The Meaning of Word "al-Nisa" in Toshihiko Izutsu's Perspective of Semantic

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Abstract: The word *al-Nisa* is often only understood with the meaning of women/female without an understanding that actually the word *al-Nisa* and its derivation there is a category of meaning that is ignored (distortion). This study aims to discuss the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* in Al-Quran especially in Surah an-Nisa. The data used are the verses in surah an-Nisa. This research used Izutsu semantic analysis method. The results of this study revealed that the word *al-Nisa* has two forms in surah an-Nisa, namely *Imra'ah* or *Mar'ah*, and *Al-untsa*. Syntagmatically, the word *al-Nisa* always encompasses one meaning, namely women, who have female gender. In the term of paradigmatic, the word *al-Nisa* has the synonymity with the words *Imra'ah* or *Mar'ah,* and *Al-untsa*. Whereas the antonymity of that word is with *rijal* (male), or ruler. This word was understood as being helpless, weak and oppressed in pre-Qur'anic period. In Al-Qur'anic period, this word was conceived of as a type of gender that is recognized and has an honorable and noble position and has rights as well as men would have. The results of this study are also an effort to find *weltanschauung* conceptual understanding of the meaning of the word *al-Nisa*, so the word *al-Nisa* would not be distorted. It has the evidence that the word *al-Nisa* does not only distinguish between men and women. Nonetheless, the distinction is only in the terms of function which is conditional.

Introduction

Al-Qur'an is as a holy book that is used as a guide of Muslims' life. It always attracts human attention to understand the meaning and message contained in it. Al-Qur'an as the main source of Islamic teachings does not discuss a problem systematically as other scientific creation composed by humans, Al-Qur'an discusses a problem globally, partially and presents a problem in basic principles and outlines. In this context, there is always an effort to understand the meaning of Al-Qur'an along with the needs

and problems are faced by human being or as known as *tafsir* (interpretation).[1] For the record, in understanding Al-Qur'an, the interpreters of Al-Qur'an use different approaches in interpreting Al-Qur'an. In this term, there is a possibility that different approaches to interpretation emerge that are suitable with the development of science and technology.[2] These different approaches cause them not to be able to produce a totality of cohesive and meaningful understanding for life as a whole and their interpretations have not been able to be the best solution for Muslims' life.

In understanding the meaning of Al-Qur'an, according to Hamidi[3] in his research entitled *"Pemikiran Toshihiko Izutsu Tentang Semantik Al-Qur'an"* (Toshihiko Izutsu's Thoughts on Semantics of Al-Qur'an) states that there are differences in the quality level of society (Arabic) in understanding the meaning and sentences that exist in the verses of Al-Qur'an. There are some of them who can easily understand or interpret the meaning of words and sentences in Al-Qur'an. Contrariwise, there are other groups that found it difficult to know the meaning. The mistaken interpretations of words can lead to the mistaken of other words. Fachrurrozi in Ismail[4] states that in order to analyze (read: interpret) the text of the holy book (Al-Qur'an), it is necessary to consider the aspects of the meaning that encompass it due to the meaning that cannot be separated from our understanding of the text and context. According to Izutsu[5], a new perspective is necessary in dealing with the problems faced by Muslims.

As the response to the problems above, a reconstruction of interpretation is needed by using theories and methodology out of the classical methodology used by classical interpreters. Just as the courage of modern Muslim and non-Muslim intellectuals by looking for the alternative interpretation methods with adapting the theories of interpretation developed in the Western tradition, such as the *adabī ijtimā'i* approach developed by Muhammad Abduh, the philological approach by Zamakhsyari as

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[1] Ismatilah, Ahmad Faqih Hasyim, And M. Maimun, "Makna Wali Dan Auliyā' Dalam Al-Qur'an (Suatu Kajian Dengan Pendekatan Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu)," *Diya Al-Afkar* 4, No. 02 (2016): 38–64, Https://Doi.Org/10.24235/Diyaafkar.V4i02.1144.

[2] Junizar Suratman, "Pendekatan Penanfisran Al-Qur'an Yang Didasarkan Pada Instrumen Riwayat, Nalar, Dan Isyarat Batin," *Intizar* 20, No. 1 (2014): 43–62.

[3] A Luthfi Hamidi, "Pemikiran Toshihiko Izutsu Tentang Semantik Al-Qur'an" (Uin Sunan Kalijaga, 2009), 2.

[4] Ecep Ismail, "Analisis Semantik Pada Kata Ahzāb Dan Derivasinya Dalam Al-Quran," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 1, No. 2 (2016): 139–48, Https://Doi.Org/Https://Doi.Org/10.15575/Al-Bayan.V1i2.1598.

[5] Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia: Pendekatan Semantik Terhadap Alquran*, Trans. Agus Fahri Husein Dkk. (Yogyakarta: Pt Tiara Wacana Yogya, 2003), 2.

what is developed by Amin al-Khuli, the contextual approach developed by Rahman, the anthropological approach developed by Arkoun, as well as the semantic analysis developed by lzutsu and others, is a sophisticated step that should be appreciated.[6]

In the perspective above, it is necessary to concern and adapt the methods of modern linguistic interpretation theory, such as semiotics, hermeneutics or semantics as an effort to enrich and complete the methods of reading and interpreting Al-Qur'an that is developing among Muslims nowadays. As an effort to understand the meaning of Al-Qur'an, according to Abu Zaid[7], there are two approaches used in interpreting it. *First,* Al-Qur'an is regarded from the origin of its existence, namely, God. *Second*, Al-Qur'an is regarded from the material facts in the form of certain sounds when read and in the form of letters in the form of writing. The first framework is theological, while the second is linguistic. Thus, Al-Qur'an can be observed from the theological and linguistic aspects.

