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Exploring a New Semantic Paradigm for Understanding the Quran: Bridging Interpretation Gaps and Uncovering Hidden Meanings

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ABSTRACT

This research proposes a new semantic approach to enhance the understanding of the Quran. The aim is to bridge the existing gap in interpretation, which primarily relies on semantic web ontology and the linguistic framework developed by Toshihiko Izutsu. This philosophical research seeks to provide new paradigms and transcend the conventional semantic. It argues for the adoption of five methodical steps to uncover the deeper meanings behind the literal text of the Quran: (a) textual context analysis, (b) situational context analysis, (c) integration of intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the Quran, (d) syntaxmatic and paradigmatic analysis, and (e) constructing the meaning of the past and present. This new paradigm aims to challenge the traditional semantic approach to the Quran and facilitate a deeper understanding.

1. INTRODUCTION

Semantic analysis of the Quran involves studying the meanings and interpretations of its verses, with a focus on understanding the messages and how words and sentences relate to each other. There are two approaches to Quranic semantics: semantic web ontology and semantics within linguistic science. Semantic web ontology is about organizing and using web information using formal language and ontology standards. It emphasizes representing and connecting concepts in a specific domain, making information more accessible for machines. On the other hand, semantic analysis within linguistic science, such as Toshihiko Izutsu's approach, examines the meaning of Quranic verses by considering the relationships between words, language structures, and the practical aspects of the Quran. The goal is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the messages conveyed in the Quran and to uncover any hidden meanings.

Toshihiko Izutsu's approach is a well-known theory in Quranic semantics. It combines Yuishiki Buddhism's theory of consciousness with modern linguistic theory to understand the structure and meaning of the Quran. Izutsu emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural context and language of Arabia to grasp the Quran's messages. However, subsequent scholars have not expanded on Izutsu's work, and his approach has limitations. Semantic web ontology, on the other hand, focuses on literal text-based relationships between words and lacks the ability to explore deeper meanings of the Quran. It is a computational-quantitative approach. There is a need for a new paradigm in Quranic semantics to further develop the understanding of the Quran. This new theory should address the research gap and move beyond the stagnation that has occurred in the field, building on the foundations laid by Izutsu.

This new paradigm aims to facilitate a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the messages in the Quran. It allows us to perceive the Quran not solely as a collection of words but as a structured conceptual system with intricate meanings and messages. By adopting a semantic approach, we can broaden our perspectives and gain fresh insights into the teachings of the Quran, revealing hidden and profound meanings within its text. Additionally, this new semantic paradigm offers an opportunity to bridge the gap between religious traditions and contemporary thought. Through semantic analysis, we can contextualize the Quran within the modern era, appreciating its relevance to the issues and challenges faced by society today. By expanding the scope for interpretation and understanding, the new semantic paradigm enables the Quran to continue

providing pertinent guidance and direction for human life in this era.

2. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SEMANTICS IN THE QURAN: UNVEILING MEANINGS ACROSS TIME

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, phrases, sentences, and texts in a language. It focuses on how meaning is constructed, interpreted, and used in communication. Semantics attempts to answer questions such as "What makes a word have a certain meaning?" and "How is meaning connected to context and its use in sentences?" At the most basic level, semantics encompasses two main aspects: lexical meaning and compositional meaning. Lexical meaning relates to the meaning of individual words in a language. Each word has a basic meaning that can be described through definitions, synonyms, or explanations using other words. For example, the word "eat" has a basic meaning related to the action of consuming food

Compositional meaning, on the other hand, relates to how the meanings of words are combined to form more complex meanings in sentences. A sentence can contain phrases, clauses, and subordinate clauses, all of which contribute to the overall meaning of the sentence. For example, in the sentence "Ani eats fried rice at the restaurant," the meanings of the words "Ani," "eats," "fried rice," and "restaurant" need to be interpreted and combined to understand the overall meaning of the sentence.

