



SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SYNONYMY OF THE MEANING OF KHATAMA AND ṬABA'A IN THE QURAN: CONTEXTUAL RELEVANCE FOR CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION STUDIES

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Abstract

The synonymy of meaning between the words khatama and ṭaba'a in the Qur'an has become an important issue in semantic and exegesis studies. These two words are often understood to have similar meanings, namely to close, but have different contextual nuances. This study aims to analyze the semantic differences between khatama and ṭaba'a, and evaluate their relevance in the context of contemporary exegesis. The method used is a qualitative method with semantic-comparative analysis techniques. The results of the study show that khatama tends to be used to describe God's action in closing the heart permanently as a consequence of rejecting the truth, while ṭaba'a is more of a locking action that is oriented towards cause and effect. In the context of contemporary exegesis, this difference is relevant to understanding the dynamics of guidance and rejection of the truth in modern society. In conclusion, khatama and ṭaba'a are not entirely synonymous, but rather have specific contextual meanings. This study makes an important contribution in deepening the study of the semantics of the Qur'an and enriching the interpretation of exegesis with a contextual approach.

Keywords: Khatama, Ṭaba'a, Al-Quran, Semantics, Contemporary Tafsir

Abstrak

Sinonimitas makna antara kata khatama dan ṭaba'a dalam Al-Quran telah menjadi isu penting dalam studi semantik dan tafsir. Kedua kata ini sering dipahami memiliki makna yang serupa, yaitu menutup, tetapi memiliki nuansa kontekstual yang berbeda. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perbedaan semantik antara khatama dan ṭaba'a, serta mengevaluasi relevansinya dalam konteks tafsir kontemporer. Metode yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif dengan teknis analisis semantik-komparatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa khatama cenderung digunakan untuk menggambarkan tindakan Allah dalam menutup hati secara permanen sebagai konsekuensi dari penolakan terhadap kebenaran, sementara ṭaba'a lebih bersifat tindakan pengunci yang berorientasi pada sebab-akibat. Dalam konteks tafsir kontemporer, perbedaan ini relevan untuk memahami dinamika hidayah dan penolakan terhadap kebenaran dalam masyarakat modern. Kesimpulannya, khatama dan ṭaba'a tidak sepenuhnya sinonim, melainkan memiliki makna kontekstual yang spesifik. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dalam memperdalam studi semantik Al-Quran dan memperkaya interpretasi tafsir dengan pendekatan yang kontekstual.

Kata kunci: Khatama, Ṭaba'a, Al-Quran, Semantik, Tafsir Kontemporer



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INTRODUCTION

Al-Quran studies often utilize semantic analysis as an important approach to understanding the meaning and contextual relevance of the words contained therein.¹ A problem that often becomes a topic of discussion in interpretation studies is the synonymy or difference in meaning of words that appear similar but have different contexts of use.² One example is *khatama* (ختم) and *ṭaba'a* (طبع), which are often translated as meaning to cover or cover. These two words appear in verses of the Koran which describe the condition of the human heart, especially in the context of a heart that is closed to guidance.

In the context of contemporary interpretation, semantic analysis of these two terms becomes increasingly significant. Modern approaches that integrate linguistics, semiotics, and hermeneutics open up opportunities to study the meaning of these two words more comprehensively. By utilizing modern technology, such as linguistic corpus analysis, researchers can explore the usage patterns of *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* not only in the Qur'an but also in other classical Arabic texts.

In addition, the relevance of this study also includes aspects of contemporary life of Muslims. In the modern era full of spiritual challenges, the issue of openness of heart to truth and guidance becomes very relevant.³ Interpretation of verses that use the words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* can provide a deep theological perspective on how humans can keep their hearts open to Allah's guidance, while also understanding the consequences of continued disobedience. Thus, semantic analysis of these two words not only contributes to the study of interpretation, but also helps Muslims to reflect on their spiritual condition in facing the dynamics of modern life.

Furthermore, this study is also relevant to understanding the dynamics between human free will and God's will, which is one of the central themes in Islamic theological discussions.⁴ The use of the words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* in the Qur'an is often associated with the question of whether humans really have the freedom to accept or reject guidance, or whether the rejection is a consequence of God's decision. By analyzing these two words semantically, this study can help explain how the Qur'an depicts the relationship between human effort and divine will, thus

¹ Sansyzbay Chukhanov and Nurlan Kairbekov, "The Importance of a Semantic Approach in Understanding the Texts of the Holy Quran and Sunnah," *Pharos Journal of Theology* 105, no. 3 (2024): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.36>.

² Badrus Samsul Fata and S Mahmudah Noorhayati, "Mazhab Sinonimitas (Al-Tarâduf) Dalam 'Ulumul Qur'an," *AL Fikrah: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (2022): 26–40, <https://doi.org/10.51476/alfikrah.v2i1.356>.

³ Thomas Gatzka, "Aspects of Openness as Predictors of Academic Achievement," *Personality and Individual Differences* 170 (2021): 110422, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110422>.

⁴ Mohammad Yunus Masrukhin, "The Will And The Presence Of Human Being In Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari's Thought: Explaining the Relation between Human and God in Kalam Discourse," *Al-Jami'ah* 59, no. 1 (2021): 221–54, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2021.591.221-254>.

producing a more holistic and deeper understanding of the sacred text.

