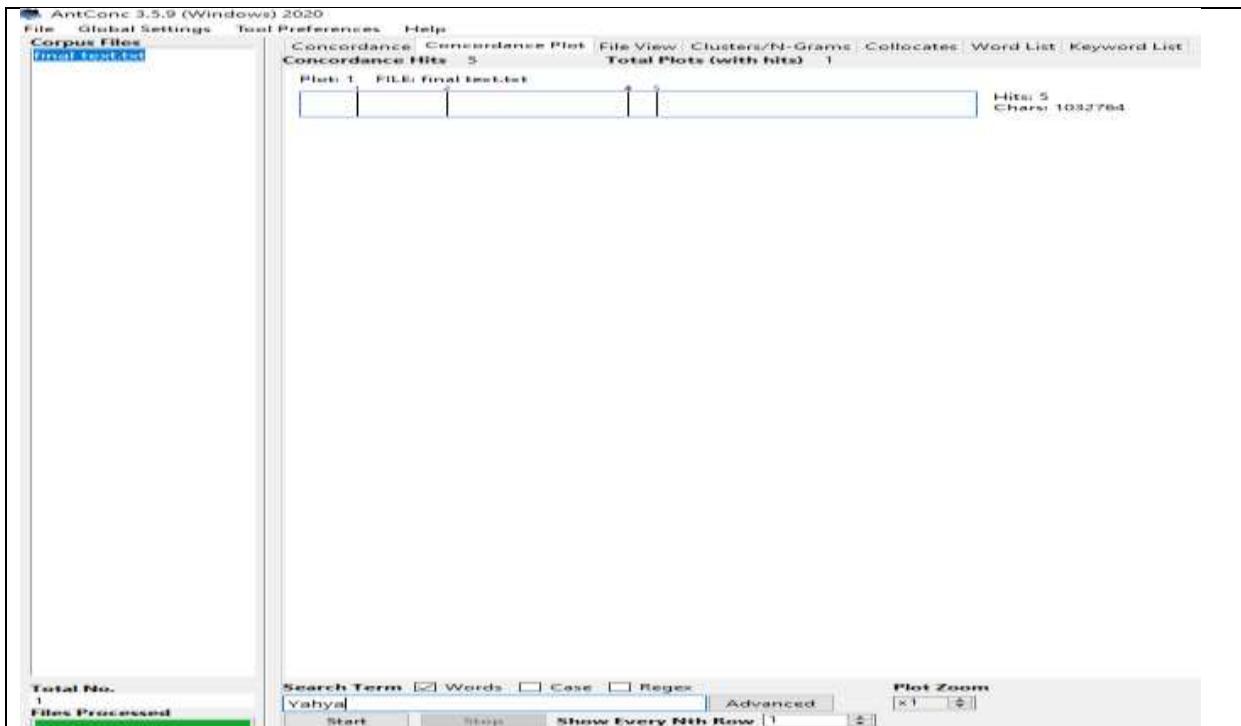
4. 2.18. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Yahya (peace be upon him) appears 5 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by scarce and fragmentary mentions located primarily in the beginning and middle sections of the text. This pattern indicates that Yahya (peace be upon him) appears sporadically, serving largely as a reference for brief narration or illustration rather than a sustained thematic presence.
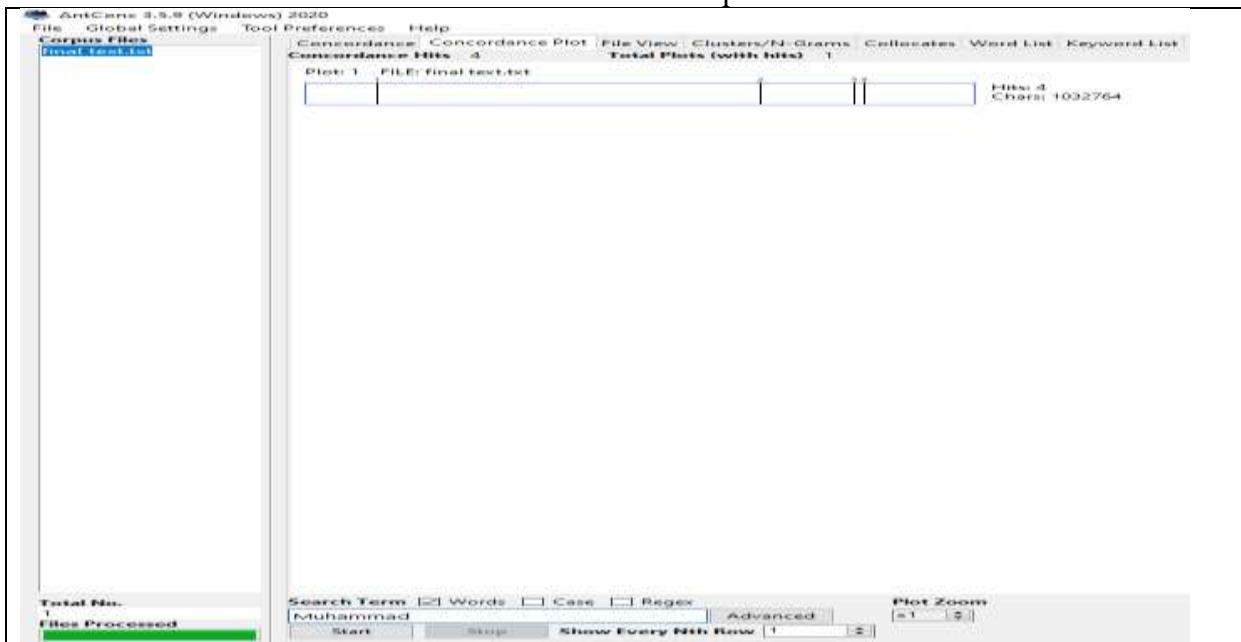
4. 2.19. Quantitative Analysis