In addition, semantics also studies linguistic phenomena such as synonyms (words with similar meanings), antonyms (words with opposite meanings), hypernyms (words that are more general categories), and homonyms (words that are spelled the same but have different meanings). Semantics also studies the relationship between meaning and context, including pragmatic aspects involving communication goals, implicature, and presupposition. Pragmatics plays an important role in understanding how meaning is formed in communication. Pragmatics involves understanding communication goals, implicatures contained in expressions, and presuppositions underlying conversations. By considering pragmatic aspects, we can understand a more complete and contextual meaning of a speech or text.

In semantic analysis, various approaches and theories are used. Some main approaches include formal semantics, which uses formal representation and logic to describe meaning, and cognitive semantics, which views meaning as a cognitive construction related to human experiences and mental concepts. Other approaches that have developed in semantics include lexical semantics, contrastive semantics, and generative semantics. Overall, semantics is a complex and broad field that

seeks to understand how meaning is formed, understood, and used in language. Through semantic analysis, we can gain deeper insights into how language plays a crucial role in human communication.

Semantic analysis also involves understanding the relationships between the meanings of words in the verses of the Quran. Quranic semantics involves the analysis and interpretation of the Quranic text with the aim of understanding the meanings contained within it. This involves studying the meanings of words, phrases, sentences, and the context of the Quranic verses. Quranic semantic research seeks to answer questions such as "What is the true meaning of this word?" or "How do these words relate to each other within the context of the verse?"

In studying Quranic semantics, researchers and religious scholars employ various approaches and methods. They analyze Quranic verses considering the historical and social context at the time of revelation. They also pay attention to the language style and rhetoric used in the Quran to understand the hidden meanings behind words and sentences.

The study of the semantic aspects of the Quran aims to understand the messages and teachings of the Quran in a deeper way. It also helps in the development of Islamic thought and the relationship between the Quran and the current reality. However, it is important to remember that the study of the semantic aspects of the Quran is a complex field that requires expertise and deep knowledge of the Arabic language, exegesis, and the historical context of Islam. Therefore, the interpretation of the Quran should be done with caution, based on sound scientific methodology, and respecting the diversity of opinions among scholars and religious scholars.

With the rapid advancement of computer science and networking, the approach of semantic ontology has emerged to analyze the words and even the themes of the Quran. Semantic ontology for the Quran is a representation of the deep knowledge structure of the Quran using semantic web technology. In this context, ontology refers to a computational model that encompasses the concepts present in the Quran and the relationships between these concepts. In semantic ontology, concepts in the Quran are represented as ontological entities, while the relationships between these concepts are represented as properties in the ontology. For example, concepts like "faith," "worship," or "reward" can become entities in the ontology, and relationships like "contains," "relates to," or "is a part of" can become properties in the ontology.

By utilizing semantic web technology, the ontology of the Quran provides significant benefits. First, this ontology allows computers to process the contents of the Quran in a deeper way, assisting in the development of natural language processing tools and other applications. Second, the ontology of the Quran enables more accurate and targeted knowledge retrieval through “Structured Query Language” (SPARQL). Additionally, the ontology of the Quran allows for integration with other sources of knowledge, expanding the applications that utilize knowledge from various sources. Overall, the ontology of the Quran, through semantics, provides a

structured framework for understanding and utilizing the knowledge within the Quran computationally.

Meanwhile, on one hand, there are a number of Islamic scholars dedicated to understanding and interpreting the Quran using a semantic approach. The semantic approach to the Quran reached its peak during the Umayyad and Abbasid eras. During that time, Islamic scholars focused on understanding the literal meanings of Arabic words and exploring the deeper layers of metaphorical and figurative language used in the Quran. They examined the syntactic structure of verses, the relationships between words, and the rhetorical devices used in the Quran. They also considered the historical and cultural context of the revelation, including the social, political, and religious conditions of the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. This contextual understanding aided in interpreting specific verses and understanding their intended meanings.