Previous studies related to synonyms in the Quran have been conducted by several researchers, such as in the research conducted by Nuraini and Majid (2021) which discussed the phenomenon of synonyms in the use of words that have the same meaning in the Quran, such as *rahmah* and *barakah*.⁵ Another study by Sweta et al., (2022) examines the differences in implicit meaning between *al-Ins* and *Basyar* according to *al-Raghib al-Aṣḥānī*, highlighting the importance of understanding the subtle differences between the two.⁶ In addition, research by Rohman, Irfan and Amin (2023) regarding the word *nur* shows that in the context of the Qur'an, *nur* not only refers to material light, but also includes God's guidance, the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad, faith, justice, God's religion, rewards, and revelation.⁷

The theme of this research is different from the previous studies presented because it focuses more on the semantic analysis of the words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a*. This study will emphasize the differences in meaning and use of these two words in a broader context, and how these two words influence contemporary interpretations. This study will examine two words, “*khatama*” and “*ṭaba'a*,” which are often considered synonymous in translation, but have very different meanings when understood in a deeper semantic context. On that basis, this study aims to reveal the fundamental differences between the two, and how the use of these words can provide new perspectives in understanding spiritual and moral concepts.

This research is important because it provides new insights into contemporary tafsir studies that can change the perspective of understanding the spiritual dynamics in the Qur'an, especially in the context of the development of Islamic preaching and education today. The expected contribution is to provide enlightenment in understanding how seemingly similar Qur'anic words can have very different impacts in theological and practical understanding, as well as enriching tafsir studies with a sharper and contextual semantic approach.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method with a semantic analysis approach to examine the synonymy of the meaning of the words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* in the Qur'an. The semantic approach was chosen to explore the differences and similarities in the meaning of the two words in the

⁵ Nuraini and Dhira Majid, “Lafaz *Rahmah* in the Quran,” *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)* 4, no. 3 (2021): 5548–57, <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v4i3.2351>.

⁶ Andri Arungga Sweta et al., “The Urgency of *Siyaq* (Interpretation of the Word *Al-Ins* and *Basyar* Perspective of *Ar-Raghib Al-Ashfahani*) in *Buku Al-Mufrodāt Fī Gharīb Al-Qur'an*,” *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies* 1, no. 3 (2022): 329–42, <https://doi.org/10.23917/qist.v1i3.2221>.

⁷ Abdul Rohman, Muhammad Irfan, and Amin Amin, “Tracing the Meaning of the Word *Nūr* in the Qur'an: Encyclopedic Semantic Application,” *Jurnal Kawakib* 4, no. 2 (2024): 155–69, <https://doi.org/10.24036/kwakib.v4i2.176>.

context of the verses that use them, by considering the linguistic, contextual, and interpretation dimensions. The main data source used in this study is the Qur'an itself, referring to various classical and contemporary interpretations to enrich the understanding of the meaning of the two words. In addition, prominent interpretations such as the Tafsir al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, and al-Baidāwī, as well as relevant contemporary interpretations, will be used as supporting sources to explore the context of understanding.

The data collection technique was carried out by means of documentation studies of the texts of the Qur'an and interpretations, as well as other supporting references related to semantic studies. The collected data will be analyzed semantically-comparatively by mapping the use of the two words in various contexts and identifying their relevance and differences in contemporary interpretations. The data obtained were analyzed by comparing the meaning of the words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* based on linguistic and interpretation perspectives, as well as examining the relevance of the meaning of the two words in today's social and cultural context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Semantic Studies in Al-Quran Studies

Semantics in the study of the Qur'an refers to the science that studies the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences in the Qur'an. Semantics is not only limited to literal or lexical meaning, but also includes contextual and interpretive meanings that can develop over time.⁸ In the context of the Quran, semantics is essential to understanding the depth and complexity of the messages of revelation conveyed by Allah to humanity.⁹ The meanings in the Quran are often multidimensional, with layers of meaning that can be explored more deeply through tafsir (interpretation). Therefore, the study of semantics in the Quran is key to formulating a deeper understanding of the verses of the Quran in various contexts, both linguistically, historically, and socially.¹⁰

The study of semantics in the Koran developed along with the development of the discipline of interpretation itself. Since the beginning of Islamic history, mufasssīr (experts of interpretation) have tried to understand the meanings of Al-Quran verses by paying attention to

⁸ Faiza Beirade, Hamid Azzoune, and D Eddine Zegour, "Semantic Query for Quranic Ontology," *Journal of King Saud University - Computer and Information Sciences* 33, no. 6 (2021): 753–60, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksuci.2019.04.005>.

⁹ Rahima Bentrucia, Samir Zidat, and Farhi Marir, "Extracting Semantic Relations from the Quranic Arabic Based on Arabic Conjunctive Patterns," *Journal of King Saud University - Computer and Information Sciences* 30, no. 3 (2018): 382–90, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksuci.2017.09.004>.