The explicit proper name of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) appears four times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is episodic, characterized by highly scattered mentions occurring only in the beginning and middle sections, with no direct references to the name Muhammad in the remaining portions of the text. This pattern indicates that while the explicit proper name is used infrequently, it represents a specific stylistic choice, as the Prophet is frequently addressed throughout the corpus by other titles and honorifics rather than his proper name.

4. 2.20. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Yunus (peace be upon him) appears four times in the corpus. Its distribution is episodic, with mentions occurring infrequently and at specific points rather than throughout the text. All references are located in the main body, with none in the final third, indicating that his presence is intermittent. This pattern suggests that Prophet Yunus functions primarily in a narrative or illustrative capacity within particular sections, rather than as a central or recurring figure across the corpus.
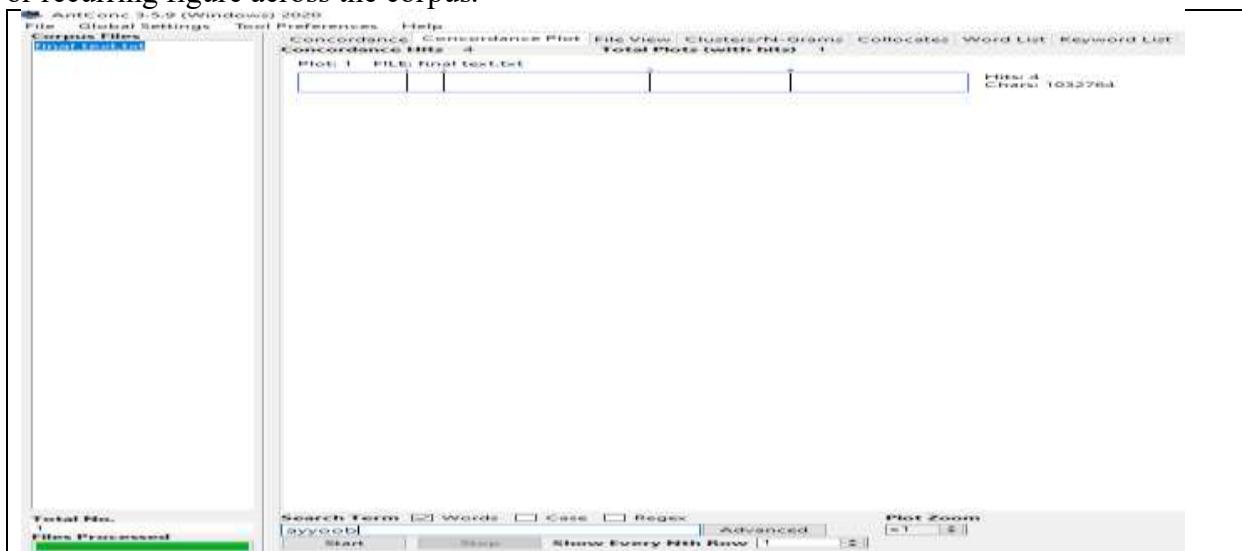
4. 2.21. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Ayyoob (peace be upon him) appears 4 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by minimal mentions that occur periodically in the initial and central parts of the text, while being entirely absent from the final section. Based on these frequency and distribution patterns, Ayyoob is referenced primarily for illustrative or referential purposes within the narrative.
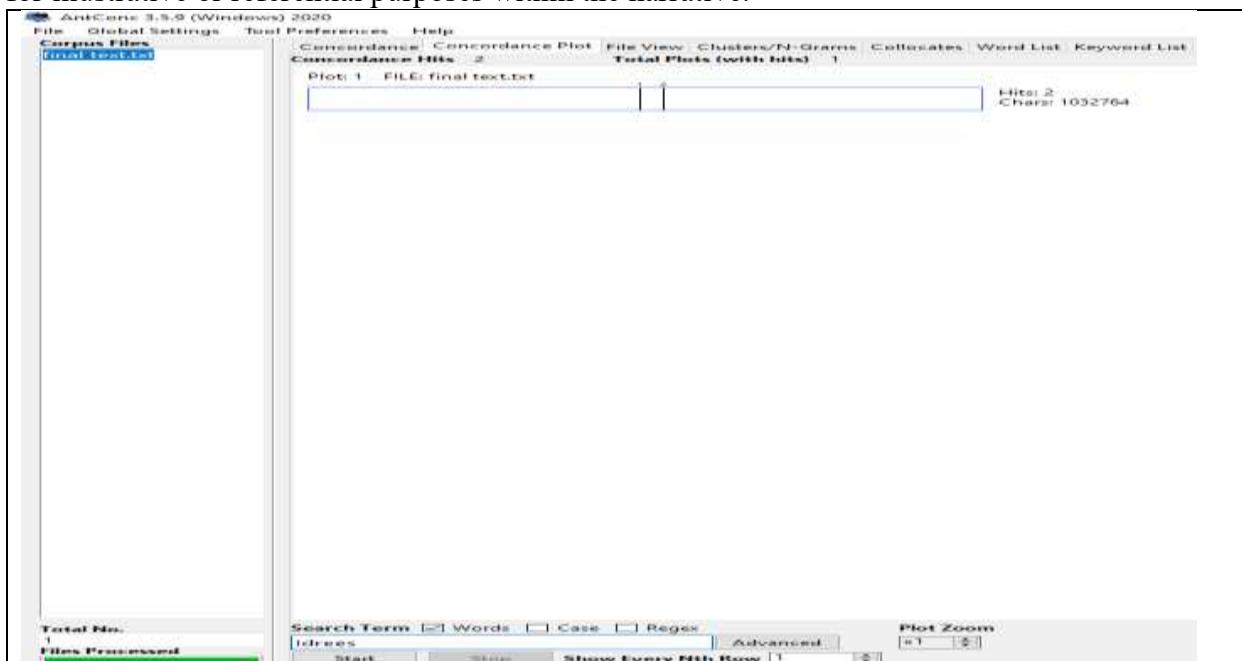