Overall, classical semantic analysis of the Quran during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods involved a comprehensive study of the linguistic, rhetorical, historical, cultural, theological, and legal dimensions of the Quranic text. In the modern era, Toshihiko Izutsu offered semantic analysis to understand the Quran, considering the widespread awareness of the importance of adopting modern linguistic theories in a more inclusive approach to the Quran. Through semantic analysis, it becomes clear that there is a "structural intelligence" governing the universe and the overall conceptual system comprising the Quran. This offers a deeper and more detailed understanding of the meanings of Quranic verses and the messages contained within them.

It is important to note that semantic analysis is not a homogeneous single theory but encompasses various perspectives and theories. Each scholar has their own approach and interpretation of semantic analysis of the Quran. Therefore, in this dissertation, a critical study will be conducted on the semantic theories developed by Izutsu, along with the proposed Quranic reading systems, in order to understand their implications and impact on the study and interpretation of the Quran in a more comprehensive manner.

In this research, historical and hermeneutic analysis methods will be used on Izutsu's works. This will help explore and understand Izutsu's perspective, which combines the theory of Araya consciousness in Yuishiki Buddhism and the linguistic theories developed by Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf, and Leo Weisgerber. Through the conducted semantic analysis, it will be acknowledged that the Quran, written in the Arabic language, reflects Arab cultural elements within its conceptual system but also radically reconstructs that conceptual system to align with the views presented in the Quran.

In this context, it is important to remember that the Quran is intended for all of humanity, not just Arabs or Muslims. Although it is written in Arabic, its purpose is to facilitate communication between God and the Prophet, including the early recipients of the revelation who used the Arabic language. Therefore, it is important to understand that the Quran does not consider the Arabic language as the best language among all languages in the world but rather recognizes that both Muslims and non-Muslims have an equal right to respond to the Quran, as long as they have the intelligence to understand it. In this regard, mutual interaction

and contribution are essential in building an understanding of the worldview contained in the Quran. Therefore,The study and analysis of dominant concepts and lexis in the Quran should be approached with scholarly rigor, linguistic expertise, and an understanding of the historical and cultural context of Islam.

Overall, the study of the semantic aspects of the Quran and the development of semantic ontologies can contribute to a deeper understanding and interpretation of the Quranic text. It provides a structured framework for exploring the meanings, relationships, and concepts within the Quran, aiding in the development of computational tools and knowledge retrieval systems. However, it is essential to approach this field with caution, respecting the diversity of scholarly opinions and interpretations, and recognizing the limitations of any computational analysis when it comes to understanding the profound and multifaceted nature of the Quran.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3. 1. Result

The issue of the language used in the Quran arises from its distinctiveness compared to other holy books and literary works. The Quranic language is considered as the perfect language of God, remaining unchanged since its revelation. This sets it apart from the Bible, which was written by the apostles in a subsequent era and can be debated as to whether it is the language of God. While there are discussions about the Quran as a "cultural product," the consensus remains that the language of the Quran is indeed the language of God. Thus, because the Quran was revealed in a linguistic form, the linguistic approach, specifically semantics, is the most comprehensive compared to other approaches. The operational steps we propose for interpreting the Quran using a semantic approach are as follows:

3.1.1. Textual Context Analysis

"Textual context analysis" involves analyzing the "intrinsic elements" of the Quran in order to gain a concrete understanding of its literal text (syiyāk lafẓī), which refers to the structure of the Quran. The intrinsic elements of the Quran encompass its linguistic aspects, including vocabulary, syntax, and verse structure. Scholars also pay attention to the rasm and gharib of the Quran, which are considered part of its intrinsic elements and influence interpretation. Therefore, analyzing the intrinsic elements of the Quran entails examining its linguistic aspects by focusing on the language elements (usas al-lughah) employed in the Quran.