One of the alternatives in interpreting Al-Qur'an is through linguistic studies by using one of branches of linguistics which is the Semantic analysis of Al-Qur'an. Unfortunately, if the method and approach by Izutsu are compared to the methods and approaches by orientalists and western islamologists, they are unfamiliar and lack of appreciation, so its use in interpreting Al-Qur'an and also critically examining it is not widely practiced. In fact, if it is examined further, semantic analysis is far more specific than hermeneetics and semiotics. Semantics is only related to the interpretation of linguistic signs, while semiotics is related to the interpretation of signs, both linguistic signs and non-linguistic signs.[8] Semantic analysis is only related to the interpretation of words, while hermeneutics, although initially used specifically for the benefit of the interpretation of the texts of holy book[9], but in subsequent developments related to the interpretation of linguistic symbols in general.[10]

Actually there are many things that can be done in an effort to find out the meaning of a foreign word, one of the simplest is to interpret the same word in the

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[6] Hamidi, "Pemikiran Toshihiko Izutsu Tentang Semantik Al-Qur'an," 6.

[7] N Hamid Abu Zaid, *Teks Otoritas Kebenaran*, Ed. Khairon Nahdliyin (Yogyakarta: Lkis. Algesindo, 2003), Vi.

[8] Hamidi, "Pemikiran Toshihiko Izutsu Tentang Semantik Al-Qur'an," 14.

[9] Putera Manuaba, "Hermeneutika Dan Interpretasi Sastra," *Fsu In The Limelight* 8, No. 1 (2001).

[10] Berthin Simega, "Hermeneutika Sebagai Interpretasi Makna Dalam Kajian Sastra," *Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 2, No. 1 (2013): 24–48.

language itself or according to Newmark (1988) in Trisnawati[11], the meaning of the can be known by interpreting the source language into the target language as intended by the writer of the source language. According to researcher, that action is unreliable and reckless and the conclusions can be misleading. For example, the word "*Jahiliyah*" is translated as "stupid", the similarity between "*Jahiliyah* = Stupid", if the listeners and readers acknowledge "stupid" as its meaning, there is no other way for them to learn the meaning of *Jahiliyah* more than putting it into the semantic category of "stupid" . They do not understand directly but the connotation of "stupid". Through the semantic category of the word "stupid" formed in such that way, the definition of the word itself is in the danger of distortion.

As in Izutsu's works on semantic analysis of Al-Qur'an, Izutsu holds that the phrase "Semantic Qur'an" must be understood only in *Weltanschauung* terms of the Alquran or the view of Qur'ani world itself. Izutsu lets "Al-Qur'an defines about itself". By "letting Al-Qur'an defines about itself", Izutsu is also considered to have done interpreting the *tafsīr bi al-ma'ṡūr* or the method of interpreting verse by verse which had first developed in the realm of interpretation science. It is different from the workings of the method of *tafsīr bi al-ma'ṡūr* which emphasizes the relation between its verses, the workings of the Izutsu Semantic analysis method emphasizes on the relation between the dominant key words in utterances of Al-Qur'an.

The word *al-Nisa* in the verse above means woman, but if we analyze using semantic science, then we will get another wider meaning. Regarding the verse explained by Umar[12] that the word *al-Nisa* has a basic meaning as 'woman'. In literal meaning, the word *al-Nisa* comes from the word *an-Niswah* means 'a woman'. The word *al-Nisa* has also become common knowledge among Islamic science which shows that what is meant is 'a woman', when someone said *al-Nisa*, then it can be understood directly, namely 'a woman'. Regarding the word *al-Nisa*, Umar in Samawiyah[13] defines it more specifically as quoted in the book *al-Mawrid* that al-Nisa sometimes means 'female

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[11] Ika Kana Trisnawati And Syamsul Bahri, "Strategi Penerjemahan Teks Bahasa Inggris Kebahasa Indonesiacalon Mahasiswa Magister Dalam Ujian Masuk Program Pascasarjana Uin Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh," *Getsempena English Education Journal (Geej)* 4, No. 2 (2017): 84–100.

[12] Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender: Perspektif Alquran* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001), 160.

[13] Siti Samawiyah, "Makna Al-Nisā' Dan Al-Mar'ah Dalam Al-Qur'ān (Tinjauan Terhadap Tafsīr Al-Munīr)" (Uin Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2014).

gender' and also means 'wives'. This illustrates that the word *al-Nisa* differs according to the context of the sentence in Arabic.

The word *al-Nisa* is often only understood with the meaning of 'woman' without understanding that in fact the word *al-Nisa* and its derivation have a category of meaning that is ignored, especially when this word is used in Al-Qur'an as a linguistic phenomenon. In total, the word *al-Nisa* and its derivation in Al-Qur'an are mentioned 56 times. Due to there are a lot of the derivation of word *al-Nisa*, the researchers limited this research to the word *al-Nisa* which is in Surah an-Nisa only. Therefore, researchers are interested in studying further and trying to unravel into the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* and its derivation in Surah an-Nisa.

