

Semantic Analysis of al-'Afw as the Basic Principle of Forgiveness and Restorative Justice in the Qur'an

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the semantic analysis of the Qur'an with the context of the word al-'Afw, the purpose of this analysis is to know and understand the concept of the word al-'Afw in the Qur'an based on Semantic review, by observing its various forms in the Qur'an. The word al-'Afw which was investigated from the book al-mu'jam al mufahras li alfadz al-Quran al-karim was found 35 times scattered in 11 surahs with several different forms and mostly means forgiveness of sins. In assessing the meaning of al-'Afw, the author uses a qualitative type of research and library research as a data collection method that aims to find meaning in depth. While the approach used in this study is to use Toshihiko Izutsu's Quranic Semantics approach, as for the methodological steps, namely by showing the basic meaning, looking for relational meaning, paying attention to changes in the meaning of al-'Afw through historical analysis, namely synchronic and diachronic, and the last step tracing the weltanschauung of the word al - 'Afw. Al-'afw in the context of forgiveness also has a harmonious relationship with several terms in the Qur'an, namely shafa (leniency), ghafar (forgiveness) and taubah (repentance). These words have their own meaning.

Keywords: Qur'an, al-'Afw, semantic analysis, Toshihiko Izutsu, forgiveness

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji analisis semantik Al-Qur'an dengan konteks kata al-'Afw, tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk mengetahui dan memahami konsep kata al-'Afw dalam Al-Qur'an berdasarkan tinjauan Semantik, dengan mengamati berbagai bentuknya dalam Al-Qur'an. Kata al-'Afw yang diselidiki dari kitab al-mu'jam al mufahras li alfadz al-Quran al-karim ditemukan 35 kali tersebar dalam 11 surah dengan beberapa bentuk yang berbeda dan sebagian besar berarti pengampunan dosa. Dalam menilai pengertian al-'Afw, penulis menggunakan jenis penelitian kualitatif dan penelitian perpustakaan sebagai metode pengumpulan data yang bertujuan untuk menemukan makna secara mendalam. Sedangkan pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah dengan menggunakan pendekatan Semantik Al-Qur'an Toshihiko Izutsu, sedangkan untuk langkah-langkah metodologis, yaitu dengan menunjukkan makna dasar, mencari makna relasional, memperhatikan perubahan makna al-'Afw melalui analisis sejarah, yaitu sinkronis dan diakronis, dan langkah terakhir menelusuri weltanschauung dari kata al - 'Afw. Al-'afw dalam konteks pengampunan juga memiliki hubungan yang harmonis dengan beberapa istilah dalam Al-Qur'an, yaitu shafa (keringanan hukuman), ghafar (pengampunan) dan taubah (pertobatan). Kata-kata ini memiliki arti tersendiri.

Kata kunci: Al-Qur'an, al-'Afw, analisis semantik, Toshihiko Izutsu, pengampunan

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is the supreme holy book for Muslims, used not only as a spiritual guide but also as the source of all the laws that govern human life. It is believed that the Qur'an contains a variety of knowledge from different fields. Therefore, many scholars from different groups try to understand the contents of the Qur'an from different perspectives.

The Qur'an is a holy book revealed by Allah to His servants through the angel Gabriel, which was then transmitted to the Prophet Muhammad Saw, the Qur'an has content in the form of life guidance for salvation in this world and the hereafter (Drajat, 2017). The Qur'an is a book that is valid for all time until the Day of Judgment comes. Human beings are certainly commanded to apply all the contents contained in the verses of the Qur'an, whether in the form of prohibitions or commands. However, the study and application of the Qur'anic verses in everyday life is difficult for human beings because it requires a lot of thinking to understand the Qur'anic verses. Therefore, it is necessary to have someone who has mastered the requirements of interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, including mastering Arabic, memorizing the Qur'an, and understanding the contents of the Qur'an.

The purpose of the mufassir in interpreting the Qur'an is to explore the explicit meaning of a verse he is discussing so that he can examine and reveal the secret meaning of the verse so that it can be easily understood and practiced by all people (Suwarno et al., 2022). As Allah says in Surah Sad, verse 29;

كُنْزٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

“(This Qur'an is) a Book which We have revealed to you (the Prophet Muhammad), full of blessings, that they may recite its verses, and that men of understanding may learn.”

The above verse in the interpretation of al-Azhar, illustrates that the Qur'an is a book full of blessings and will guide and bring people from a life that is full of darkness to a life full of joy and hope according to the explanation of the Qur'anic verse. Therefore, human beings are required to carry out all the requests of Allah and His Messenger (Hamka, 2003b).