The underlying assumption of the textual context approach is that the Quran is the eternal word of God (qadīm), devoid of sound and letters (lā ṣaut wa lā ḥarf), revealed to "new" humans (ḥadīṡ). Since it was impossible for humans to comprehend Allah's "kalam kadim" directly, Allah employed the Arabic language as

a means to convey it to them. The kalam kadim wrapped in Arabic is what is known as the Quran. The process of rendering the Quran in Arabic is the "ḥadīṡization" of Allah's eternal word. However, associating the Quran with the Arabic language does not imply that the Quran is a "cultural product" (intāj ṡaqafī); it simply acknowledges that the Quran is a sacred book conveyed through culture. As Allah is infallible in conveying His words, all word choices, language styles, syntax, and linguistic aspects of the Quran are deemed sacred and must be regarded as true (inerrant). Thus, this paradigmatic assumption highlights the necessity of understanding the Quran from a "language approach" since Allah never errs in conveying His words through language.

Furthermore, the "meaning" ascribed to the text of the Quran is a "sacred meaning" that humans cannot fully comprehend. Instead, humans are tasked with "understanding" the Quran based on their own individual perspectives or "horizons." While humans may not be able to grasp the "divine meaning" of the Quran, they are enjoined to strive to understand it to the best of their abilities. The understanding attained by the first audience (first recipient), as comprehended by the companions, does not represent the sacred meaning of the Quran but rather their understanding within the context of their time. Consequently, the interpretations offered by contemporary Quran scholars are not inherently incorrect, as they have the right to interpret the Quran according to their own horizons. Since the understanding of the companions is not inherently sacred, it can be deconstructed, and subsequent generations of Muslims have the right to interpret the Quran based on their own horizons. This paradigmatic assumption aims to liberate the Quran from the limitations imposed by time and space.

3.1.2. Situational Context Analysis

Situational context analysis is an analysis of "asbab al-nuzul." This analysis is an extrinsic element analysis of the Quran, aimed at gaining a concrete understanding of the situation when the text was revealed. Its objective is to examine the inner feelings of the first generation of recipients of the Quran when the verses were revealed. However, this analysis does not determine the meaning but rather serves as a supporting tool for understanding the Quran. Regarding the definition of "asbab al-nuzul," etymologically, the term "Asbab Nuzul" comes from the words "asbab" and "nuzul." "Asbab" is the plural form of the word "sabab," which means cause or reason. "Nuzul" is the verbal noun form of the verb "nazala," which means to descend.

In further development in the modern era, Fazlur Rahman divided "asbab al-nuzul" into two categories: micro and macro. Micro "asbab al-nuzul," as defined by modern scholars, is essentially the same as the definition put forward by traditional scholars. It is called micro because it focuses on specific narrations that provide the background for the revelation of particular verses. The scope of

these narrations is limited to specific verses. The way to know micro "asbab al-nuzul" is through narrations attributed to the Prophet. However, not all narrations are accepted. Only narrations that meet certain criteria, as determined by scholars in the field of Ushul al-Hadith, are accepted as valid "asbab al-nuzul." Why Ushul al-Hadith? Because "asbab al-nuzul," by its nature, must be in the form of narrations and therefore, it must be in the form of hadith.

On the other hand, if micro "asbab al-nuzul" is limited to narrations that provide the background for specific verses, macro "asbab al-nuzul" refers to the broader social, economic, political, cultural, etc., conditions of Arab society that influenced the revelation of the Quran. Contemporary Islamic thinkers feel that relying solely on micro "asbab al-nuzul" is not sufficient because the extensive textual horizon of the Quran related to social and cultural conditions needs to be understood in detail. The way to know macro "asbab al-nuzul" is through anything that provides information about Arab culture at that time, both before and during the revelation of the Quran. This can include narrations that are not solely attributed to the Prophet but also include various aspects related to the social conditions of Arab society at that time, or it can include poetry, historical evidence of the Arabs, and so on.

However, researchers disagree with the opinions of contemporary scholars who support macro "asbab al-nuzul." According to the researchers, the research method using macro context is totalitarian and speculative or forced and approximate because it attempts to capture the psychology of the masses when the Quran was revealed. Instead, this research will only use micro "asbab al-nuzul" transmitted through authentic narrations. Thus, the situational contextual approach examines the inner feelings of the first generation of recipients of the Quran through micro "asbab al-nuzul."