¹⁰ Menwa Alshammeri, Eric Atwell, and Mhd ammar Alsalka, "Detecting Semantic-Based Similarity Between Verses of The Quran with Doc2vec," *Procedia Computer Science* 189 (2021): 351–58, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2021.05.104>.

the context of the classical Arabic language used in the Al-Quran.¹¹ However, as time progresses, semantic studies in the Qur'an involve new, more modern approaches. For example, with the emergence of more systematic linguistic and linguistic studies in the 20th century, semantic studies of the Qur'an began to incorporate more recent language theories, such as structuralism and semiotics.¹²

The use of semantic theory in interpretation also began to lead to a more contextual and relevant understanding of the current situation. With the emergence of various branches of social sciences and humanities, including anthropology and sociology, the study of the semantics of the Qur'an increasingly considers cultural and social factors in understanding the text.¹³ This encourages interpreters to pay attention to the pragmatic aspect in understanding the meaning of the verses, namely how the message in the Qur'an can be translated or applied in real life according to the conditions of society at that time and in the present.

In addition, modern semantic approaches often involve rational interpretations that connect the meaning of Quranic verses with objective reality or existing scientific developments.¹⁴ Furthermore, semantics in the study of interpretation also plays a role in understanding technical or specific terms in the Qur'an, such as the terms *fiqhiyah* (Islamic law), *tasfiyah* (purification of the soul), and others. The meaning of words or phrases in such contexts can have very different meanings from the meanings in everyday contexts.¹⁵

In more contemporary semantic studies, the role of technology is also increasingly significant. Tools such as linguistic software and computer programming used in text analysis have opened up opportunities to understand the relationship of words in the Quran more deeply and systematically. These techniques allow researchers to identify certain semantic patterns in the Quran that may not be easily found with manual approaches.¹⁶ This brings the study of semantics

¹¹ Alwi Padly Harahap and Ari Mayang Wahyuni, "Peran Perempuan Sebagai Mufassir Dan Kontribusinya Terhadap Pendidikan Islam," *Ibn Abbas: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran Dan Tafsir* 7, no. 1 (2024): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.51900/ias.v7i1.22548>.

¹² Zainuddin Soga et al., "The Application Of The Semiotics Of The Qur'an Toward The Story Of The Chosen Servants In Surah Maryam," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam* 9, no. 2 (2021): 320–35, <https://doi.org/10.24252/JDI.V9I2.22868>.

¹³ Ismail Fahmi Arrauf and Miswari Miswari, "Menangkap Pesan Tuhan: Urgensi Kontekstualisasi Alquran Melalui Hermeutika," *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran Dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (2018): 223–36, <https://doi.org/10.32505/tibyan.v3i2.698>.

¹⁴ Oliver Leaman, "Modern Developments in Qur'anic Studies," ed. Mustafa Shah and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies* (Oxford University Press, May 14, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199698646.013.42>.

¹⁵ Ahmadi Ahmadi, "جوهر علم الدلالة في القرآن (دراسة تحليلية دلالية في قراءة الآيات القرآنية)," *LISANIA: Journal of Arabic Education and Literature* 2, no. 2 (2018): 193, <https://doi.org/10.18326/lisania.v2i2.193-215>.

¹⁶ Majdi Sawalha et al., "Morphologically-Analyzed and Syntactically-Annotated Quran Dataset," *Data in Brief*, 2024, 111211, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2024.111211>.

in interpretation to a higher level in terms of depth of analysis, taking into account the various dimensions of meaning in the broader text.

Thus, the development of semantic studies in the study of interpretation shows how this science has developed from a more textual traditional understanding to a broader one, taking into account aspects of context, science, and social development. Semantic studies in the Qur'an are not only an attempt to understand the meaning of words, but also an attempt to make the messages in the Qur'an more alive and relevant to the lives of mankind in every era.

Synonymy in Arabic Linguistics

Synonymy in Arabic linguistics refers to the phenomenon where two or more words or phrases have similar or nearly similar meanings, but with slight differences in usage or connotation. This concept is crucial in understanding and analyzing the Arabic language, which is rich in nuances and lexical variations.¹⁷ Synonyms in Arabic do not only include words that have identical meanings, but also contain differences in context, style, or choice of words that are more appropriate depending on a particular situation.¹⁸ This phenomenon has become an important part of the study of Arabic interpretation, literature, and even rhetoric.

Views on synonymy in Arabic have been put forward by various famous scholars and linguists, such as Ibn Manẓūr, al-Asfahānī, and al-Jurjānī. Each of these scholars made significant contributions to the understanding of Muslims in particular, on how synonymy functions in Arabic.

Ibn Manẓūr, a renowned lexicographer known for his work *Lisān al-'Arāb*, provides an in-depth explanation of Arabic words, including synonymy. In his work, Ibn Manẓūr notes that many Arabic words have similar meanings but differ in their usage. Ibn Manẓūr believes that synonymy in Arabic is often based not only on the literal meaning, but also on the nuances and connotations that each word carries. For example, the words 'jalasa' (to sit) and 'qa'ada' (to sit) may have similar meanings, but they are used in different contexts, which shows how synonymy can be influenced by cultural and situational contexts. For Ibn Manẓūr, synonymy does not necessarily mean that

¹⁷ Dyah Adila Perdana and Ummu Hanifah Syamsuhri, "Sinonimitas Dalam Al-Qur'an: Lafadz Sanah Dan 'Am (Kajian Semantik)," *Tarling: Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 275–90, <https://doi.org/10.24090/tarling.v6i2.7192>.