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, scientific progress on semantic studies continued, which was continued by the companions called the classical period. The companions of the Prophet tried to explore the verses of the Qur'an with the method of linguistics on verses that were not yet organized. One of them was Mujahid Ibn Jabbar who tried to change the basic meaning to relational meaning on one of the verses in verse 34 in Surah Al-Kahf. In this contemporary period, this approach to semantic study has experienced a very good development. One of the contemporary figures who is phenomenal for his phenomenal work and contributes to the semantics of the Qur'an is Toshihiko Izutsu (Suwarno et al., 2022).

Semantics in the Holy Qur'an became one of the studies that began to be discussed by mufassirs after a figure from Japan, Toshihiko Izutsu, a linguist. In 1966, he succeeded in publishing a book entitled *Ethical-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*. The book received a positive response from Western scholars and mufassirs because it discussed the world perspective of the Qur'an. Before this book, Toshihiko Izutsu had written a book entitled *God and Man in the Qur'an: Semantics of the Qur'anic Worldview* in 1964. This book also became one of the guidelines for mufassirs who conducted semantic studies of the Qur'an (Darmawan et al., 2020).

Humans, as social beings, should have one of the social attitudes in themselves for everyday life, which is the nature of mutual forgiveness. This attitude is a praiseworthy quality, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (sall-Allâhu 'alaihi wa sallam), who was gentle and patient. That is why the Qur'an explains it with the term *al-'afw*, which means forgiveness (Ramadanti, 2023). Therefore, it is necessary to deepen to get a broader understanding and meaning of the word *al-'Afw*, because the word is often interpreted or interpreted only about forgiveness. But in fact, the word *al-'Afw* has other meanings that can be used as a guide for life.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is categorized as qualitative research that emphasizes on analysis of the meaning of a word found in the Qur'an. By using literature research method (library research) in which the main data mainly comes from books, theses, and other sources related to the research topic.

This study analyzes the meaning of the word 'Afw in the Qur'an using the semantic approach developed by Toshihiko Izutsu. The purpose of this study is to examine and interpret the meaning of the word 'Afw through analyzing the Qur'anic text, some contemporary and classical commentaries, as well as literature related to Qur'anic semantics.

The method involves collecting Qur'anic verses that mention the word 'Afw and reviewing various commentaries to understand variations in its meaning. Then, Toshihiko Izutsu's approach is used for semantic analysis, which analyzes each word based on its basic meaning and summary with other verses.

In addition, this study uses syntagmatic analysis to see how the word 'Afw relates to other words in the Qur'an and paradigmatic analysis to compare it with its synonyms or antonyms in the Qur'an.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Semantics

Semantics is one of the fields of study in linguistics (language) that prioritizes understanding a meaning. It includes not only the meaning of individual words but also phrases, clauses, and without exception whole texts. This concept is very

important in everyday communication as well as for the analysis of a word or literary or scientific text

Semantics comes from the Greek *semantikos* which means meaning, meaning and signaling. In Greek, semantics comes from several basic words with different meanings, namely *semantikos* (meaning), *semainein* (meaning), and *sema* (sign). As for terminology, semantics is a study of science that examines a meaning, both related to the relationship between words and symbols with thoughts, and also related to the search for events in that meaning and the changes in form that occur over that event (Kahfi & Ahmadiyah, 2021).

According to Mulyono, semantics is a part of linguistics that acts to study the meaning of a word, how it began, about its development, then what causes changes in the meaning of words in history. So we can conclude that if there is a search for the meaning of a word, then semantics will work for a word to be studied, investigated, studied and examined the meaning of the word (Mutoharoh, 2020).

Toshihiko Izutsu's Semantics

Toshihiko Izutsu who was born on May 4, 1914 in Japan, he grew up in a family that has a good economy because it has a business in Japan. Since childhood, he has known and learned zen meditation and puzzles, because his father was a calligrapher and Buddhist zen practitioner. In 1937, he was a research assistant after graduating from college. Then Toshihiko Izutsu decided to translate the Quran from Arabic into Japanese for the first time, which he completed in 1958. Thanks to his linguistic translation of the Quran, many scholars used it for scientific works (Dalimunthe, 2019).

Izutsu's works are widely recognized for their ability to bridge Eastern and Western thought, thus opening up a wider space for dialogue between different philosophical and religious traditions. He is known for his in-depth approach to classical Arabic and Islamic philosophy, as well as his ability to relate key concepts in the Quran to Eastern philosophical thought traditions, such as Taoism and Zen, especially in the realm of metaphysics. One of his most influential contributions was the book "Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Quran", published in 1966. This work reflects Izutsu's interdisciplinary approach in exploring the ethical and spiritual values contained in the Quran (Ahmad et al., 2024).

According to Toshihiko Izutsu's view, the lafadz in the Qur'an are in fact not very simple to understand. Each word has a separate position, but has a dependency between words that will produce concrete meaning from the relationship. Therefore, Izutsu uses the semantic method so that the Qur'an interprets the concepts by exploring the data sourced from the Qur'an. Semantics from Izutsu's point of view is a study of key words or keywords of a language (Yaumi, 2024).