4. 2.22. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Idrees (peace be upon him) occurs twice in the corpus. Its distribution is episodic, with extremely sparse mentions, including isolated references in the middle of the text and no repetition elsewhere. These frequency and distribution patterns indicate that Idrees appears only transiently, serving primarily as an illustrative or referential figure, with minimal narrative presence.
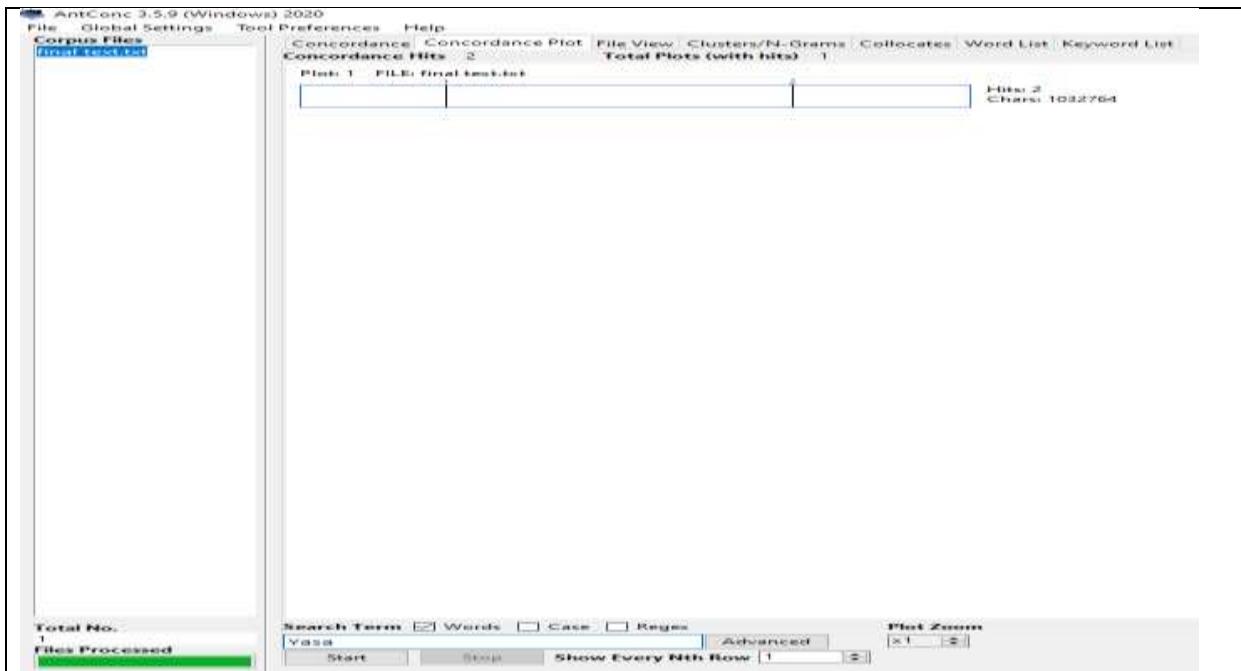
4. 2.23. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Yasaʿ (peace be upon him) appears twice in the corpus. Its distribution is episodic, with