This is the fundamental difference between the methodology we have developed and other methodologies. While other methodologies consider context as the determinant of meaning, we believe that it only helps present-day interpreters of the Quran to understand the textual situation. The textual situation provides descriptions related to textual emphasis. In our assumption, emphasis is an important aspect for understanding the text. The same language may use the same choice of words and the same style, but due to different emphasis, the meaning can be different. Therefore, in our view, the situation is not the core aspect in determining meaning; it only guides the reader to understand the language's emphasis. Once the reader understands the emphasis, they can determine the meaning.

Fundamentally, our research assumption aligns with the assumption of classical Quranic

scholars: al-Ibrah bi umum al-lafzi, la bi khusus al-sabab (the meaning of the Quran is determined by its wording, not the situation of revelation). If we say that the text is determined by the situation of revelation, then the above principle is reversed: al-Ibrah bi khusus al-sabab, la bi umum al-lafzi. Some contemporary Quranic scholars argue that this principle should be reversed because "asbab al-nuzul" determines the meaning. However, we find this approach problematic because our historical heritage does not provide authentic evidence for a text. If we insist on using "asbab al-nuzul," the interpretation is based on historical evidence that is not authentic. Such speculative interpretations should not be conducted.

Furthermore, the quantity of "asbab al-nuzul" does not currently meet the required amount for use in interpretation. Therefore, if weforce ourselves to interpret the text using "asbab al-nuzul," there will be many verses that cannot be interpreted because their "asbab al-nuzul" cannot be found. Nevertheless, we still conduct investigations into the textual situation through classical tafsir books, aided by books on "asbab al-nuzul." In our view, classical tafsir books provide a broader range of data compared to books on "asbab al-nuzul." Afterward, the data we find is used as material to determine the circumstances of the revelation of the verses. We believe that interpretation through this method is superior to interpretation that relies solely on the reasons for the revelation of the verses.

3.1.3. Integration of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Elements of the Quran

This research aims to integrate the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the Quran, namely textual context and situational context, in order to delve into the inner atmosphere of the Quran. The author acknowledges that the text must be examined from both "microlinguistic" and "macrolinguistic" perspectives. The microlinguistic aspect focuses on the structure of language systems, without considering language acquisition, storage in memory, or its various functions. It disregards the interplay between language and culture, as well as the physiological and psychological mechanisms involved in language behavior. In essence, microlinguistics solely concerns itself with the language system, in isolation.

With this understanding, the Quran possesses microlinguistic aspects that can be explored through its structure. The textual context analysis aims to investigate these microlinguistic aspects of the Quran. In the subsequent chapters, an independent analysis of the Quran's structure is provided to comprehend the language used in the Quran, where Allah's choice of arranging its words is deemed infallible. This assumption reinforces the belief that the Quran is the eternal Word of Allah, free from error and harboring countless secrets. It is the responsibility of humans to interpret and

understand Allah's words.

On the other hand, macrolinguistics, in a broader sense, encompasses all aspects related to language. Given that numerous disciplines beyond linguistics deal with language, it is natural to identify various interdisciplinary fields within macrolinguistics, such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, stylistics, and more. It is important to note that the distinction between microlinguistics and macrolinguistics is not dependent on the division between theoretical and applied linguistics. Theoretical aspects exist within each branch of macrolinguistics.

Moreover, adopting a broad perspective on the structure and function of language is crucial in interpreting the Quran. This is why some scholars include macrolinguistics in their interpretation of the Quran. In the subsequent chapters, we will examine several areas of macrolinguistics that are utilized in interpreting the Quran. This approach recognizes the significance of analyzing language using various scientific disciplines. Tafsir (interpretation) should encompass the widest possible view of the Quran. However, in reality, interpreters often neglect this theoretical framework and rely primarily on historical analysis. Nevertheless, language should be analyzed from multiple angles, including psychological, sociological, cultural, aesthetic, and neurophysiological perspectives.