To obtain a concept in the Qur'an, Toshihiko Izutsu requires methodology as steps to analyze the Qur'an with this semantic approach. First, determining the keyword that will be the discussion of this study, in this case the keyword is lafadz al-

'Afw. Second, analyzing the basic meaning and relational meaning of the selected keywords. The basic meaning is a meaning that has characteristics that are always attached to the word itself and always carried wherever the word is positioned. Meanwhile, relational meaning is a new meaning obtained from words associated with other words in a sentence.

The third is to analyze the historical meaning of the keywords using linguistic perspectives, namely synchronic and diachronic. Toshihiko Izutsu examines its history by dividing it into three different periods. The first is Pre-Qur'anic, which is found in the jahiliyah period or when Islam the Quran did not yet exist. Then the Qur'anic period which is found during the prophetic period or when the Quran was in the stage of revelation. The last is the Post-Qur'anic period which is found when the Quran has been perfectly revealed.

The last is to explain the weltanschauung of the Qur'an or the worldview of the community towards the use of the language which is not limited as a means of speaking and thinking, but more importantly in order to be able to conceptualize and interpret it within its scope (Parhan et al., 2022).

Analysis of Basic Meaning and Relational Meaning

1. Basic Meaning

The word Al-'Afw seen from its etymology is a masdar form from the root word *afa - ya'fu - afwan* which is taken from the words '*ain, fa'* and *wawu*. In meaning, *al-'Afw* has the basic meaning of *tark al-syai* (leaving something) and *thalab Al-syai* (asking for something), which in the end the word *al-'Afw* was born which means leaving or removing a sanction against those who make mistakes. Then *al-'Afw* also means covering, even from the arrangement of the letters '*ain, fa'* and *wawu* is also born the meaning of erased or lost without a trace, because something that is erased will certainly be left behind. Furthermore, it has the meaning of excess, something that is excessive should be abandoned, meaning giving those who ask or need it (Hidayah, 2023).

Al-'Afw when it says '*afw Allah 'an khaliqih*', means *tarkuhu iyyahum fala yu'aqibbum* which means that Allah will leave them alone so as not to punish them. Al-Khalil said "everyone deserves punishment, then you let (*tarakahu*), then you have forgiven (*'afaw ta 'anhu*)". From lafadz *al-'Afw* is also the birth of the word *al-'afiyah* which means defense or protection of Allah against His servants (Khasan, 2017). Imam al-Ghazali said that Allah will always erase and forgive the badness or offense of His servants. In addition, al-Ghazali distinguishes between *al-'Afw* and *al-Ghafur*, because *al-Ghafur* only covers the sin. While *al-'Afw* emphasizes the elimination of sin. (Antonio, 2011)

Based on the large Indonesian dictionary, the word *al-'Afw* is defined as the release of a person from a punishment because he has made a mistake or is also interpreted as an expression of a request for forgiveness to the person who is the victim of his behavior. According to Shihab, the word forgiveness is part of the

absorption of Arabic, namely al-'Afw, which originally meant excessive, which is mentioned in Surah al-Baqarah verse 219 and then developed into erasure or forgiveness, which means that someone must erase the wounds or scars on his heart (Shihab, 1996b).

The verses concerning the word 'Afw based on the explanation in the book al-mu'jam al mufahras li alfadz al-Quran al-karim, the word al-'Afw is mentioned in the Qur'an 35 times in 11 surahs and has different forms (Baqi, 1987d). Here is al-'Afw in its various forms ;

Table 1. Al-'Afw

Lafadz	Verses & Surahs
عفا	Al-Baqarah : 178 Al-Imran : 100 & 152 Al-Maidah : 95 & 101 At-Taubah : 43 Asy-Syura : 40
عفونا	Al- 'Araf : 95
تعفوا	Al-Baqarah : 52 An-Nisa : 153
	Al-Baqarah : 237 An-Nisa : 149 At-Taghabun : 14
نعف	At-Taubah : 66
يعف	Asy-Syura : 34

يعفو	Al-Baqarah : 237 An-Nisa : 99
يعفوا	Al-Maidah : 15 Asy-Syura : 25 & 30
وليعفوا	An- Nur : 22
يعفون	Al-Baqarah : 237
اعف	Al-Baqarah : 286 Al-Imran : 159 Al-Maidah : 13
اعفوا	Al-Baqarah : 109
عفي	Al-Baqarah : 179
العفو	Al-Baqarah : 219 Al-'Araf : 199
عفو	Al-Hajj : 60 Al-Mujadalah : 2

عفو	An-Nisa : 43, 99 & 149
العافين	Al-Imran : 134

Of the various terms above regarding al-'Afw when described based on the verses will mean various perspectives. Most of them relate to forgiveness or forgiveness which is an attribute of Allah addressed to His servants. In addition, it also describes human morals to be lenient or forgiving of fellow humans.

