CHAPTER II

TOSHIHKO IZUTSU'S SEMANTIC

A. Biography of Toshihko Izutsu

Toshihko Izutsu is the largest scholar of Islamic thought that ever born in Japan. Izutsu was born in Tokyo, Japan, 4 May 1914 M, as a son of religious leader of Japan Zen Buddhism that wealthy and rich, Izutsu grows and develop in an atmosphere of business family that rich with culture *oriental nothingness* that very thick. Since born, Izutsu has educated and trained by his father. Not only to understand the religion, but also carrying out his religious teachings strictly and total comprehension. When Izutsu move teenage, his father who wanted to make Izutsu as practicing Zen, start train him to understand and master the methods of introspection the Zen style.

The exercises that given by his father, although very helpful in reminding the memory and sharpens the mind, but Izutsu felt very annoying. The hate and a surfeit have embedded so firmly in his mind immediately turned into an attitude of antipathy. Not just to exercises and his father's teaching, but also hate that very deeply to doctrine, methods and introspection the Zen style. As a form of escapism from the mood and attitude of his antipathy to religion of Zen, then Izutsu spend his time and devote the whole of his mind by studying foreign languages. For Izutsu, just with study foreign languages he can get run away and forget everything about Zen in his life.

See a very strong motivation in Izutsu to learn foreign language. Then Professor Junzu Nishiwaki suggested Izutsu to more serious study about linguistics. As a response of these recommendations, then Izutsu decided to discontinue his studies from Economics Faculty of Keio University and

moved to the United Kingdom Language Faculty (The Department of English Literature). At the age of 23 years (1937), Izutsu successfully completed his studies, Master of art at the Keio University, in the discipline of Linguistics. Nine years later, in 1946, he was appointed as lecturer at the same University. In the 1950s, Izutsu were appointed as Asistent Professor, and later confirmed as a Professor in linguistic and Oriental Study in 1954.[1]

Izutsu is very talented in understanding foreign language; he can speaks more than 30 languages, ranging from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, Japan Persia, and Greece. According to Takashi Iwami, more than 130 books, articles and papers have written and published in japans language. 25 titles and 51 articles written and published in the English language, also 2 books edited and published in Arabic language. Even he was able to read the Qur'an in a month after starting learns Arabic language. In 1958, Izutsu finished the first translation Qur'an from Arabic language into Japan language, his translation very famous with carefulness accuracy of language Qur'an and many used for scientific works. Articles and books were written by Izutsu since he was young until old that full of peace.[2]

In 1969 he became visitor professor at the institute of Islamic studies University of Mc. Gill Canada, where he spent six month each year to teach theology and Islamic philosophy. Later he became professor of philosophy at the institute philosophy of Iran in Teheren. After revolution of Iran in 1979, he returned to Japan and wrote several books and articles in Japan language about Eastern thought that very important.

Izutsu is really productive in writing scientific papers, both published in book form as well as essays. Izutsu's works can be divided into two categories, the first works in the field of general that includes, Izutsu's works who talking about language field and culture, including religious schools of

---

[1] Dr. A. Luthfi Hamidi, *Op.cit*, p. 35-37.
[2] Ibid, p. 40.

thought (*non Islam*). Second, Izutsu's works in the Islamic field that includes Qur'anic field and Sufism field.

Here is part of Izutsu's works;[3]

1. Language and Magic: Studies in The Magical Function of Speech, 1956

2. The Structure of The Ethical Terms in the Koran: a Semantical Analysis of the Koranic Weltaschauung. 1964

3. The Concept of Believe in Islamic Theology, 1965

4. Ethico-Relegious Concepts in the Quran, 1966

5. Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology, 1980

6. God and Man in the Koran, 1980

7. Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concept, 1984

8. Creation and the Timeless Order of Things: Essays in Islamic Mystical Philosophy, 1994

9. Toward a Philosophy of Zen Buddhism, 2001

10. The Metaphysics of Sabzvari, 1997

B. Definition of Semantic

Semantic comes from the Greek *sema,* which means a sign or symbol. Its verb is *semaino* that has meaning mark or symbolize. A sign or symbol itself such as Ferdinand De Saussure put forward consists of two parts, namely component which defines it, which takes the forms sound of language and component that defines or meaning from the first component it. These both components are a sign or symbol; while that symbol is something that beyond language called *refren* or designated.[4]

---

[3] http://zackymuzakkil.blogspot.co.id/2014/09/pendekatan-semantik-toshihiko-izutsu.html, downloaded on May 25, 2016.