¹⁸ Ani Susilawati and Ahmad Habibi Syahid, "Sinonim Kata Bahasa Arab Dari Terjemah Buku Alfu Lailah Walailah Lilathfal (Pendekatan Semantik Kontekstual)," *Mantiqutayr: Journal of Arabic Language* 4, no. 2 (2024): 426–44, <https://doi.org/10.25217/mantiqutayr.v4i2.4608>.

the words are interchangeable in all contexts, but rather that they have a similarity in a larger core meaning.¹⁹

Al-Asfahānī, another scholar and linguist who is famous for his work *al-Maqāyis fī al-Lughah*, also provided valuable insights into synonymy in Arabic. Al-Asfahānī focused on the etymological and morphological analysis of words, which helped him understand the relationship between words that are similar in meaning. According to al-Asfahānī, synonymy in Arabic is not only seen in terms of similarity in meaning, but also related to the origin and formation of the words. Al-Asfahānī also considered that words that appear to be synonyms may have different roots, reflecting differences in the way they were generated and developed in the language. For example, the words 'salam' (peace) and 'aman' (security) may be considered synonymous in certain contexts, but their etymological differences indicate that they have different layers of meaning, even though they both relate to peace and security.²⁰

Al-Jurjānī, in his works on rhetoric and linguistic theory, has a more rhetorical and aesthetic view of synonymy. In his books *Dalāil al-I'jaz* and *Asrār al-Balaghah*, al-Jurjānī discusses how the use of synonyms can enrich Arabic rhetoric and enhance the appeal of a text. Al-Jurjānī emphasizes the importance of choosing the right word in a given context to create the desired effect, whether in poetry, prose, or speech. In al-Jurjānī's view, synonymy is not simply a linguistic phenomenon related to the meaning of words, but is also related to the expressive and aesthetic power of language. For example, in Arabic literary texts, the use of synonyms can add beauty and harmony, and provide certain nuances that cannot be achieved with a single word. Al-Jurjānī sees synonymy as a tool for achieving rhetorical perfection in Arabic works.²¹

In addition to these three great scholars, many other scholars and linguists have paid attention to synonymy in Arabic, both in the context of pure linguistics and in other fields such as tafsir and literature. One aspect that is often discussed is how words with similar meanings can be used differently in the texts of the Qur'an and Hadith, and how this affects the interpretation of the meaning. For example, in tafsir, the word 'rahmah' (compassion) and 'lutf' (gentleness) are often used in very similar contexts, but have different connotations. *Rahmah* refers more to all-encompassing affection, while *lutf* is more related to gentleness in action.²²

¹⁹ Muwaffaq Hussein Aliwi Al-Jubouri, "The Semantic Permission in Selected Poetic Evidences in Ibn Mandhur's *Lisan Al-Arab* (711 AH)," *Journal of Language Studies* 5, no. 4 (2022): 197–218, <https://doi.org/10.25130/jls.5.4.1.16>.

²⁰ Sweta et al., "The Urgency of Siyaq (Interpretation of the Word Al-Ins and Basyar Perspective of Ar-Raghib Al-Ashfahani) in *Buku Al-Mufrodāt Fi Gharib Al-Qur'an*."

²¹ Jeannie Miller, "Bayān, Gesture, and Genre: Self-Positioning in Al-Jurjānī's Introductions," *Journal of Abbasid Studies* 5, no. 1–2 (2019): 58–104, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142371-12340038>.

²² Iril Admizal, "Study of the Word *Rahmah* in the Context of Giving Grace to Prophets and Apostles," *Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin*, Adab Dan Dakwah 5, no. 1 (2023): 145–58, <https://doi.org/10.32939/ishlah.v5i1.242>.

In the context of Arabic literature, synonymy plays an important role in shaping the author's language style. Classical Arabic poetry, for example, relies heavily on the use of words with similar meanings to create rhythm and balance in its verses. The poet will choose words that not only match the desired meaning, but also the sound and pattern he wants to achieve in his poem.²³ This makes synonymy not only a matter of meaning, but also a matter of art and technique in language.

In general, scholars and Arabic linguists agree that synonymy in Arabic is more complex than just similarity of meaning. Each word carries a certain historical, cultural, and connotative content that makes it unique in a particular context of use. Therefore, understanding synonymy in Arabic requires not only knowledge of the basic meaning of words, but also how they are used in different contexts to create deeper and richer meanings.

Semantic Analysis of the Synonymy of the Meanings of *Khatama* and *Ṭaba'a* in the Al-Quran

The words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* in the Qur'an have similarities in semantic aspects, but each has different nuances of meaning depending on the context of their use. Both terms refer to the concept of closing, strengthening, or affirming, but with variations in the manner and purpose of such closing. Analysis of the literal and contextual meanings of these two words in several verses of the Qur'an can provide deeper insight into their role in the communication of Divine revelation.

The literal meaning of the word *khatama* comes from the root *kha, ta, mim* (خ, ت, م), which generally means “to close” or “to end.” In this sense, *khatama* indicates the act of closing or ending something, which cannot be opened or continued afterward.²⁴ Meanwhile, *ṭaba'a* comes from the root word *ṭa, ba, 'ain* (ط, ب, ع), which means “to print” or “to seal,” and has a stronger meaning in terms of permanent influence or change on the object that is marked or stamped.²⁵ Therefore, although both of these words have connotations related to “closure,” the nuances of their meanings differ in the degree of continuity and the nature of the changes brought about. *Khatama* focuses more on termination, while *ṭaba'a* emphasizes more on the lasting effect or

²³ Abdelmalek Berkani, Adrian Holzer, and Kilian Stoffel, “Pattern Matching in Meter Detection of Arabic Classical Poetry,” in 2020 IEEE/ACS 17th International Conference on Computer Systems and Applications (AICCSA), 2020, 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.1109/AICCSA50499.2020.9316497>.