2. Relational meaning

After examining the basic meaning of the word al-'Afw, the next step is to examine the relational meaning of al-'Afw. Relational meaning itself is a new meaning conveyed to a lafadz due to a change in circumstances. To analyze relational meaning requires an understanding of the relationship or relationship in a word that is related to other words. In addition, it is necessary to use syntagmatic analysis and paradigmatic analysis to find out the relational meaning (Ahmad, I., Boriri, A, & Atib, 2023). For more details, here is the analysis

a. Syntagmatic analysis

In this analysis, what needs to be done is trying to find the meaning of al-'Afw by looking at the lafadz located in front and behind the lafadz al-'Afw in one context, then the meaning of the word formed from these words will appear (Ramadhani, 2020). The following verses of the Qur'an related to the word "al-'Afw" were found.

1. The Relation of Al-'Afw to Allah's Attributes

Of the many lafadz al-'afw, most of its meanings indicate one of the attributes possessed by Allah which also includes asmaul husna, namely the Forgiving. The verses that show the meaning of the Forgiving nature are mentioned in 8 surahs of the Qur'an. As in the following list ;

Table 2. Surah of the Qur'an

Surahs	Verses
Al-Baqarah	187 & 52
Al-Imran	152 & 155
An-Nisa	43,99,149 & 153
Al-Maidah	95 & 101
At-Taubah	43 & 66
Al-Hajj	60
Asy-Syura	25, 30 & 34
Al-Mujadalah	2

The word al-'Afw in the verses above indicates that Allah has a substance that is all forgiving and forgives sins for sinful behaviors committed by His servants, for example as mentioned in surah Asy - Syura verse 25 which reads:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

The Meaning is :” *It is He who accepts repentance from His servants, forgives mistakes, knows what you do.*” (Kemenag RI, 2022)

In the interpretation of al-Azhar, Buya Hamka explains that no matter how many and how big the mistakes caused by lust, the world and the devil, Allah will accept the repentance of His servants and forgive them as long as they sincerely ask Him for forgiveness. Undoubtedly, the sins of previous mistakes will be wiped out by Allah. It is in this verse that the Prophet commands the polytheists to be on the noble way (Hamka, 2003c). As in the interpretation of Ath-Thabari, the meaning of verse 25 is that Allah always accepts the repentance of a servant if he returns to piety and obedience to worship after disbelieving in Allah. From the sentence *السَّيِّئَاتِ عَنِ وَيَعْفُو* indicates that Allah not only forgives, but removes the punishment that will be imposed on him (Ath-Thabari, 2007).

With the explanation of the example of the verse above from several mufassirs, we can understand that this lafadz al-'Afw is not just a mere forgiveness. But it has a very extraordinary meaning when associated with Allah SWT. which ultimately contains the meaning of one of the attributes of Allah, namely the Forgiving who will accept the repentance of His servants who are earnest.

2. The relationship with noble character

The word al-'Afw found in the context of praiseworthy akhlaq regarding the behavior of forgiving each other in the Quran as many as 9 verses in 8 letters with different derivations. It proves that having the akhlaq of forgiving each other between humans is very important in living life. The following verses contain the meaning of mutual forgiveness;

Table 3. The Relationship with Noble Character

Surahs	Verses
Al-Baqarah	109 & 237
Al-Imran	134 & 159
An-Nisa	149
Al-Maidah	13
Al-'Araf	199
An-Nur	22
Asy-Syura	40
At-Taghabun	14

The morality of forgiving each other is a picture of Muslims who are devoted to Allah, therefore instructing His servants to always be open-minded when someone behaves badly towards us. As in Surah al-Imran verse 134 which reads;

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكُظُمِينَ الْغَيْظِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

The meaning is: *“Those who give alms in times of plenty and want, those who control their anger, and those who forgive others their mistakes. Allah loves those who do good”*. (Kemenag RI, 2022)

In Tafsir Al-Misbah, the above verse contains three pieces of advice, namely spending their wealth in the way of Allah, restraining anger, and forgiving mistakes. In the context of the word الْعَافِينَ which is taken from the word العفن which means sorry and has another meaning that means erasing. If someone has forgiven others, it means that they have erased the scars in the heart that come from other people's mistakes against us (Shihab, 2007).

Meanwhile, in the interpretation of Ath-Thabari, the meaning of النَّاسِ عَنِ وَالْعَافِينَ is those who prefer to give forgiveness or not to retaliate for what others have done to us, even though they could have done it. This is one of the deeds favored by Allah and is promised a very great reward, namely heaven (Ath-Thabari, 2007).