The use of the Izutsu's semantic approach that researchers used in this study was an effort to develop research study of word *al-Nisa* by using the Izutsu's semantic approach that had previously been studied using the same approach. Based on the results of the search, there are a number of studies relating to semantic studies of the newspaper using Izutsu's Semantic analysis, including; Romziana[14] in her article explained the view of the Al-Qur'an about the meaning of the word *jâhilîyah* through a semantic approach as a instrument of analysis. In the results of Romziana's research, *jâhilîyah* in Al-Qur'an is mentioned in 24 verses in 17 Surah in various forms. The basic meaning of *jâhilîyah* itself comes from *ja-ha-la* which means the opposite word '*ilm*; rough characteristic; unfriendly; turning away (*jafâ*); dullness; foolish; stupid; angry (*hamuqa*). While the relational meaning of the word *jâhilîyah* is related to the word *Allâh*, *îmân*, '*amal al-ṣâliḥ*, *ẓâlim*, *fâsiq*, and *tawbah*.

Mahendra[15] in his thesis explained that *sultān* had several meanings in Al-Qur'an, namely: 1) *al-quwwah wa al-qudrah*, 2) *ḥujjah*, 3) *burhān*, and 4) '*ilm*. Raudatussolihah[16] in her thesis explained that the type of meaning contained in Surah al-'Alaq, consists of several types of meanings, namely: referential meaning, basic meaning or dictionary meaning (*al-ma'nā al-asāsī wa al-mu'jamī*), figurative meaning (*al-ma'nā almajāzī*), and denotative meaning (*al-ma'nā al-haqīqī*). However, the relation of meaning between words or pronunciation of Al-Qur'an with the interpretation of the

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[14] L. Romziana, "Pandangan Alquran Tentang Makna Jâhilîyah Perspektif Semantik," *Jurnal Mutawâtir* 4, No. 1 (2014), Https://Doi.Org/Https://Doi.Org/10.15642/Mutawatir.2014.4.1.117-138.

[15] Ahdiyat Mahendra, "Sultan Dalam Al-Quran; Studi Semantik Perspektif Toshihiko Izutsu" (Program Pascasarjanauin Sunan Kalijaga, 2015).

words occurs in four kinds of relations (meaning relations), namely: a synonym relationship (*al-tarāduf*), polysemic relations (*ta'addud al-ma'nā*) , the concepts of hyponymy and hypernymity (*al-Isytimāl*).

Istifaiyah[17] in her thesis analyzed the basic meaning of the word *fatḥ* etymologically. From this study, the author concluded that based on its basic meaning, the word *fatḥ* has several meanings: namely: opening, a diacritical sign, a hole in something, and so on. But the meaning of the word *fatḥ* and its derivation in Al-Qur'an are: to open, to let down, to send, victory or glory, and determination or decision. The relation or syntagmatic relationship is with the words: Allah, the slogan of struggle (*Jihād*), Islam, *maghfirah*, favor and guidance of Allah. But the relation or paradigmatic relationship, related to the *word; naṣr, tamkin, falaḥ, and fauz.*

Munawaroh[18] in her research specialized in the interpretation of the word *kafir* contained in Surah al-Kafirun. The results of this study are that the basic meaning of *Kafir* is the form of *ism fa'il* from the word *kafara-yakfuru-kufr*. Which in terms of language, this word implies 'cover up', in accordance with what was conveyed by al-Ashfahani and Ibn Manzur that night is called *kafir* because it covers the day or covers objects with its darkness. While the relational meaning of the word *kafir* is 'escape' (Surah Ibrahim [14]: 22), 'the farmers' (Surah al-Hadid [57]: 20), 'erase' (Surah al-Baqarah [2] : 271), 'a forfeit' for violating one of Allah's provisions (QS. Al-Maidah [5]: 89), 'petals that cover fruit' and 'clear, fragrant, and savory springs in heaven' (QS. Al - Insan [76]: 5). From the search results of relevant research above, it is known that there are a number of similarities with research conducted by researchers who discuss the meaning of words in Al-Qur'an using Izutsu's Semantic methodology. But there are also differences with the relevant research, which is located on the subject of research that discusses the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* in Al-Qur'an Surah an-Nisa.

The researcher assumes that it is important to unravel the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* and its derivation in surah an-Nisa using the Izutsu's semantic approach based on the basic and relational meanings so that a complete concept is reached of the meaning of the word *al-Nisa*. It is expected that with the presence of this research, said *al-Nisa* in its

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[16] B. Raudotussolihah, "Analisis Linguistik Dalam Alquran ; Studi Semantik Dalam Surah Al-'Alaq" (Uin Alauddin, 2016).

[17] N. Istifaiyah, "Makna Kata Fath Dan Derivasinya Dalam Alquran" (Pascasarjana Uin Sunan Kalijaga, 2017).

meaning and position on understanding does not experience distortion. The usefulness of this study is also expected to be able to enrich the interpreters of Al-Qur'an and become an alternative approach to understanding the word *al-Nisa* in Al-Qur'an, so Muslims no longer waste time and energy to refuse without reasoning any new theories coming from outside related to interpretation Al-Qur'an comes to developing what is considered good and appropriate for an understanding which is more ideal towards the messages of Al-Qur'an.