²⁴ Agustang K, “Tradisi Khatam Qur'an Sebagai Upaya Perwujudan Pendidikan Karakter Islami Di Kota Ternate Maluku Utara,” *Foramadiahi: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Dan Keislaman* 11, no. 1 (2019): 34, <https://doi.org/10.46339/foramadiahi.v11i1.146>.

²⁵ Atabik Ali and Ahmad Zuhdi Muhdlor, *Kamus Kontemporer Arab-Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Multi Karya Grafika, 2003), 1223.

permanent change that occurs in the object or subject that is marked. To make it easier to find the location of these two words in the Qur'an, it can be seen in the following table:²⁶

No	Khatama		Thaba'a	
	Surah	Paragraph	Surah	Paragraph
1	Al-Baqarah	7	Al-Nisa	105
2	Al-An'am	46	Al-A'raf	100-101
3	Al-Ahzab	40	Al-Tawbah	87, 93
4	Yasin	65	Jonah	74
5	Ash-Shura	24	Al Nahl	108
6	Al-Jatsiyah	23	Al-Rum	59
7	Al-Muthaffifin	25-26	Ghafir	35
8	-		Muhammad	16
9	-		Al-Munafiqun	3

1. *Khatama*

In Surah al-Baqarah verse 7, the word *khatama* is used in the context of the closing of the hearts and the obstruction of understanding for the disbelievers. Literally, the word *khatama* here indicates a closing that occurs in their hearts, which leads to the understanding that they cannot receive revelation and guidance from Allah.²⁷ The contextualization of this word gives the understanding that the closure is a form of punishment for those who reject the truth that comes to them, namely in the form of revelation brought by the Prophet. In this case, *khatama* is not only a physical closure, but more on the closure of their hearts and minds from receiving divine guidance.

Meanwhile, in Surah al-An'am verse 46, the word *khatama* also appears with a similar meaning, but emphasizes more on the closing of hearing and sight as a result of rejecting the truth. In this context, *khatama* is understood as a physical closing, namely the closing of hearing and sight, which leads to the loss of the ability to receive guidance.²⁸ The use of *khatama* in this verse more describes the passive state of humans who can no longer respond

²⁶ Muḥammad Fuād 'Abd Al-Bāqī, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufahras Li Alfāz Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1945), 279, 539.

²⁷ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, vol. 1 (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2010), 96.

²⁸ Abū al-Fadā' Ismā'īl bin 'Umar bin Kaṣīr, *Tafsīr Al-Quran Al-'Aẓīm*, trans. Abdul Ghoffar and Abu Ihsan Al-Atsari, vol. 6 (Bogor: Pustaka Imam ash-Syafi'i, 2004), 40.

to guidance, along with the closing of their senses as a form of punishment from Allah for their rejection.

On the other hand, in Surah al-Ahzab verse 40, *khatama* has a different contextual meaning. Here, *khatama* is used to describe the position of the Prophet SAW as the final or end of the Prophets. This context shows that the Prophet Muhammad is the last Prophet sent by Allah, who has no more Prophets after him.²⁹ In this case, the word *khatama* does not only mean closing in a physical or symbolic sense, but also in a very important meaning in the history of prophecy, namely as the closing of the series of revelations brought by previous prophets.

In Surah Yasin verse 65, the use of the word *khatama* again refers to the closing of the heart and the obstruction of Divine guidance. In this verse, the word *khatama* is used in the sense of closing the mouth, which describes the Day of Judgment when sinners can no longer speak to defend themselves. They can only hear the testimony of their limbs that will reveal their deeds.³⁰ The use of the word *khatama* in this context indicates the aspect of closure in a symbolic and metaphorical sense, namely the closure of the ability to speak and defend oneself after someone dies and is faced with the reckoning of one's deeds.

In Surah ash-Shura verse 24, the word *khatama* is used in a more general context of closure, relating to stubbornness and rejection of the truth. This verse reads: "Or do they say, He (Muhammad) fabricates lies about Allah? If Allah wills, He will close your hearts (*khatama 'alā qalbika*).". In this context, the use of *khatama* describes the closure that occurs as a result of human actions that continually reject the truth.³¹ This closure indicates that Allah can close a person's heart if they persist in disbelief and rejection of revelation.

In Surah al-Jatsiyah verse 23, *khatama* appears in the form of a closure that is more like God's decision against those who turn away from His guidance. The word *khatama* here describes a closure that causes them to be unable to hear revelation, which in turn makes them unable to respond to God's guidance.³² This closure reflects Allah's decision towards those who continue to turn away from His path.

Then in Surah al-Muthaffifin verses 25-26, the word *khatama* indicates something that is perfect and well-preserved, where '*makhtūm*' refers to a seal that signifies authenticity

²⁹ Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Anṣārī Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām Al-Qur'an*, Tahqīq. Aḥmad Al-Birdūnī and Ibrāhīm Aṭfīsy, vol. 14 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutb al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), 196.