3. The relationship with wealth

Some of the words al-'Afw have meanings in the context of wealth which means increasing and exaggerating the wealth they have. In the Quran it is mentioned in 2 different verses and surahs, here are the verses;

Table 4. The Relationship with Wealth

Surahs	Verses
Al-Baqarah	219
Al-'Araf	95

In Surah al-'Araf verse 95 has content related to the promise of Allah who will add offspring and wealth to a country's population. As in the word of Allah;

ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ الْحَسَنَةَ حَتَّىٰ عَفَوْا وَقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ آبَاءَنَا الضَّرَّاءُ وَالسَّرَّاءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

The meaning is: "Then, We replaced the affliction with pleasure (so that their offspring and wealth) increased. Then, they said, "Indeed, our fathers had experienced suffering and pleasure." So, We inflicted a torment upon them suddenly, while they were unaware".

The meaning of the word عفا in the interpretation of Al Misbah is to increase, which describes an impression of not feeling burdened. This is because it is also interpreted as forgiveness, therefore something that is forgiven has no meaning anymore. The use of عفا in this verse also explains the increase in sustenance in the form of wealth and offspring that they will receive. (Shihab, 2002b)

In the interpretation of Ath-Thabari, this verse explains the existence of a country whose inhabitants Allah gave a test in the form of hardship and suffering that they received because of their actions, namely shirk. Some interpretations such as Jonah's explain about عَفَوْا حَتَّىٰ الْحَسَنَةَ السَّيِّئَةِ مَكَانَ بَدَّلْنَا ثُمَّ which means that something that is not liked by them will be replaced with what they like in the life of the world. Some other interpretations interpret it with the increase in the number of their descendants which is increasing to more and more abundant wealth (Ath-Thabari, 2007).

4. The Relationship with Diyat (Substitute Punishment)

There is one mention of lafadz al-'Afw with عفي in Surah al-Baqarah verse 178, in the verse contains the provisions of punishment for the perpetrators of murder. As in His words:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنثَىٰ بِالْأُنثَىٰ فَمَنْ عَفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبِعْهُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءُ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

The meaning is: “O you who believe! It is obligatory upon you (to carry out) the qisas in respect of those who are killed. Freeman for freeman, slave for slave, woman for woman. But whoever obtains forgiveness from his brother, let him follow him kindly, and pay him the diyat (ransom) kindly. Such is a relief and mercy from your Lord. Whoever transgresses after that, then he will have a very painful punishment.”(Kemenag RI, 2022)

In the interpretation of al-Misbah, the meaning of عَفَى above is as a form of forgiveness given from the family of the murdered. To obtain forgiveness, the recipient of the forgiveness must give or pay a substitute for ransom or diyat to his family. However, it should be noted that the family of the murdered should not ask for excessive diyat, and the perpetrator should immediately pay it without delaying for unclear reasons (Shihab, 2002a).

فَمَنْ عَفَى لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ

From the above interpretation according to Abu Ja'far, the meaning is if the family or heirs of the victim grant the perpetrator release from qishas or punishment and forgiveness. As a substitute, the perpetrator is required to pay and fulfill the diyat that has been agreed upon wisely. From another narration, what is meant by forgiveness is that the guardian is entitled to receive diyat from the perpetrator who has killed intentionally who is asked nicely.(Ath-Thabari, 2007c)

b. Paradigmatic Analysis

In addition to analyzing from a syntagmatic point of view, the word “al-‘Afw” is also analyzed from a paradigmatic point of view which is an attempt to find meaning by comparing the word under study with words that have synonymity or anonymity (Syaifullah, 2021). The following is a paradigmatic analysis of the word al-‘Afw :

1. Synonyms

a. Shafah

According to Quraish Shihab in his book entitled Al-Quran Insights, the word ash-Shafh means spacious. The pages in a book are called shafhat because they have spaciousness and breadth. Therefore, al-Shafh can mean spaciousness of the chest. Meanwhile, shaking hands is called mushafat because it symbolizes the spaciousness of one’s chest. The word al-Shafh is mentioned repeatedly in the Qur’an 8 times with various forms, four of which are preceded by the command to forgive (Shihab, 1996). One of them is mentioned in surah an-Nur verse 22 ;

وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُولُو الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلْيَعْفُوا
وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ

أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ يَا اللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

The meaning is: "Let not those who are wealthy among you swear that they will not support their relatives, the poor, and those who migrate in the cause of Allah. Let them be forgiving and tolerant. Do you not like that Allah forgives you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (Kemenag RI, 2022)

Some scholars such as Ar-Raghib Al-Isfahani said that al-Shafh has a higher position than the position of al-'Afw because something that is erased does not necessarily remove its entire mark, while ash-shafh erases all until it leaves no trace. When a person has reached the stage of spaciousness of heart, there will be a desire from those who forgive to re-establish good relations with the person who has hurt him (Huda & Fitriana, 2020).