extremely sparse mentions occurring exclusively in the early and late parts of the middle section. These frequency and distribution patterns indicate that Yasaʿ does not hold a sustained place in the narrative, functioning instead as a brief, illustrative, or referential figure.
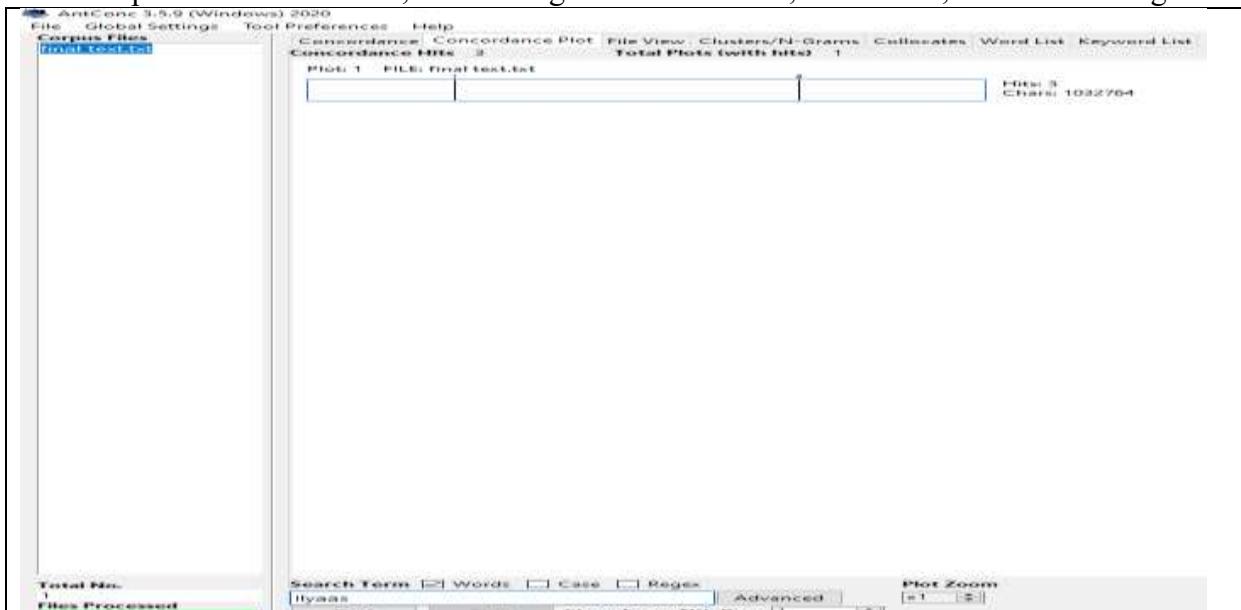
4. 2.24. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Ilyaas (peace be upon him) appears three times in the corpus. Its distribution is episodic, with mentions occurring at the beginning and end of the middle section, separated by a substantial gap, while remaining absent from the opening and final sections of the