Method

Seeing the characteristics of the problems in this discussion, the type of research used in this study is qualitative, namely Library Research. The data used as materials in this study which were obtained from Al-Qur'an in Surah an-Nisa and other data related to the theme. The data collection technique is carried out by using the documentation technique. What is meant is a record of past events which are stated in oral, written and forming work.[19] The documentation data collection technique used in this study is to record the written data, with reading and note taking (careful reading and careful writing) whose purpose is to look for aspects, functions, and purpose of speech of words, phrases, or sentences that are will be analyzed.

The data analysis technique in this study uses Janice McDrury's model in Moleng[20], with several stages: *First,* reading or studying the data, marking the key words and ideas in the data. *Second,* studying the key words, trying to find themes derived from the data. *Third,* writing down the model found. *Fourth,* the coding has been done. The stages of analysis in this study were carried out with several steps, namely: *First*, reading or studying and marking key words (derivation of *an-Nisa'*) to be used as the focus of discussion. *Second*, studying and determining the basic meanings and relational meanings through syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis, then looking for synchronous and diachronic aspects of the focus word, and writing the meaning of each of the focus words. *Third*, describing *weltanschauung* of the word *al-Nisa*.

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[18] Siti Munawaroh, "Makna Kafir Dalam Surat Al-Kafirun; Analisis Pendekatan Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu" (Yogyakarta, 2018).

[19] Albi Anggito And Johan Setiawan, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, Ed. Ella Defi Lestari (Sukabumi: Cv Jejak, 2018), 145, Https://Books.Google.Co.Id/Books?Id=59v8dwaaqbaj&Printsec=Frontcover#V=Onepage&Q&F=False.

[20] Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Pt. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2009), 248.

Result and Discussion

Analysis of Basic and Relational Meanings

In linguistic studies generally, words always have two sides that cannot be separated integrally[21], according to de Sassure in Baidhowi[22], First, *signifie* (sign) which is a concept, mind or mental picture. Second, *signifiant* (marker) which is a meaningful sound image or scribble, i.e. what is written and read. Briefly, *signifie* is meaning and *signifiant* is word. The relationship between the two is not a rigid relation. Thus, one word does not only have one meaning. Among the various meanings that a word has are denotative meanings and connotative meanings.[23] Izutsu is called the basic meaning and relational meaning. According to Izutsu, each word has a basic meaning and a relational meaning.

Basic Meanings

In semantics, word can be traced by searching for the meaning of the word itself, this is what is meant by "Basic Meaning". This basic meaning becomes the first step in semantic theory to look for the meaning of a particular text or word. The basic word of a certain word will always be attached whenever and wherever the word is placed. The workings of the search for this basic meaning are obtained through the attention of lexical meanings. All of the meanings, both basic and derivative in every dictionary are called lexical.[24] In the context of Al-Qur'an, the basic word can be applied by giving its basic meaning or contextual content to certain words in Al-Qur'an, even though the basic word is taken from outside the context of Al-Qur'an.[25]

The basic meaning offered in this study is the word "*al-Nisa* (النساء) ". The word *an-Nisā '*, the basic meaning is 'woman/female', which is the antonym of "*Rijāl* (رجال)" which means 'man/male/ruler/leader'. The meaning that follows the word *al-Nisa* is still translated as 'woman '. But, when the word *al-Nisa* is linked to the word "*lā mastum*" in

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[21] Kurniawan, *Semiologi Roland Barthes* (Magelang: Indonesiatera, 2001), 14.

[22] Baidhowi, *Antropologi Al-Qur'an*, Ed. Fuad Mustafid (Yogyakarta: Lkis Yogyakarta, 2013), 23.

[23] Fathurrahman, "Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsirnya Dalam Perspektif Toshihiko Izutsu" (Uin Syarif Hidayatullah, 2010), 112.

[24] Eko Zulfikar, "Makna Ūlū Al-Albāb Dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu," *Jurnal Theologia* 29, No. 1 (2018): 109–40, Https://Doi.Org/Https://Doi.Org/10.21580/Teo.2018.29.1.2273.

[25] Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia: Pendekatan Semantik Terhadap Alquran*, 1.

the context of Al-Qur'an, for example, the words *al-Nisa* and " *lā mastum* " have a change of meaning, from denotative meaning to connotative meaning as a result of relations relational to both words in a particular context and editor. As stated in Surah an-Nisa: 43.

In this case, according to Ibn Kasir the meaning of the word *la> mastum* (to touch) changes to 'intercourse', it no longer means 'touching woman'. The phrase "*la> mastum*" (you touch) in Al-Qur'an is only found twice, namely in Surah an-Nisa verse 43 and Surah al-Maidah verse 6 with the same sentence. Specifically, in Surah an-Nisa verse 43 and Surah al-Maidah verse 6, although it has meaning 'to touch' lexically, but there is a relational meaning that is meant "husband and wife relationship". To a better understanding about the relational meaning, we can look at the next discussion.

Relational Meaning

The relational meaning is something that is connotative which is given and added to the existing meaning by putting the word in a special position and in a special field, being in a different relationship with other important words in the system.[26] To get a relational meaning, there are several steps that are carried out namely: Syntagmatic Analysis and Paradigmatic Analysis. Syntagmatic analysis is an analysis that attempts to determine the meaning of a word by concerning to the words in front of and behind the words that are being discussed in a particular section of a speech or it can be said of an analysis of integration among concepts.[27] In Al-Qur'an, the word *al-Nisa* has a relationship with other words, both in front of or behind the word. The relationship can give several different meanings between one verse with another verse utterance. In Al-Qur'an, the meaning of *al-Nisa* sometimes means 'gender' (female) or also means 'wife'.