Based on the aforementioned paradigm, Quranic semantics seeks to integrate the microlinguistic aspect of textual context and the macrolinguistic aspect of situational context. It delves deeply into the structural aspects of the Quran. Additionally, Quranic semantics incorporates approaches from sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, and other fields. These two language aspects are integrated to capture the inner atmosphere of the Quran. This integration is a fundamental aspect of Quranic interpretation, although regrettably, many interpreters overlook it. Instead of giving due attention to these aspects, interpreters often prioritize historical analysis over a textual and situational context approach.

3.1.4. Syntaxmatic and Paradigmatic Analysis

During the 19th century, linguists primarily focused on investigating the historical details of language development and formulating general hypotheses about language change. This branch of the scientific discipline is now known as historical linguistics. It is evident that, in historical linguistics as well as non-historical linguistics, one can be interested in language in general or in a specific language. Later scholars popularized the concepts of diachrony and synchrony. This concept was first introduced by Saussure, who made a distinction between langue and parole. Diachronic description of a language traces its historical development and records the changes that occurred

between different points in time. Therefore, diachronic is synonymous with historical. On the other hand, the synchronicity of a language refers to its non-historical aspects, presenting an explanation of language based on its structural features.

In Quranic research, a synchronic-diachronic approach is necessary to gain insights into the historical aspects of the language used in the Quran. Researchers refer to this approach as the language archaeology approach. Islamic scholars have extensively discussed this approach through discourses on fiqh al-lughah (jurisprudence of language) and wujuh wa al-nadzair (aspects and perspectives). While this approach can provide a description of the range of meanings of a word, the Quran still needs to be analyzed using a syntactic and paradigmatic approach to capture the emphasis of its language.

Syntax analysis involves examining the correlation of words within sentences. Ferdinand de Saussure referred to syntactic analysis in praesentia (in the present). This means that the object of study at the syntactic level is "present and visible." The structure of words in a sentence is something that is present and observable. The relationships between subject, predicate, and object are visible. This is different from the relationships between synonyms and antonyms, which cannot be observed but require deeper thought. In simple terms, syntactic analysis studies the relationships between words to form coherent sentences. Saussure also emphasized that the object of syntactic study cannot be an independent word; it must be a complete sentence with cohesive connections between words.

On the other hand, paradigmatic analysis involves examining the historical meaning of a word (language archaeology). This analysis is performed by presenting words that have similar meanings. It is called paradigmatic because words with similar meanings are indirectly present when a word is mentioned. Saussure referred to this as being present in absence (in absentia). The purpose of presenting other words that are not explicitly present is to explore the broad lexical meaning of the word. Based on this assumption, interpreters should present associated words from a verse to capture a broader meaning. Previous scholars have paid attention to this aspect by presenting words that are associated with each other.

In summary, the concepts of synchronic and diachronic represent ways of thinking that encompass space and time. The synchronic approach analyzes specific conditions and emphasizes the structural aspects of the Quran to examine the patterns found within that structure. Similarly, the term diachronic, derived from Greek, means "passing" or "going beyond." When related to history,

the diachronic approach teaches individuals to observe certain symptoms or phenomena more carefully. Through these two ways of thinking, the Quran is analyzed to uncover comprehensive meanings.

3.1.5. Constructing the Meaning of the Past and Present

After engaging in textual and situational context analysis, integrating extrinsic and intrinsic elements of the Quran, and conducting syntactic and paradigmatic analysis, the next task for contemporary readers of the Quran is to use "constructing the meaning of the past" as a foundation for determining "constructing the meaning of the present." The goal of interpreting the Quran is to achieve this meaning construction. The integration of these two forms is the essence of the Quran, which should be realized for all time and space.