text. This pattern indicates that Ilyaas is employed in an episodic manner, serving specific illustrative or thematic purposes in distinct locations rather than maintaining a continuous narrative presence.
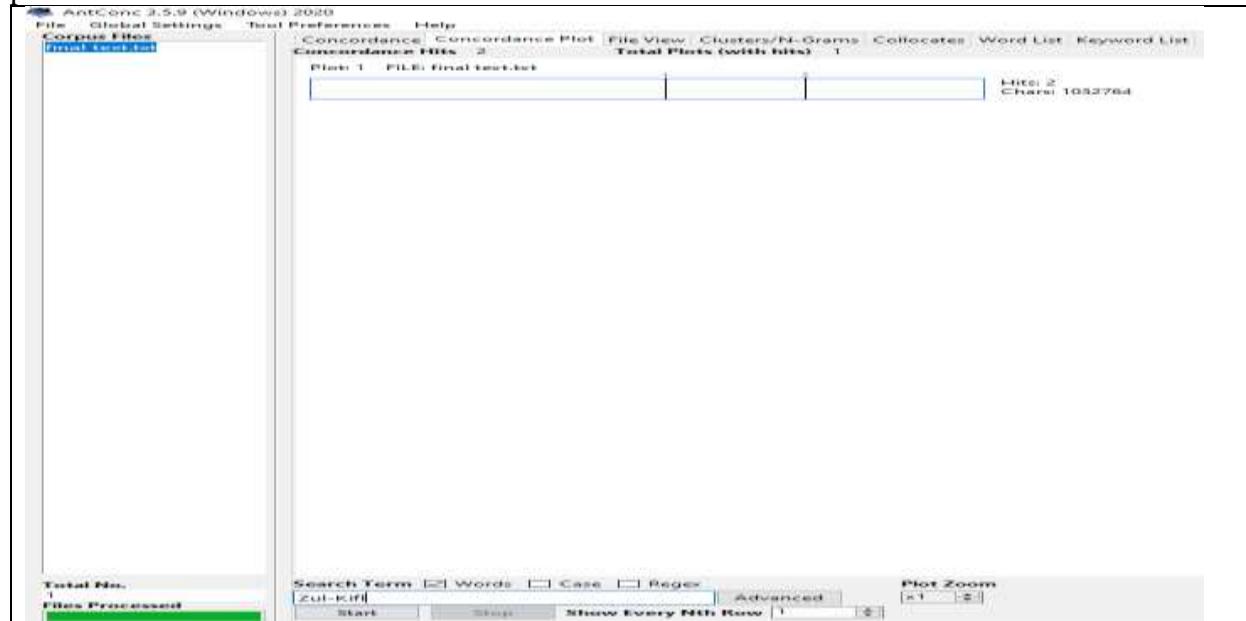
4. 2.25. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet Zul-Kifl (peace be upon him) appears 2 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by scarce mentions that are exclusively located in the later sections of the text, with no occurrences in the preceding parts. This pattern suggests that Zul-Kifl (peace be upon him) functions as a brief narrative figure, appearing only in the final stages of the corpus rather than maintaining a sustained presence.
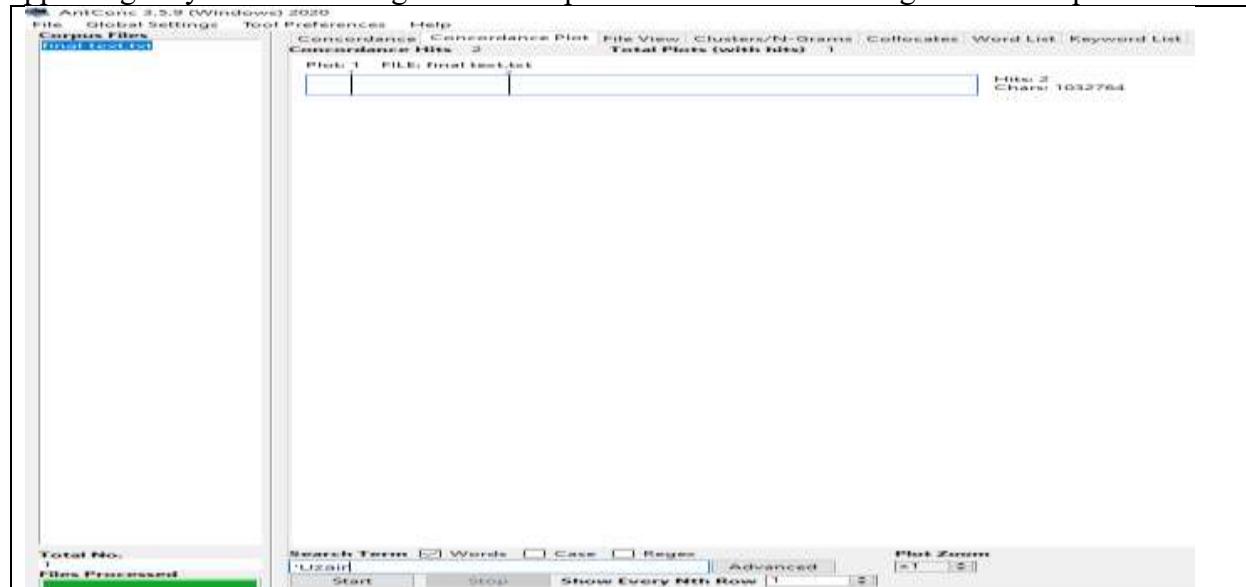
4. 2.26. Quantitative Analysis