From the researchers' observation of relational meaning of the word *al-Nisa*, there are several relationships which is obtained by using syntagmatic analysis as in the following table:

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[26] Izutsu, 12.

Table 1. The Relational Meaning of "a*l-Nisa'* "

No	Surah and verse	The relational meaning	Literal Meaning
1	An-Nisa: 127	Questions about women and the rules about their rights.	Woman
		وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ...	
2	An-Nisa: 1	Women as part of the process of human regeneration.	Wife
		...رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً	
3	An-Nisa: 3	Rules of polygamy and social justice. If you are unable to do justice, then marry just one woman.	Woman
		...مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ...	
4	An-Nisa: 129	Rules of polygamy and social justice. If polygamy, don't just love one wife.	Wife
		...أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ...	
5	An-Nisa: 4	The rights of women to obtain dowry in marriage from their husbands	Woman
		...وَآتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ	
6	An-Nisa: 7	About women's rights in the matter of inheritance. Equally have rights with men.	Woman
		...وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ..	
7	An-Nisa: 11	About women's rights in the matter of inheritance. That the inheritance portion for women is half that of men.	Woman
		...أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا..	
8	An-Nisa: 176	About the rights of women who have no children in the matter of inheritance. Then his sister gets inheritance rights.	Woman
		وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رِجَالًا وَ نِسَاءً	
9	An-Nisa: 15	The tendency to commit a evil deed. It must be evidenced with 4 witnesses	Woman
		...مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا..	
10	An-Nisa: 19	The position of women as heirlooms in of *jahiliyah* era.	Woman
		..أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا..	
11	An-Nisa: 22	The woman you can't marry is the wife of my father.	Woman
		..مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ..	
12	An-Nisa: 23	A woman who is not allowed to be married because of the sister through nursing	Woman
		... وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ مِنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ ...	
13	An-Nisa: 23	A woman who is not permitted to marry with is the daughter of his wife	Wife
		... مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ ..	
14	An-Nisa: 24	Women who cannot marry women who are married, except slaves.	Woman
		...وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ	
15	An-Nisa: 32.	Women commonly can have a career or work. Men and women have the opportunity to be successful	Wanita

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²⁷ Saiful Fajar, "Konsep SyaiṬān Dalam Al-Qur'an (Kajian Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu)" (Uin Syarif Hidayatullah, 2018).

		..وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ..	
16	An-Nisa: 34	The position of women in the family / household sector led by their husbands. The husband is a leader in the household.	Perempuan
		الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ...	
17	An-Nisa: 43	Women and *wudhu*. Touching women can ruin *wudhu*.	Perempuan
		..أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ...	
18	An-Nisa: 75	The nature of women as beings who are weak in oppression.	Perempuan
		...الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ...	
19	An-Nisa: 98	The nature of women as beings who are weak in oppression	Perempuan
		..إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ..	
20	An-Nisa: 127	Questions about women, women and the rules about their rights	Wanita
		.. فِي يَتَامَى النِّسَاءِ..	

After obtaining the relational meaning with syntagmatic analysis, the researcher finds the relational meaning of the word *al-Nisa* by using paradigmatic analysis. This analysis compares certain words or concepts with other words or concepts that are similar (synonyms) or opposites (antonyms). Paradigmatic analysis is the analysis that compares certain words or concepts with other words or concepts that are similar (synonyms) or opposites (antonyms). In paradigmatic analysis, to determine the meaning can be done by selecting 'this-or-this-or-this'. So, when it is viewed with a paradigmatic analysis, there are several words which can substitute the words *an-Nisā* like the words *al-mar'ah, imra'ah*, *untsa*, or *banat*.

To understand the *weltanschauung* concept of Al-Qur'an, Izutsu lets Al-Qur'an define the concept and speak out itself. For this reason, one of the methods taken is the researcher gathering all key words that represent all concepts related to the meaning of the word *an-Nisā* itself, namely the words *al-Mar'ah* (ا المراة), *Imra'ah* (امرأة), *Banat*

(البنات), *Untsa* (الانثئ), *Ukht* (اختئ), *Ummu* (ام), *Mu'minah* (مؤمنات) and *Muslimah*

(مسلمات) . The important words or key terms are words that have a significant role in

the preparation of the basic conceptual structure of meaning.

The semantic field that emerged in this study did not stand independently. However, the keywords in this study are very likely to appear in a number of semantic

fields simultaneously in their capacity as keywords that have its different parts in each field but have a function as a link among these fields.[28] Thus, in the view of paradigmatic analysis, there are several words that can substitute the word *al-Nisa* as follows: *imra'ah* and *mar'ah, al-Untsa. Imra'ah* and *Mar'ah* are mentioned in Al-Qur'an in several Surah with the various forms approximately 38 times, as the word of Allah in the Surah an-Nisa: 128. According to Al-Allamah al-Raghib al-Ashfahany[29], the basic meaning of *imra'ah* is 'freshness' and 'comfort'. The word is taken from the root of word

مرأ-يمرء-مرء/امرأة which has the basic meaning of 'good, useful, fresh, comfortable'.