b. Ghafar

The word Ghafar comes from the root "Ghafara" which means to close. On the other hand, some argue that the word al-Ghafaru is a type of plant used to treat wounds. If taken from the first opinion, then Allah al-Ghafar means covering the sins of His servants out of mercy and grace. But if taken from the second opinion, it means that Allah grants His servants a regret for their sins, so that it becomes an antidote and expiation of sins. With this opinion, both can be true and justified, because in life in the world it is Allah who fosters a sense of regret in His servants, so that they will ask for forgiveness when they make mistakes. Then Allah will forgive His servants who are repentant (Widiyawati, 2017).

When viewed from the difference between the attributes of Allah Afuwun and Ghafur, it can be seen from the basic meaning, Afuwun means Allah's Compassion, Allah's Forgiveness, meaning that He can forgive His servants. Not only that, Allah also gives His grace to be clean from the record of sin. Meanwhile, the nature of al-Ghafur is the Most Forgiving, not only giving forgiveness to His servants who repent, but He will also cover all the disgraces of His servants perfectly. In contrast to 'Afuwun, the nature of al-Ghafur only forgives human sins and mistakes and the record of sins will remain (Febriany, 2021).

In the book al-mu'jam al mufahras li alfadz al-Quran al-karim, the word Ghafara is repeated 234 times in 56 surahs in the Quran with various forms (Baqi, 1987a). One of them is mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 173:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالْدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخَيْزُرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

The meaning is: "Indeed, He has only forbidden you carrion, blood, pork, and (the meat of) animals slaughtered in (the name of) other than Allah. But whoever is compelled to eat them, not for want of appetite, and

does not transgress the limits, there is no sin on him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."(Kemenag ri, 2022)

c. Taubah

The word Taubah is derived from the word *taba* (تاب) linguistically the word *taubah* means to return or regret. Terminologically, *taubah* means an attempt to return from sinful behavior or sin towards obedience to Allah followed by regret for all his sinful deeds. Therefore, the person who repents is called *at-ta'ib*, which means a person who is aware of his sinful actions that are prohibited and everything that is hated by His command. According to Abu Ali Ad-Daqaq, that repentance has three kinds of meaning, the first is repentance which means returning which means repenting for fear of punishment, secondly, *inabah* which means repeatedly returning which means repenting for the hope of reward, and finally, *aubah* which means returning which means showing one's careful and thorough attitude (Ridho, 2019).

According to Al-Qusyairi, someone who does repentance is not an easy enough action, but must have the willingness to know his mistakes and regret with a strong determination not to do it again. If this awareness is found in a person's character identity, then he will try not to do the wrong thing for the second time (Lendra, 2022). In the Quran, the word *taubah* is found and mentioned many times. Based on the book *al-mu'jam al mufahras li alfadz al-Quran al-karim*, *lafadz taubah* is mentioned 87 times in 27 surahs with various forms (Baqi, 1987b). One of them is mentioned in Surah An-Nisa verse 17:

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

The meaning is: "The only repentance that Allah will accept is for those who do evil out of ignorance, then they repent immediately. They are the ones whom Allah accepts their repentance. Allah is All-Knowing and All-Wise."(Kemenag RI, 2022)

2. Antonyms

a. Al-Iqab

The root word of *al-'Iqab* is *'aqaba-ya'qubu-'iqaban* (عقاب – يعقب), which linguistically means to replace, trace, reply, punishment, the end of everything. Whereas in terms, *al-'Iqab* is an act of rewarding or giving someone a law in accordance with what he has done (Akram, 2018). In general, the purpose of *iqab* is aimed at the servant of Allah to improve behavior, warning so as not to become a human being who commits damage and aims for the servant of Allah to always obey the

rules of Allah SWT and the prophet Muhammad according to the Qur'an and as-Sunnah (Rezki, 2022).

The word al-Iqab in the Qur'an is mentioned in various suras 80 times in various forms, including in Surah ar-Ra'du verse 32, Surah Shad verse 14, Surah al-Kahf verse 44, Surah al-Hajj verse 60, al-Hasyr verse 4 and 7, and others (Baqi, 1987c). As for the context of rewarding the wrongdoing of fellow humans, it is explained in QS. Al-Hajj verse 60, as Allah says:

ذٰلِكَ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوْقِبَ بِهِ نُمِّيْ عَلَيْهِ لِيُنْصِرْتَهُ اللّٰهُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُوْرٌ

The meaning is "Thus, whoever avenges in proportion to the persecution he has suffered and then is wronged (again) will surely be helped by Allah. Verily, Allah is indeed Forgiving and Merciful." (Kemenag RI, 2022)

The above verse in the book of interpretation al-Azhar by Buya Hamka explains that Allah allows or allows His servants to reply to people who have committed injustice with a reply that is balanced or does not exceed the perpetrator's injustice. Allah even promises a help if the wrongdoer retaliates again (Hamka, 2003).