The name of Prophet ʿUzair (peace be upon him) appears 2 times within the corpus. The distribution of these references is classified as episodic, characterized by scarce mentions that are confined exclusively to the initial section of the text, with no recurrence in the remainder of the corpus. This pattern indicates that ʿUzair (peace be upon him) functions as an isolated, brief mention, appearing within a specific context without featuring in the ongoing or continuous narrative.

4.3. Key Findings

4.3.1. Continuous / Central Figures

Mūsā (Moses) is mentioned 136 times, making him the most frequently occurring prophets's names in the corpus. His name appears consistently throughout the text and in high concentrations. This centrality and repetition are clearly observable through concordance plots, which show sustained distribution across the entire corpus.

Ibrāhīm appears 69 times. Although his frequency is substantial, the distribution is characterized by noticeable clustering and intermediate spacing. This pattern indicates a significant recurring presence, though not a continuous one across all sections of the corpus.

4.3.2. Episodic Figures

Prophets such as Nūḥ (43 mentions), Lūṭ (27), ʿĪsā (25), Hārūn (20), and Isḥāq (17) display episodic distribution. Their names occur at specific points rather than being evenly spread across the corpus. Mentions are often mid-centric, front-loaded, or discontinuous, with narratives focused on particular sections.

Examples include:

Nūḥ: Mentions are separated by intervals, indicating an episodic pattern.

Lūṭ: Appears at the beginning, middle, and end of the corpus with noticeable interruptions, reflecting episodic distribution.

ʿĪsā: Exhibits early and late clustering, resulting in a discontinuous episodic pattern.

4.3.3. Localized Figures

Prophets such as Yūsuf (27 mentions) and Shuʿayb (11) are highly localized, occurring within very limited textual blocks. Their narrative roles are both episodic and confined to specific sections. Prophets with very low frequency of occurrence, including Idrīs (2), al-Yasaʿ (2), Dhū al-Kifl (2), and ʿUzayr (2), occur so infrequently that they function primarily as referential or illustrative mentions.

4.3.4. Front-Loaded and Late-Biased Patterns

Ādam (25 mentions): His appearances are restricted to the early portions of the corpus, indicating a front-loaded pattern and establishing his foundational role.

Sulaymān (17 mentions): His name appears predominantly in later sections, reflecting a late-biased episodic pattern.

4.3.5. Episodic Low-Frequency Figures

Prophets with relatively low frequency such as Dāwūd (16), Yaʿqūb (16), Ismāʿīl (12), Hūd (7), Zakariyyā (7), Yaḥyā (5), Yūnus (4), Ayyūb (4), and Muḥammad (4) (peace be upon them) occur episodically, with their mentions clustered within specific narrative units or illustrative contexts. Notably, the proper name Muḥammad appears only four times, despite frequent references through titles, descriptions, and pronouns.

4.4. Summary of Distributional Patterns

A comparison of distributional patterns across different sections of the corpus reveals three primary types of prophetic name distribution, as evidenced by concordance plots:

Continuous / Central Figures

- Example: Mūsā
- Characterized by extensive and frequent references throughout the corpus.

Section-Specific / Episodic Figures

- Examples: Ibrāhīm, Nūḥ, Hārūn, Isḥāq, ʿĪsā (peace be upon them)
- Mentions are clustered, intermittent, and concentrated in particular sections.

Referential (Localized) Figures

- Examples: Yūsuf, Shuʿayb, Idrīs, Dhū al-Kifl, ʿUzayr (peace be upon them)
- Appear sporadically, usually confined to a single narrative block or brief illustrative reference.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

This study examined the frequency and distributional patterns of prophets' names in the English translation of the Qurʾān (The Treasure of Faith), using a corpus-based quantitative approach. Frequency counts and concordance plots were employed to analyze the distribution of prophets'names across the corpus.

The findings demonstrate a highly uneven frequency distribution. Certain prophets, particularly Mūsā (136 mentions) and Ibrāhīm (peace be upon them) (69 mentions), occur with high frequency and exhibit sustained presence, indicating their central narrative roles. In contrast, several prophets appear with very low frequency, functioning primarily in referential or illustrative contexts rather than as recurring narrative participants.

Concordance analysis further shows that prophetic names are not evenly distributed throughout the corpus. Instead, they follow identifiable positional patterns, including front-loaded, mid-centric, and late-biased distributions. These patterns suggest that prophetic references are strategically positioned to support specific themes and narrative purposes.

Overall, three principal distributional types were identified: continuous/central, episodic/section-specific, and localized/referential distributions. A notable observation concerns the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), whose proper name occurs only four times despite his thematic centrality. However, he is frequently referred to through other titles, honorifics, and attributive names, highlighting a clear distinction between lexical frequency and thematic importance.

In sum, the study shows that frequency and distributional patterns reflect narrative organization and thematic structuring rather than hierarchy or rank. It also confirms the value of corpus-based methods in expressing structural and discourse-level features of religious texts.