This word is commonly used, which means a person (male and female).

From a number of words *imra'ah*[30] in Al-Qur'an (26 times in various forms), it generally means wife (married woman), except for two verses that refer to unmarried women (maiden) and three other verses that mention women in general without differentiating who are married (wife or widow) and who are not married (maiden). The meaning is functional connotation. In this case, each person both male and female have a function to create freshness and comfort situation, or means 'joy and happiness' to each other. By looking up the word امراة in Al-Qur'an, the researchers conclude that the word specifically refers to women who are generally wives with their characters who comfort their partners (husbands).

According to Ahmad in Djollong[31], the origin of word *Al-Untsa* consists of the letters *al-Hamzah, al-Nun* and *al-Tsa* becoming *Anatsa* which means: mild, soft, weak and tender. Then, it is formed into *Untsa*, the opposite of *al-Zakara* (strong, hard, or sharp), the plural of *al-Untsa* is *Inatsun*. Al-Qur'an mentions the word *Untsa* 30 times in the various forms. All of those words mean 'woman' except one verse that has another meaning, which is 'statue'. Mufassirin gives meaning to the word *Inatsun* in Surah al-Nisa 4: 117. Al-Maraghi[32] interprets *Inatsun* with the meaning of inanimate objects, because the peoples of Arabia say *Untsa* to the dead because of their weakness (helpless). According to al-Shabuny, that what was meant by *Inatsun* in the verse is the statue of *al-*

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[28] Fathurrahman, "Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsirnya Dalam Perspektif Toshihiko Izutsu," 27.

[29] A. Al-Raghib Al-Ashfahany, *Mu'jam Mufradat Alfazh Alquran* (Bairut: Dar Al-Fikr, N.D.), 158.

[30] Luthfi Maulana, "Pembacaan Tafsir Feminis Nasarudin Umar Sebagai Tranformasi Sosial Islam," *Muwazah* 9, No. 1 (2017): 51–65.

[31] Andi Fitriani Djollong, "Al Mar'ah Dalam Al Qur'an," *Istiqra'* 6, No. 1 (2018): 51–80.

Lata, al-Uzza and *al-Banata*, because the peoples of Arab in Jahiliyah era gave their statue (idols) with name of woman. When the meaning of the word al-Untsa on the side of its use is analyzed, it essentially refers to the meaning of woman biologically, even an animals are called *Untsa*. In Surah al-An'am / 6: 144.

Chronological Development of the Meanings of the Al-Nisa Word (Synchronous and Diachronic)

To get a deeper semantic analysis, synchronous and diachronic approaches are needed. Synchronous aspects are aspects of words that do not change from the concept of words, meaning the words are static. Whereas the diachronic aspect is the aspect of a group of words, each of which develops and changes freely in its own way and particularity. Izutsu himself made an attempt to simplify this problem by dividing it into three periods of time using vocabulary, namely the pre-Qur'anic, Qur'anic and post-Qur'anic periods.[33]

The object of this research is vocabulary of Al-qur'an, while vocabulary of Al-qur'an itself is related to the vocabulary previously used by pre-Islamic societies. Hence, looking up the vocabulary outside Al-Qur'an system is still relevant, as long as it can provide useful information for the formation of the semantic concept of Al-Qur'an, there is the significance of combining historical semantics with synchronic semantics in analyzing the structure of Al-Qur'an vocabulary, and the content of the basic semantic elements of a word still exists wherever the word is placed and used.[34] To analyze the historical semantics of the word *al-Nisa* in this research, it will be divided into three periods, namely pre-Qur'anic, Qur'anic, and post-Qur'anic.

The pre-Qur'anic period is the period before Islam came. In understanding the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* in pre-Qur'anic period, we can use a historical point of view, the problem of women has been widely discussed in the world before Al-Qur'an was revealed. Greek society, for example, who are famous at their philosophical thoughts, does not talk much about women's rights and obligations.[35] In the lower classes, the fate of women is grieved, they are traded, while those who are married are

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[32] Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghi, *Tafsir Al-Marâghi* (Beirut: Dar Al-Akli, 1961), 156.

[33] Zulfikar, "Makna Ūlū Al-Albāb Dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu."

[34] Ismatillah A Nu'ad, *Fundamentalisme Progresif: Era Baru Dunia Islam* (Jakarta: Panta Rei, 2016), 24.

[35] Siti Nurul Khaerani, "Perempuan Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an," Academia, 2015.

completely under the power of their husbands. Shihab[36] said that before Al-Qur'an was revealed, in the view of the Christian leaders, it was found that women were the weapon of Satan to mislead men. In the 5th century AD a council was held which discussed whether women had a spirit or not, finally concluded that women did not have a holy spirit and in another place it was stated that women were human beings created solely to serve men, etc.

Historical facts show that in general, the condition of women in pre-Islamic times was gloomy. The history of human civilization bears witness to how women who helped other women to give birth were humiliated, treated roughly, and degraded. Hence, they no longer became dignified humans and turned into slaves.[37] Women were forced to serve their husbands who could freely defend or divorce them.[38] In addition, Engineer[39] stated that the attitude of discrimination against women had become the paradigm of society and was the impact of the doctrine of the assumption that had become a belief. Women were claimed not to have the ability as men, and men had rights to dominate women and men were leaders and determiners of their future. Thus, finally, it was impacted on the women's activity which became limited. This view is caused due to women in the period before the arrival of Islam were only seen to 'satisfy the sexual desires' only, their abilities, opportunities were not universally seen as the human aspects or as a human with sense and feeling.