[4] Abdul Chaer, *Pengantar Semantik Bahasa Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2002), cet. ke-2, p. 2.

In English is known as semantic, whereas in Arabic is known as *ilm al dilalah* , but some are calling it as *ilm al ma'ani*. The different of term that used can be understood because of three things: first, the relation of meaning that exists in every level of the language component. Second, meaning is becoming a meeting point of all linguistic studies. And third, so many terms that can represent the meaning of science.[5] From some definition of semantic that have been found it has focus on meaning. Verhaar defines it as theory of meaning.[6] Lyon also defines semantic as a research of meaning. And Parare explain that semantic is science that discussed about meaning.[7]

The term semantic itself, has been around since 17th century. If considered through the phrase semantic philosophy. Discussion about meaning is interesting issue in everyday life, because meaning has a term *meaning* that is the word or term that confusing. Aristoteles is a Greek thinker who first man uses 'meaning' term. He gave definition of meaning as the smallest unit which has a meaning. In this case, Aristoteles also said that meaning of word can be distinguished between the meaning that come from the word itself and the meaning that come because of grammatical relation.[8] Indeed, Plato (429-347 SM) on *cratylus* spook that sounds of language contain certain meaning.

However, the limits among etymology, meaning studies, and also words meaning studies were not so clear at that time.[9] At 1825, a Germany, C. Chr. Reisig, set before a new concept about grammar which includes 3 main points. They are: 1) seismology, a science of sign, 2) syntaxes, sentence studies, 3) etymology, learning of words derivation as its relation to changing of form and meaning.

---

[5] Muhammad Dawud, *Al Arabiyah wa Ilm al Lughah al Hadist*, (Cairo: Dar Gharib, 2001), p. 215.

[6] J.W.M. Verhaar, *Op.cit*, p. 123.

[7] John Lyons, *Semantic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1995), p. 393.

[8] Stephen Ullman, *Pengantar Semantik*, (Basiln Blachwell: Oxford, 1997), p. 3.

[9] Animuddin, *Semantik Pengantar Studi Tentang Makna*, (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensido, 2008), p. 15-16.

At that time, term of semantic itself had not being used although that studies had been held. Thereby, that time was remembered as the first growth phase which is by Ullman called as the underground period. The second phase semantic growth was marked by the coming out of Michel Breal's work (1883) in a classic journal. In article under title *Les Lois Intellectuelles du Language*, he makes framework of a new science program and gives a name that is still famous, it is semantic.

The third phase, marked by the appearance of the work of the Swedish philologist, he is Gustaf Stern, under title *Meaning and Change of Meaning with Special Reference to the English Language* (1931), in his study, Stern has conducted empirical studies with the opposite meaning from one language, namely English. Semantic is just explicitly as science of meaning in 1897 by appear of *Essai de Semantique*, an essay by M. Breal, and then followed by Stern in the next period.[10]

Izutsu himself gave an explanation about semantic that will be used in his study. Semantic that Izutsu means is, an analytic study of the key-terms of a language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual graph of the *weltanschauung* or world-view of the people who use the language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking, but, more important still, conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surround them. Semantic, thus understood, it is kind of *weltanschauung*, a study of the nature and structure of the world-view of a nation at this or that significant period of its history, conducted by means of a methodological analysis of the major cultural concept the nation has produced for itself and crystallized into the key-word of its language.[11]

---

[10] Mansoer Patede, *Semantik Laksikal*, (Flores: Nuasa Indah, 1986), p. 3-4.
[11] Thoshihko Izutsu, *Op.cit*, p. 3.

C. Semantic al- Qur'an

Al-Qur'an as language text appears to require presence of linguistic analysis. Even Rasulullah himself has started it until then developed to date. One of proof from this thing is the case meaning of al-*Zulm* in the letter al-An'am in paragraph 82 that interpreted by Rasulullah different with contextual understanding its use in *jahilliyah* community, that is interpreted polytheists as in letter *Luqman* verse 13.[12] That is, the analysis of linguistic occupies a very high portion in interpreting Qur'an.