³⁰ Nāṣir Al-Dīn Abū Sa'īd 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar bin Muḥammad Al-Syairāzī Al-Baidāwī, *Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa Al-Asrār Wa Al-Ta'wīl*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāṡ al-'Arābī, 1997), 272.

³¹ 'Abdurrahmān bin Nāṣir bin 'Abdullah Al-Sa'dī, *Taisīr Al-Karīm Al-Rahmān Fī Tafsīr Kalām Al-Manān* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, 2000), 758.

³² Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin Jarīr Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' Al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Al-Qur'an*, vol. 22 (Cairo: Dār al-Hijr, 2001), 76–77.

or eternity, and 'khitāmuḥu' refers to a cover that is a symbol of perfection, such as the seal on the drink mentioned in the verse, which is a heavenly drink served to the inhabitants of heaven. These two words give a picture of the perfection, eternity, and purity of the pleasure that Allah gives to the believers, which is depicted by a drink whose cover is 'misk' (kasturi), fragrant and precious, indicating unmatched quality and pleasure.³³ Symbolically, this contains the meaning that the afterlife is full of unlimited and perfect pleasures, which cannot be achieved by worldly means, so that people who compete in goodness must continue to strive to achieve it.

Thus, the use of the word *khatama* in the Qur'an shows various nuances of meaning related to closure, whether physically, symbolically, or metaphorically. This word contains the meaning of the closure of the heart, mind, or senses, which prevents a person from receiving revelation or divine guidance. However, in some contexts, *khatama* is also used to describe the closure of prophethood, indicating that the Prophet Muhammad is the last Prophet. *Khatama* is not only a closure in the physical sense, but can also be understood as a spiritual closure that has an impact on understanding, acceptance, and response to the truth.

2. *Ṭaba'a*

In Surah al-Nisa' verse 155, the word *ṭaba'a* is used to describe the state of the hearts of the Children of Israel after they committed bad deeds. In this verse, Allah mentions that their hearts have been closed (*ṭaba'a*), as a result of their rejection of the revelations and truths brought by the messengers. Literally, *ṭaba'a* contains the meaning of closure, but in this context, the word refers more to a closure that prevents acceptance of guidance and faith, describing how hard their hearts are because of pride and disobedience.³⁴

Then, in Surah al-A'raf verses 100-101, *ṭaba'a* is used to describe the condition of a people who have denied their Prophets. Here, *ṭaba'a* describes a more concrete situation, namely when Allah closes their hearts so that they are no longer able to understand the truth or receive clear evidence from Allah. The word *ṭaba'a* in this verse indicates that rejection of revelation is not only rooted in an intellectual decision, but also includes a spiritual aspect, where their hearts are completely closed and can no longer receive divine guidance.³⁵ This shows that a closed heart is the result of prolonged sin and disbelief.

In Surah al-Tawbah verses 87 and 93, the use of the word *ṭaba'a* is slightly different, although it still maintains the core meaning of closing or locking. In verse 87, *ṭaba'a* refers to

³³ Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusain bin Mas'ūd bin Muḥammad bin al-Farā' Al-Bagawī, *Ma'ālim Al-Tanzīl Fī Taḥsīn Al-Qur'ān*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāṣ al-'Arābī, 1999), 226.

³⁴ Wahbah Al-Zuhailī, *Taḥsīn Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqīdah Wa Al-Syarī'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, vol. 3 (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 2009), 352.

³⁵ Al-Zuhailī, 5:47-48.

the state of those who did not want to fight with the Prophet (saw) in the Battle of Tabuk. They had no desire or ability to participate due to their laziness and worldliness. The closing of their hearts was not due to a direct rejection of revelation, but rather their attachment to the life of this world.³⁶ In this context, ṭaba'a indicates that worldliness can be a barrier for someone to fight in the way of Allah. Whereas in verse 93, ṭaba'a refers to their cowardice and inability to defend the religion of Allah, which again shows how a heart that is closed by the worldly causes failure in carrying out religious commands.

In Surah Yunus verse 74, ṭaba'a is used to describe Allah's action of closing the hearts of liars. Here, the closing of the heart or ṭaba'a leads to a firm rejection of the revelation conveyed.³⁷ In this context, ṭaba'a refers to a more permanent state, in which Allah seals their hearts as a result of their continued wrongdoing and disobedience. This indicates that Allah's sealing of their hearts is a result of their own choice to reject the truth despite being presented with clear evidence.

Surah an-Nahl verse 108 also contains a similar meaning, where ṭaba'a is used to describe the attitude of a closed heart towards Allah's revelation. This verse speaks of people who do not want to listen to the revelation and arguments conveyed by Allah.³⁸ The word ṭaba'a here emphasizes that the closing of the heart does not only occur at the intellectual level but also in the spiritual aspect, where they are no longer able to accept the truth even when the revelation is presented clearly.

In Surah al-Rum verse 59, the word ṭaba'a also refers to the closing of one's heart, in this case related to the rejection of the signs of Allah's greatness. Liars do not want to accept the truth even though they see clear evidence, and therefore their hearts are closed.³⁹ The use of this word indicates that the determination to reject the truth can lead to a state of irreversibility, where one can no longer open their heart to guidance.

Surah Ghafir verse 35 uses the word ṭaba'a in the context of closing the hearts of people who do not want to accept Allah's revelation. In this verse, ṭaba'a describes how arrogant and haughty people close the doors of their hearts to the revelations conveyed.⁴⁰ This indicates that arrogance can cause a very deep closing of the heart, which ultimately distances a person from the truth and guidance of Allah.