5.2. Recommendations

5.2.1. Inclusion of Titles and Honorifics: Future studies could incorporate prophetic titles, attributes, and descriptive allusions to provide a more comprehensive assessment of narrative prominence, particularly in the case of Hazrat Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him).

5.2.2. Surah-Based or Thematic Analysis: Future research may examine the distribution of prophetic names within individual surahs or thematic divisions (e.g., Meccan vs. Medinan), which can reveal links between narrative mention and thematic development.

5.2.3. Integration of Qualitative Approaches: Future research may combine corpus-based analysis with qualitative discourse or stylistic approaches to provide deeper insights into narrative strategies and rhetorical focus.

5.2.4. Cross-Scriptural Expansion: This methodology can be applied to other Islamic texts, such as Hadith collections, for comparative studies of narrative prominence.

5.2.5. Pedagogical Applications: Corpus-based findings can inform curriculum design, translation training, and teaching of Qurʾānic exegesis, enhancing understanding of narrative organization and thematic focus.

References

1. Al-Quran
2. l-Khaṭīb at-Tibrīzī, W. A. A. ʿA. M. ibn ʿA. A. (Year). Mishkat al-Masabih. al-Bushra
3. Abdel Haleem, M. A. S. (2004). *The Qurʾān* (New translation). Oxford University Press. (Oxford World's Classics)
4. Al-Azami, A. M. (2003). *Ajaʾib al-Qurʾān wa gharāʾib al-Qurʾān*. Karachi: Maktabat al-Madinah.
5. Al-Ṭabarī, M. ibn J. *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*. Markaz al-Buhooth wal Diraasaat al-'Arabiyyah wal-Islamiyyah.
6. Azami, M. A. A. (2012). *Bahar e Shariat (v.1)*. Karachi: Maktabatul Madinah.
7. Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use. Cambridge University Press.
8. Hamidi, M. A. N. (2023). *Tafseer Miftaah-ul-Ihsaan*. Karachi: Maktabatul Madinah.
9. Hamidi, M. A. N. (2023). *Welcome to Islam*. Karachi: Maktabatul Madinah.
10. Hamidi, M. A. N. (Trans.). (2022). *The Treasure of Faith* [English translation of Kanz-ul-Iman, an Urdu translation of the Qur'an by Ahmad Raza Khan]. Karachi: Maktabatul Madinah.
11. Ibn Kathīr, I. (1988). *Qasasul Anbiya* (The Stories of the Prophets). Maktabah al-Talib al-Jam 'ee Karachi: Makka tul Mukkramah.
12. Ibn Kathīr, I. (2003). *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (D. S. Ahmad, Trans.). Darussalam.
13. Ilyas, Q. (Trans.). (2022). *The clear criterion* [English translation of *Kanzul Irfan maa' Ifhaam al-Qur'an*, Urdu translation by Mufti Muhammad Qasim]. Karachi: Maktabatul Madinah.
14. Kilgarriff, A. (2001). *Comparing corpora*. International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 6(1), 97–133.
15. Nasr, S. H. (2004). *The heart of Islam*: Enduring values for humanity. HarperSanFrancisco.
16. Noor, H., Arslan, M. F., Latif, T., & Noor, N. (2025). Transition in naming practices: A diachronic socio-onomastic exploration of Pakistani trends across generations. *Journal of Asian Development Studies, 14*(2), 323–341.
17. Qasim, M. M. (2020). *Seerat ul Anbiyaa.* Karachi: Maktabatul Madinah.
18. Rahman, F. (1980). *Major themes of the Quran*. University of Chicago Press.
19. Sardar, Z. (2011). *Reading the Qurʾan*: The contemporary relevance of the sacred text of Islam. Oxford University Press.
20. Sikandar, N., Umar, U. F., Arslan, M. F., & Faizullah. (2024). An examination of naming conventions and linguistic structures across diverse cultures: A cross-linguistic perspective. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, 7(4), 784–798.
21. Stubbs, M. (2001). *Words and phrases*: Corpus studies of lexical semantics. Blackwell.