Synchronic and Diachronic Analysis

After analyzing the relational meaning of the word al-'Afw, the next step is to analyze the meaning of al-'Afw from the historical or historical side of the word. In analyzing the meaning of words historically, the semantics of the Qur'an is divided into two approaches, namely diachronic and synchronic. The meaning of diachronic itself is to observe the language that focuses on the element of time. While synchronic is an understanding of the period in which the word appears and changes meaning over time in the use of the word in society (Azima, 2017).

The purpose of this synchronic and diachronic analysis is to obtain a complete and in-depth semantic analysis, meaning that it is not only seen from the language structure (vocabulary, basic meaning, and relational). Analyzing the meaning of the lafadz from the historical side is very important because it is to find out whether there is a change in meaning or not from the lafadz al-'Afw from time to time. Therefore, Toshihiko izutsu divides three periods, namely Pre Qur'anic, Qur'anic, and post Qur'anic (Rajab Sihobing, 2023).

Pre-Quranic period

The pre-Quranic period is a term used in the study of a lafadz in the Qur'an in the use of the lafadz before the Qur'an was revealed or received by the Prophet Muhammad Saw (Ayuni et al., 2024). In this discussion, we will explore other meanings of lafadz al-'Afw before the Qur'an was revealed or in the jahiliyyah era.

In the book *Al-Mufradat fi Gharib Al-Qur'an*, the word *al-'Afw* is interpreted as a form of desire to obtain something or it can be interpreted as wanting to consume what he has. In addition, in the context of a command, *al-'Afw* has the meaning of leaving or ignoring as mentioned in the hadith quote from Ibn Umar *أعفوا للحي*, which means "Leave the beard" (Al-Ashfahani, 2017).

In an excerpt of a poem written by Al-Kumayt, *وظلَّ غُلامٌ الحَيِّ طَيَّانٌ ساغِباً* which describes the youth of the tribe describing a state of hunger and suffering. *Al-'Afw* is used as a gift of food to someone who is experiencing hunger as explained in the book *mu'jam Muqayyis al-lughah* ;

العفاوة: شيء يُرْفَع من الطعام يُتَخَف به الإنسان وإِنما هو من العَفْو وهو الترك، وذلك أَنه تُرك فلم يُؤْكَل.

Al-'Ifaawatu is something that is removed from food and given as a dish or gift to someone. Indeed it comes from the word '*al-'Afw*' which means to leave out, i.e. something that is left out (not eaten)" (ibnu Faris, 1994).

Qur'anic period

This Qur'anic period is the time when the revelation of the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad Saw along with the arrival of Islam with a new idea and system, including the meaning of the lafadz in the Qur'an. So that in this Qur'anic period some words and expressions that existed in the pre-Qur'anic period experienced development or change in meaning (Ramdani, 2023). In the context of *al-'Afw* itself there are two letters, namely Surah *al-'Araf* verse 199 and Surah *Al-Baqarah* verse 219, both of which have different meanings in the Qur'an.

As for Surah *al-'Araf* verse 199, it describes an order to be forgiving, this verse was revealed in connection with the behavior of the jahilyah and musyrikin who worshiped other than Allah SWT, namely idols. Then the verse was revealed to provide guidance to the Prophet and his people in preaching against them. Al-Biq'a'I said the meaning of *اِحْذِ الْعَفْوَ* is to take something easy and light for the actions of others sincerely, meaning to forgive the mistakes of others (Shihab, 2002).

In the context of Surah *Al-Baqarah* verse 219, the term "*al-'Afw*" is translated as "excess," which serves to convey the command from Allah to give. As expressed in His words;

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ هَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ

According to Abu Ja'far, the verse relates to the Companions who asked the Prophet Muhammad about what to spend from his wealth, then he replied: the excess of his needs. The meaning of excess is that if the property owned by a person has exceeded and fulfilled the needs of himself and his family, it is permissible to give it in charity (Ath-Thabari, 2007).

Post-Quranic period

The meaning of the Qur'anic verses at this time has developed in its meaning even though it does not have a significant difference or change in meaning from the time before the Qur'an was revealed to the time the Qur'an was revealed. It was during this period that *lafadz al-'Afw* began to be used in understanding language, social, law, Sufism, and the science of theology. The meaning of *al-'Afw* in the *Al-Munawwir* is interpreted as related to forgiveness or forgiveness of one's sin (Munawwir, 1997). Similarly, the meaning in the large Indonesian dictionary is known as the word "maaf" which means giving freedom to someone who has made a mistake or negligence that causes harm (Kemendikbudristek, 2008).