What is meant by Qur'anic here is the period in which Islam had arrived. Islam, with Al-Qur'an and its Sharia, brought new concepts that were different from those that had been held during the period of ignorance. So, there were some meaning of Al-Qur'an keywords changed from *jahiliyah* period to the Islamic period, although basically it did not erase the original meaning, because the original meaning of a word would always be attached to the word. With the arrival of a new context, its meaning and use can change. In Qur'anic perspective, the word *al-Nisa* which means woman is one of the two types of gender that are recognized and have an honorable and noble position and have rights as well as men. What makes it different with men is only in terms of their existence. Every

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[36] M Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Alquran,:Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), 296–297.

[37] M. Yusuf Abdullah, *Qadaya' Al-Mar'ah Fi Surah An-Nisa'* (Kuwait: Dâr Al-Dakwah, 1985), 15.

[38] Haifaa A. Jawad, *Otentisitas Hak-Hak Perempuan: Perspektif Islam Atas Kesetaraan Jender*, Trans. Anni Hidayatun Noor & Dkk. (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2002), 1.

word or phrase that shows the meaning of *al-Nisa* in Al-Qur'an is always interesting to be studied with semantic approach to obtain a complete meaning about the process of empowering women and their actualization in the current gender era. Al-Qur'an, which was revealed as *hudan li al-nâs*, is full of normative symbols to ward off gender bias, in the form of: violence, double burden, marginalization, subordination, and stereotyping of women.

In Teeuw's view[40], the meaning of a word is determined by the relations between the elements totally. Then, the symbol of the word 'woman' (*an-Nisā ʹ*) must be understood and assessed on the basis of the function played in the verses of Al-Qur'an totally. Each symbol has a meaning according to women's convection, then analyzed the meaning of the linguistic structure and its semantic meaning, then concluded the themes and problems related to gender messages according to the role of the women they live in, which are expressed in Al-Qur'an.

Hence, to understand the verses of Al-Qur'an in accordance with the message of Islam (context), it takes several steps. *First,* with semantic analysis. *Second,* proving that the content of Al-Qur'an is actually a relation of understanding that strengthen each other, so it is impossible to have a conflict between the verses. This is intended to test concepts that have been derived. *Third*, making the ideal ethical principles to verify the results of interpretations. In Al-Qur'anic period interpretation can be accepted if it is in accordance with gender justice, namely; (1) there is no subordinate gender (2) there is no marginalization by one gender against another (3) free from stereotype which is a myth (4) no one bears a heavier burden than the other.[41]

Hamka[42] argues, that basically, Islam does not look at women inferior to men, because the understanding of the subordination of men and women is actually only a hegemony of understanding the influence of the teachings of the ignorant people who see women as the source of sin. With this foundation, women are no longer seen as God's creatures that are subordinated, marginal, can be harassed or treated despotically. This is because it is contrary to the principle of protecting basic human rights which is the ideal of Islam and humanity. A further consequence of this is the marital relations must be

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[39] Asghar Ali Engineer, *Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Islam*, Trans. Farid Wajdi Dan Cici Farkha Assegaf (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Bentang Budaya, 1994), 63.

[40] A. Teeuw, *Sastra Dan Ilmu Sastra: Pengantar Teori Sastra* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1984), 64.

[41] Ahmad Baidhawi, *Tafsir Feminis Kajian Perempuan Dalam Alquran Dan Para Mufassir Kontemporer* (Bandung: Penerbit Nuansa, 2005), 94.

placed according to their respective proportions.[43] In Qur'anic period, we can indeed see that the meaning of *al-Nisa* still based on its literal text, even though the different circumstances and contexts define something different from the reality and context of the subsidence of the verse. At this stage, the meaning of *al-Nisa* still makes the position of women inferior under men's domination.

The post-Qur'anic period in this case is the present period. Unlike the Pre-Qur'anic and Qur'anic periods, the interpretation of verses in Al-Qur'an about women (*al-Nisa*) with the modern paradigm has usually linked their interpretations to cultural, political, and economic issues, and is not very interested in theological aspects and aspects gramatical in texts of Al-Qur'an. The modern paradigm in the study of women's interpretations, usually already uses thematic methods in interpreting Al-Qur'anic verses about women, so that the conclusions drawn are somewhat different from the traditionalist paradigm on the one hand, but on the other hand the interpretation of this model still seems to be reactive both to world developments modernity and the development of previous interpretations, traditionalists, sometimes it is lack of attention to a comprehensive, even there is something almost being as what it should.

In Indonesia, this model of interpretation has emerged since late 1990s. According to Marcoes[44], the first Indonesian interpreter who discussed women in this modern paradigm was M. Quraish Shihab. In his book titled *Membumikan Alquran* by using thematic methods, Shihab tries to discuss women's issues in terms of their position, rights and obligations in a near-perfect study. In his study, before reaching his own interpretation, Quraish Shihab has quoted many opinions from modern commentators. He states that the position of women in the Islamic view was not as expected or practiced while the community. The teachings of Islam essentially have given a great attention and respectable position to women.