Texts produced in the past are not limited to the past; they are relevant for all ages. The meaning of ancient texts can be formulated into new values that remain applicable in every era. Similarly, the Quran, along with its historical context and traditions, can be fundamentally understood, allowing readers today to interpret it. The Quran can be studied objectively and historically, separate from normative factors, as a means of generalizing values. The complexity of discovering these values necessitates collective ijtihad. While individual ijtihad can be pursued, it is partial and should be disseminated within the scientific community for the benefit of others. In addition to collective ijtihad, a unified interpretation is important to filter legal developments and ensure they remain within the bounds of the law.

The theoretical practice of "making the meaning of the past into the meaning of the present" is an intellectual jihad. This intellectual jihad is known as ijtihad. Intellectual ijtihad is a rigorous effort to understand the meaning of a text from the past, which contains various values, and to reinterpret it by expanding, limiting, or modifying it in a certain way that addresses new situations.

Contemporary Islamic scholars view the interpretation of the Quran as overly atomistic and literalistic, which is no longer relevant. The integration of past and present meanings suggests a holistic understanding of the Quran by moving away from normative views that restrict interpretation. Traditional interpretations have predominantly focused on legal matters rather than the moral principles underlying the law. Moreover, traditional Islamic interpretation should not be limited to a monodisciplinary approach; it requires an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approach. The dual movement of interpreting the Quran, which brings together the meanings of the past and the contemporary period, necessitates scientific variations, particularly in the field of

semantics. The interpretation of texts should not solely rely on history, as has been the case thus far, but should encompass multiple dimensions from various approaches to align with the contemporary needs of society.

The first movement of this theory primarily emphasizes the historical aspect. Researchers must be able to understand a specific historical context, not merely to grasp the meaning, but to capture the inner atmosphere of the text. Meanwhile, meaning can be derived through a semantic approach. Similarly, interpreters of the Quran today must comprehend the historical context of the Quran to capture its inner atmosphere and subsequently derive its meaning using semantic theory. This approach enhances the understanding of textual messages. The second movement involves a contextualization approach for the present. To properly comprehend the contemporary context, researchers should employ approaches from sociology, anthropology, psychology, physics, chemistry, biology, and various social and exact sciences. These diverse approaches are necessary to provide a value orientation that interpreters can refer to. Contemporary sciences serve as crucial analytical tools in articulating the meaning of the Quran. All social and natural sciences are valid for study and can be utilized as approaches in Quranic research, as long as they contribute to uncovering the Quran's deepest dimensions. This approach encourages Muslims to engage in intellectual exploration that is not constrained by dogma or cultural boundaries.

In conclusion, researchers acknowledge that a theory cannot be judged as false or true. Theories are neutral and scientific, and their validity depends on the interpreter's interpretation within the context of the methodology employed. If there is a discrepancy between normativity and the contemporary situation in interpreting the Quran, the primary issue lies with the individuality of the interpreter, not the theory itself. Nevertheless, all efforts are made to capture the message and truth of the Quran, so that they can be effectively revealed through a specific methodology. Thus, the developed semantic theory is an endeavor to capture the universal value of the Quran more comprehensively than before.

3.2. Discussion and Recommendations

The new paradigm of Quranic semantics that we propose involves several steps: (1) textual context analysis as a structural analysis to understand the relationship between verses, (2) situational context analysis as an asbāb nuzūl analysis to examine the contextual background, (3) integration of intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the Quran, (4) syntactic and paradigmatic analysis to explore the relationship between words, and (5) connecting past meanings with meanings that are

relevant in the present context to uncover the universal spirit of the Quran. Through semantic analysis, we can bring the Quran into the modern-day context, understanding its relevance to the issues and challenges faced by society today. By expanding the scope of interpretation and understanding, the new paradigm of semantics allows the Quran to continue providing relevant guidance in human life during this era.

In the study of the methodology of Quranic interpretation, linguistic methods have been employed by several classical commentators, including Al-Farrā' with his tafsir work Ma`ānī Al-Qur'an, Abu Ubaidah, Al-Sijistani, and Al-Zamakhsyari. Classical scholarly works, especially those entitled al-Wujūh wa an-Naẓāir, demonstrate the existence of semantic awareness among classical Muslim scholars. al-Wujūh wa an-Naẓāir represents a classical scholarly effort to understand the meaning of each vocabulary used in the Quran.