In Surah Muhammad verse 16, ṭaba'a is used to describe the condition of people whose hearts are closed to the truth. This verse talks about people who were unable to

³⁶ Al-Bagawī, *Ma'ālim Al-Tanzīl Fī Tafṣīr Al-Qur'ān*, 2:217.

³⁷ Al-Zuhailī, *Tafṣīr Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqīdah Wa Al-Syarī'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, 6:226–27.

³⁸ Al-Sa'dī, *Taisīr Al-Karīm Al-Raḥmān Fī Tafṣīr Kalām Al-Manān*, 786.

³⁹ Al-Baiḍāwī, *Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa Al-Asrār Wa Al-Ta'wīl*, 3:26.

⁴⁰ Shihab, *Tafṣīr Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 12:320.

understand revelation and did not want to accept guidance from the Prophet.⁴¹ The word *ṭaba'a* in this context emphasizes that rejection of the truth has a very big spiritual impact, namely the closing of the heart which prevents a person from receiving guidance.

Finally, in Surah al-Munafiqun verse 3, *ṭaba'a* describes the condition of hypocrites whose hearts are closed to the truth. In this verse, the closing of the hearts of hypocrites is not only caused by disbelief, but also by their hypocrisy, where they claim to believe but in fact they close their hearts to Allah's guidance.⁴² This shows that hypocrisy has serious consequences in the spiritual aspect, namely closing the heart to revelation and truth.

The use of the word *ṭaba'a* in these verses describes a very serious spiritual condition, namely the closing of one's heart to revelation and truth. This word indicates that a closed heart is not only caused by intellectual inability, but also by the desire or habit of rejecting the truth that comes from Allah. *Ṭaba'a* also indicates that the closing of the heart can occur gradually and is often the result of arrogance, disobedience, or hypocrisy. Semantically, *ṭaba'a* describes a condition that prevents the acceptance of guidance, and this is a warning to mankind to always keep their hearts open to the truth and guidance of Allah.

Comparison of the Meanings of *Khatama* and *Ṭaba'a*

In the context of understanding Arabic in the Qur'an, the words *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* have meanings related to closing or limiting, but their use in certain verses can indicate differences in intensity or more specific situations. Therefore, studying both words in relevant verses can provide a clearer picture of their meaning and use.

As previously explained, the word *khatama* appears in several verses such as in Surah al-Baqarah verse 7, al-An'am verse 46, al-Ahzab verse 40, Yasin verse 65, ash-Shura verse 24, al-Jatsiyah verse 23, and al-Muthaffifin verses 25 and 26. In these verses, *khatama* is usually understood as a closure or obstruction that is final and cannot be changed. For example, in Surah al-Baqarah verse 7, the word *khatama* is used to describe the closing of the heart and the blocking of understanding of those who disbelieve or who have been determined by Allah not to receive guidance. *Khatama* in this context reflects a situation that has reached its final point, a condition that cannot be returned or repaired. This concept too can be found in Surah al-An'am verse 46 and Yasin verse 65, where the closing or blocking of the heart and hearing is a depiction that a person has reached a state that cannot be changed by any effort, either from outside or from within himself. Thus, *khatama* in these verses refers to an absolute closing or blocking, namely a state that can no longer be broken through or opened.

⁴¹ Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām Al-Qur'ān*, 16:238.

⁴² Al-Baiḍāwī, *Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa Al-Asrār Wa Al-Ta'wīl*, 5:214.

In other verses such as in Surah ash-Shura verse 24 and al-Jatsiyah verse 23, the word *khatama* describes a closure related to the rejection or reluctance to accept the truth. This closure is more consequential, as a result of the individual's choice or action that rejects Allah's guidance. These verses emphasize that this closure occurs because of stubbornness or bad habits that have been ingrained, and the end result is a state that is very difficult to reopen.

In contrast to *khatama*, the word *ṭaba'a* also refers to closure, but with a nuance that is more related to the deflating or wiping of something that originally existed. *ṭaba'a* is used in various verses such as Surah al-Nisa' verse 115, al-A'raf verses 100 and 101, al-Taubah verses 87 and 93, Yunus verse 74, al-Nahl verse 108, al-Rum verse 59, Ghafir verse 35, Muhammad verse 16, and al-Munafiqun verse 3. In many of these verses, *ṭaba'a* is often used to describe a closure related to the formation or sealing of something, indicating a change that occurs in a particular object or subject that leads to non-openness or inability to respond or change.

For example, in Surah al-Nisa' verse 115, the use of *ṭaba'a* indicates that Allah will not guide those who have chosen the wrong path, because their hearts have been sealed or sealed by Allah. This concept not only indicates closure, but also describes the non-openness to His guidance due to the free will of the individual who rejects or does not want to accept. Here, this closure is more of an internal change, namely a closure that occurs as a result of attitudes and choices that continue to oppose the truth.

In Surah al-A'raf verses 100 and 101, *ṭaba'a* is used to describe a situation where unbelievers are unable to understand or accept the signs of Allah. Their hearts have been covered and wrapped in arrogance and rejection of the revelations conveyed. In this case, *ṭaba'a* implies that the covering occurs as a result of a long-term process of rejection or neglect of the truth conveyed.