In Islamic law and social science, *lafadz al-'Afw* is used in the context of forgiveness or release of punishment that will be received by someone who has made a mistake. Forgiveness is one of the important aspects in dealing with conflicts that occur in social life in order to avoid division. Therefore, those who can forgive the wrongdoings of others are a form of spaciousness of heart, high faith, piety, and expect the pleasure and forgiveness of Allah. As the Prophet said; "Whoever forgives when he is able to retaliate, Allah gives him forgiveness on the day of trouble" (H.R. Ath-Thabari). (Fajar, 2021)

As for the meaning of theology, it is described more in the introduction of the attributes of Allah and one of His attributes is the Forgiving or *Al-'Afw*. The existence of this attribute of Allah shows His mercy to humans by forgiving and eliminating all sins, vices, abominations and offenses for those who want to ask for forgiveness (Antonio, 2011).

Weltanschauung

After analyzing the basic meaning and relational meaning of *al-'Afw* and also analyzing the synchronic and diachronic meanings, the next stage of Izutsu's method is the stage of finding a global view of the understanding and use of the word *al-'Afw*. In order to express it, one needs to have a deep knowledge of the concept to study the *lafadz* to be analyzed. According to Izutsu, every Qur'anic *lafadz* has a meaning that develops due to local cultural and historical factors (Mustaqimah et al., 2025). The word *al-'Afw* in the Qur'an is generally related to the meaning of erasure, forgiveness or forgiveness related to God and humans.

From the explanation above, we can divide it into 2 concepts, namely *al-'Afw* in the concept of divinity and *al-'Afw* in the human concept. The first concept of God's relationship with humans is bound as an attribute of God. It is known that *al-'Afw* is one of the attributes of Allah which means "Forgiving". In the Islamic worldview, this trait shows a harmonious impression of compassion from Allah towards His servants who are not limited to just forgiving and even abolishing sins and their punishments. From this explanation, it shows that Allah gives hope or opportunity for humans to improve themselves and repent asking for Allah's forgiveness.

Then al-'Afw in the concept of human relations with humans. In a global view, this concept refers to the nature or character of a person to forgive each other (Forgiveness) without holding grudges for other people's mistakes in order to repair relationships well. Therefore, al-'Afw is very important in social relations as a form of harmony and compassion. As has been exemplified by Allah who is the Most Forgiving and Merciful.

In the context of emulating the Prophet Muhammad, one of the noble morals he possessed was al-'Afw. The Prophet Muhammad was sent by Allah along with a mission to perfect the morals of mankind so that human degrees are better. Rasulullah SAW is known as a very forgiving person and extensive patience. He did not repay the badness of those who antagonized him by means of badness but by forgiving him. Even the Prophet forgave those who were hostile to him without waiting to ask for an apology. Therefore, mankind to make the Messenger of Allah a perfect example in the world so that it will have high morals in society and feel the ease of the road to heaven (Nizar, 2024).

Al-'Afw is also known as a system or concept in the application of criminal law that prioritizes humanity and justice applied in several countries called Restorative Justice. Conceptually, al-'Afw aims to resolve legal issues between the perpetrator and the victim by providing compensation or fines as compensation so that it is free from punishment. Therefore, in this law enforcement, the presence of al-'Afw is a major factor in order to create peace and common good because they can forgive each other sincerely (Nugroho et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

The results of the above research show that the word "Al-'Afw" in the Qur'an has a wide and varied meaning. In general, the word "Al-'Afw" means abandoning or removing punishment for mistakes, whose meaning includes an understanding of God's forgiveness and His forgiving nature. The word "Al-'Afw" appears 35 times in the Qur'an with various contexts, and most of them convey forgiveness of sins. Moreover, this study emphasizes how important it is to understand the basic meaning and relationship of the words; this not only helps us understand linguistically but also encourages people to apply the principle of forgiveness and forgiving each other in daily life.

Meanwhile, synchronic and diachronic analysis shows that the phrase "Al-'Afw" has changed its meaning from pre-Qur'anic to post-Qur'anic times. This shows that the value of forgiveness develops and can be applied in various cultural and social contexts. From the analysis The weltanschauung concept of "Al-'Afw" illustrates a worldview of the Qur'an that emphasizes forgiveness as an essential element in the relationship between God and human beings, as well as between each other, to create a harmonious and compassionate society.

The study confirms and enriches the theoretical framework established by Toshihiko Izutsu, supporting the assertion that the meanings of Qur'anic keywords are dynamic and interconnected. Overall, the purpose of this semantic study is to gain a better understanding of the meaning and use of the concept of forgiveness in everyday life and encourage humanity to cultivate a forgiving and respectful attitude in accordance with the teachings in the Qur'an.

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