If we trace back, we will find a classical scholar named Muqātil bin Sulaiman (d. 150 AH) with his work al-Wujūh wa an-Naẓāir. According to him, every word in the Quran has a definitive meaning and can also have several alternative meanings. Apart from Muqatil, several other scholars have produced similar works, such as Harun bin Musa (d. 170 AH) with his work al-Wujūh wa an-Naẓāir fī Al-Qur'an al-Karīm, al-Ḥusain bin Muḥammad ad-Damigani (d. 989 AH) with his work Islaḥ al-Wujūh wa an-Naẓāir fī Al-Qur'an al-Karīm, Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Juzi with his work Nuzhatu al-A'yun al-Nawāzir fī 'Ilm al-Wujūh wa an-Naẓāir, and others.

Several experts have focused on semantic research of the Quran and have produced various works related to this topic. For example, Amin al-Khulli in his book "Manāhij Tajdīd fī an-Nahwā wa al-Balāghah wa at-Tafsīr wa al-Adāb" (1965), Bint al-Syathi' in "al-Bayāni li Al-Qur'ān al-Karīm" (1966), and Toshihiko Izutsu in three of his works such as "Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Quran" (1960), "God and Man in the Quran: Semantics of the Quranic Weltanschauung" (1969), and "The Concept or Belief in Islamic Theology: A Semantical Analysis of Iman and Islam" (1969). Toshihiko Izutsu is known as a scholar who consistently applies semantic analysis in Quranic studies. His monumental trilogy of works in the field of the Quran consistently contains rigorous, incisive, and data-rich semantic analysis.

Based on these circumstances, various approaches have emerged in interpreting the Quran. As developments in modern times have progressed, thinkers have begun to focus their thinking on linguistic methods, such as Amin al-Khulli and Bintu Syathi' with Tafsir Bayani, Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid and Muhammad Syahrur with their linguistic hermeneutics, Toshihiko Izutsu with historical

semantic studies of the language of the Quran, and many others. Each commentator conveys the fundamental message of the Quran using a variety of methods, approaches, and styles that suit their respective backgrounds of thought. However, every interpreter cannot overlook linguistic analysis or language studies when interpreting Quranic verses. In other words, every interpretation will always involve stages that explore linguistic symbols.

4. CONCLUSION

The new semantic paradigm of the Quran opens the door to a deeper and holistic understanding of its messages. The semantic approach allows us to see the Quran as a structured conceptual system with complex meanings and messages. This paradigm considers the Quran not merely as a collection of words but as a source of understanding that reveals hidden and profound meanings behind its text. Moreover, the semantic approach provides an opportunity to bridge the understanding between religious traditions and contemporary thought. Through semantic analysis, the Quran can be brought into the context of the modern era and understood in relation to the issues and challenges faced by society today. By expanding the space for interpretation and understanding, the new semantic paradigm enables the Quran to provide relevant guidance and direction in human life in this era.

Operationally, there are several approaches used in the semantic analysis of the Quran. The first approach is the structural approach, which analyzes the relationships between preceding and succeeding verses. This approach focuses on the intrinsic elements of the Quran related to textual context. The second approach is the analysis of asbāb nuzūl, which examines the situational context when the Quranic verses were revealed to the first generation of recipients. This analysis involves the extrinsic elements of the Quran related to the situational context. However, this analysis does not directly determine meanings but serves as a tool for understanding the Quran. Subsequently, the third approach integrates the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the Quran to gain a deeper understanding. The fourth approach involves syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis to examine the correlations between words within verses and the historical meanings of those words. The goal of this analysis is to capture the linguistic emphasis that conveys Quranic meaning. Finally, the task of the current reader is to connect the meanings of the past with the meanings of the present in the effort of interpreting the Quran. The integration of these two meanings is the essence of the Quran that needs to be applied in an unlimited context.

5. REFERENCES