The clear difference between *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* lies in the intensity and situation of their use. *Khatama* tends to be used to describe a more definitive and final closure, as if the closure is something that cannot be changed. For example, in Surah al-Ahzab verse 40, the use of *khatama* indicates that the Prophet saw is the seal of the Prophets, indicating his position as the last Prophet in the series of prophethood, with no Prophet after him. This describes a final and unchangeable state, stating a definitive closure.

Meanwhile, *ṭaba'a* often describes a closure that is more of a process or influence of actions or choices made by an individual. The use of *ṭaba'a* emphasizes the aspect of change or formation that occurs over time as a result of attitudes or rejection of guidance. In this case, the closure or obstruction that occurs is more related to personal choice or the free will of the individual, which if continuously carried out will lead to a lack of openness to the truth.

Thus, these two words have similarities in their basic meaning, namely the closure or obstruction of something, but they differ in the intensity and context of their use. *Khatama* emphasizes more on the closure that is final and cannot be changed, while *ṭaba'a* refers more to the closure that is the result of an individual's choice or attitude, which can occur gradually and is influenced by the process of time. In this case, *Khatama* often indicates a condition that has reached its final point and cannot be repaired, while *ṭaba'a* describes more of a change that occurs as a result of actions or decisions that have been taken previously.

Contextual Relevance in Contemporary Interpretation Studies

The contextual relevance of the meaning of *khatama* and *ṭaba'a* in contemporary tafsir studies has a significant impact on understanding theological and social issues. These two terms, found in the texts of the Qur'an, have a very important interpretation related to understanding the closing of revelation, as well as ideas related to the exclusivity and inclusivity of religion. The meaning of *khatama* is often understood in the context of closing, while *ṭaba'a* which is often related to the act of closing or sealing, is more commonly understood in the context of closing the heart or understanding. These two words have become the basis for thinking about theological interpretations related to the final revelation and how Muslims understand their position in this world. In contemporary tafsir, it is important to understand how the meaning of these words can be changed or expanded to address the evolving modern reality.

Semantic analysis of these two words opens up space for new debates in understanding complex theological issues, such as pluralism and freedom of thought. For example, if *khatama* is understood as absolute closure, some may judge that there is no room for the presence of other truths outside of Islam, so that an exclusive attitude can emerge that leads to intolerance towards other religious teachings. However, contemporary interpretations tend to criticize this overly rigid understanding, by emphasizing that the concept of *khatama* can be understood more dynamically, referring to the perfection of the final revelation that provides universal principles that apply to all mankind. Therefore, semantic analysis in contemporary interpretations can provide a new understanding of how Islam views interreligious relations in the context of pluralism, namely the recognition of the existence of religious differences without reducing the universal values contained in Islamic teachings.

In addition, contemporary commentaries on *ṭaba'a* point to a deeper understanding of freedom of thought. This term, which is sometimes associated with closing the heart or difficulty in receiving divine guidance, can be seen as a reflection of the mental or spiritual challenges that individuals face in the modern world. In many traditional commentaries, *ṭaba'a* is considered a state of the soul that is not open to divine truth. However, in contemporary commentaries,

semantic analysis of the word can lead to the understanding that ṭaba'a is not something permanent, but rather a state that can change. Therefore, this comment can address the issue of freedom of thought by showing that every individual has the right to open his heart to the truth, and that revelation is universal and can be accepted by anyone who has an open mind, even within the framework of a different religion.

In this context, these two terms are not only related to theological issues but also touch on broader social issues, such as pluralism, religious freedom, and faith. A more contextual understanding of khatama and ṭaba'a allows contemporary interpretations to respond more openly to the challenges of the times. For example, in an increasingly global and interconnected society, an exclusive view that assumes there is only one path to truth can cause friction between religious groups.⁴³ With a more inclusive approach to interpretation, which takes into account the dynamics of understanding religion in changing social and cultural contexts, Muslims can be more open to pluralistic ideas that respect religious freedom and diversity.

The contribution of contemporary interpretation in answering modern issues depends greatly on how the meaning of khatama and ṭaba'a is updated and expanded. Through in-depth semantic analysis, interpretation can make a significant contribution in shaping attitudes towards pluralism, freedom of thought, and faith. As a result, this kind of interpretation can be a bridge to bring Muslims together with more complex and multicultural social dynamics, and provide guidance in facing the challenges of globalization that increasingly emphasizes pluralism and freedom of thought.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data presented, the semantic analysis of the synonymy between khatama and ṭaba'a in the Qur'an shows that although both words are often translated as closing or confirming, there are significant differences in meaning in the context of their use. Khatama refers more to the closing or perfecting of something as a whole, often related to a final decision or decree, such as the closing of the heart or revelation. Meanwhile, ṭaba'a is more often used to describe the process of printing or confirming, with the nuance that something has been stamped or formally confirmed. The similarity of both lies in the meaning of closing or confirming, but the context of their use is different, which provides a deeper understanding of how the Qur'an describes Divine decisions. This semantic analysis is very important in contemporary tafsir

⁴³ Ariel Zellman and Jonathan Fox, "Defending the Faith? Assessing the Impact of State Religious Exclusivity on Territorial MID Initiation," *Politics and Religion* 13, no. 3 (2020): 465–91, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048319000488>.

studies, because it helps to explore richer and more contextual meanings, allowing for a more precise understanding according to the needs of the times and situations.

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