Regarding the origin of the existence of women, Shihab refutes the opinion that says that women were created from men's ribs. Based on the verses of the Surah an-Nisa: 1. Shihab in Suranta[45] says that "*nafsun wahidah*" in this verse is meant by Shihab as 'the

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[42] Hamka, *Studi Islam* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, N.D.), 236–237.
[43] A. Wahid, *Islam Kosmopolitan; Nilai-Nilai Indonesia Dan Transformasi Kebudayaan* (Jakarta: Wahid Institute, 2007), 210.
[44] Lies M. Marcoes, *Wanita Islam Indonesia Dalam Kajian Tekstual Dan Kontekstual* (Yogyakarta: Inis, 1993), 3–7.
[45] Khana Suranta, "Gender Dalam Pandangan M. Quraish Shihab (Tinjauan Dalam Bidang Pendidikan)" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palangkaraya, 2017), 4.

same type'. This interpretation is certainly very different from the interpretation or translation circulating in Indonesia before, like Mahmud Yunus, the interpreter translated the word "*nafsun wahidah*" with 'alone' which was then connoted with Adam.[46] Shihab also refutes the classical interpretation which says that it was woman who was the cause of Adam was ejected from heaven and thrown into this world. According to him, the verse that describes the slip of Adam and Eve was formed in a word that shows the togetherness of both of them without any difference.

To strengthen his opinion, Shihab quotes the several verses of A;-Qur'an such as Surah al-A'raf: 20 "*then Shaytan whispers the mind to both ...*" and Surah al-Baqarah 2:36 which reads " *But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been. ...*" from the two verses above, Shihab[47] argues that Al-Qur'an places women in their proper place and rectifies all wrong and wrong views, related to the position and origin of the incident. In the final conclusion of this discussion Shihab[48] states: "Women are men's siblings, so their position and rights are almost the same. If there is a difference, then it is only due to the main functions and tasks that are charged by God to each gender, so that the differences do not cause one to feel superior to others ".

Shihab's step was then welcomed by academics especially those who were familiar with the feminism movement in the Western world. The expansion of modern education, legal protection and changes in social, economic and political structure since the beginning of the 20th century, the fantasy of commentators on the superiority of men over women is increasingly easy to reject. In intelligence, achievements in schools, research institutions and in the world of management, women are increasingly prominent. In religious observance they also stand out. Evidently, the Islamic forums were always full of women. A lot of women become famous preachers.

Then many women are now active in the world of activities that demand physical endurance such as weightlifting, body building, becoming soldiers, police or pilots. The advantage of women politically and economically is no longer a strange sight. Economically, it is not a fairy tale if the position of the dowry giver and the cost of a wedding or family expense are no longer monopolized by men. Wife is now able to

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[46] M. Yunus, *Tafsir Alquranul Karim* (Jakarta: Hidakarya Agung, 1993), 64.
[47] Shihab, *Wawasan Alquran,:Tafsir Maudhu'i Atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat*, 272.
[48] Shihab, 272.

become the breadwinner of the family's economy by opening convection or food stall while men are unemployed. Thus, the development of today proves that superiority on the basis of gender is only a myth because the fact that superiority is relatively highly dependent on the personal efforts of men and women.[49]

For this reason, Syarifuddin[50] proposes a new interpretation of verses about women by saying that the bias of superiority of men over women in Al-Qur'an and society is dependent on the quality of each individual and not at all gender, and interpretations that are biased by men during this time must be formulated again. In today's modern context, according to Izutsu the meaning of *al-Nisa* has been a functional shift, that women in Islam must be able to play a dual role. In the midst of society, he must be able to eradicate ignorance and poverty to be transformed into progress and prosperity. In the household, he controls the household in realizing a peaceful family. Briefly, if women carry out their dual roles well, then their household will be full of happiness, and the community will be peaceful as always.

Hence, it can be said that the approach adopted by Izutsu which has a Neo Modern paradigm is holistic so that the resulting understanding is even more comprehensive. In relation to gender issues by using a semantic approach, he seeks to re-explore the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* in the modern context so as to produce a world view that is proportional to the problem of women. In his view, there is no substantial difference between men and women in Al-Qur'an. Even if Al-Qur'an distinguishes men and women, the distinction only lies in the functional aspect, which is still very conditional and not absolute.

Conclusion

The research analysis offered in this study is an analysis offered by Izutsu which is an approach in modern Linguistics. However, in Indonesia itself this semantics is barely known, far inferior to other linguistic methods and approaches, such as with hermeneutics, semiotics in the interpretation of Al-Qur'an. If examined further, the semantics offered by Izutsu are far more specific when compared to hermeneutics and semiotics. As is the case with the results of this study, which revealed the meaning of the

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[49] D. Syarifuddin, "Argumen Supremasi Atas Perempuan: Penafsiran Klasik Qs. An-Nisa' 34," *Jurnal Ulumul Qur'an* 5, No. 5 & 6 (1994): 708.

[50] Syarifuddin, 9.

word *al-Nisa* specifically, starting from the basic meaning, the relational meaning to its synchronous and chronicized meaning. Researchers are aware that this study would be perfect if other studies were carried out using a different semantic analysis. Thus, reformulation through efforts to simplify the meaning of the word *al-Nisa* semantically - in the present context - can be considered and developed, because a study through a different approach, will certainly produce different conclusions.

Acknowledgment

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