One of branch from linguistic analysis is semantic. Semantic analysis is used to keep track meaning in the words that have certain concepts in the Qur'an. Amin al-Khulli said that one of way to understand the Qur'an is to do an internal aspects study of the Qur'an. This study includes tracking the development of meaning and significance of these words in the Qur'an in his form; see indication of this meaning in different generation as well as his influence in psychology, social and civilization of the people against the shifting meaning.[13] This analysis then known as semantic Qur'an.

Term 'semantic' itself as semantic has many meaning, it could mean certain aspect in the object study of language itself, such as when someone says a semantic vocabulary, similarly theory in the study of language. The most widely embraced in linguistic is semantic, in the understanding of analytical studies toward the key-terms of language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual in the community who use that language itself. This view is not only as a tool of speaking and thinking, but, more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them.

---

[12] Manna' Khalil al-Qattan, *Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Qur'an*, trans. Mudzakir AS (Jakarta: Litera Antar Nusa, 2009), p. 335.

[13] Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, *Tekstual al-Qur'a*, trans. Khoiron Nahdiyin, (Yogyakarta: LkiS, 2005), p. 19.

.One of thing that agreed in view of various semantic in *spectrum* of linguistic contemporary is distinction between basic meaning (*Grund Bedeutung*) and relational meaning (*Relational Bedeutung*). The basic meaning that means here is contextual content from vocabulary that will be attached to word itself.

Meanwhile, relational meaning is *connotative* meaning, which in the practicing depend on the context at once relation with other vocabulary in the sentence. As an example of the word book (*kitab*) in the basic meaning, when that word is connected with the concept of Islam and then placed in close connection with important words in the Quran like *Allah*, *wahy*, *tanzil* and others, will get experience the development and expansion meaning that really useful .This thing happen, the word that mean basic 'book' (*kitab*) become large field of the meaning, like the holy scripture, the Qur'an, the Bible Jewish and Christian when be related with the word *ahl* in the discussions of Qur'an.[14]

According to Nur Kholis, early consciousness of semantic as interpretation of Qur'an get started since Muqatil ibn Sulaiman era (D. 150/767) like his work under the title *al-Asybah Wa al-Nazhair fi al-Qur'an al-Karim* and Muqatil ibn Sulaiman Tafseer. Muqatil explains that every word in the Qur'an beside has *definitive* meaning (basic meaning) also has some alternative meanings (relational meaning).

An example is the word *ma'*, which in the context of talks of Qur'an has there alternative meanings. First, it means rain, as in al-Hijr: 22, al-Furqan: 48, al-Anfal: 11 and al-Luqman: 10. One of verse reads "And we have sent the fertilizing winds and sent down water from the sky and given you drink from it. And you are not its retainers". Second, it mean water of sperm, as in the al-Furqan :54, "And it is He who has created from water a human being and made him (a relative by) lineage and marriage. And ever is

---

[14] M. Nur Kholis Setiawan, *Al-Qur'a Kitab Sastra Terbesar*, (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ, 2005), p. 166-167.

your lord competent (concerning creation)". Third, it means a very fundamental foothold in the life of believers, as in the an-Nahl: 65". And Allah has sent down rain from the sky and given life thereby to the earth its lifelessness indeed in that is a sign for a people who listen". In this paragraph the word "water" by Muqatil understood as metaphor (*matsal*).

Another example is the word *mawt*, which has basic meaning "death". According to Muqatil, in the context of verse, the word *mawt* could have four alternatife meaning, IE: the drop that has not been turned on yet, the wrong human in believe, infertile ground and barren, as well as soul that lost. With regard to possibility of meaning that belongs to vocabulary of Qur'an, Muqatil said that someone could not dominate Qur'an yet before they realize and get to know various dimensions that belong to the Qur'an

Muqatil's thinking then improved on by generations after, like al-Jahiz (d. 471/865), ibn Qutaibah (d. 276/898), Abd al-Qahir al Jurjani (d. 471/1079), as well as Harun ibn Musa (d. 170/786) in his work under the title al-Wujuh wa al-Nazhair fi *al-Qur'an al- Kareem*.

Then in the contemporary era, the method was developed by Thosihiko Izutsu, semantic Qur'an trying to unveil the world view of Qur'an through analysis semantic or conceptual toward the material in the Qur'an itself, that is the words or important terms that many used by Qur'an. Semantic Qur'an only understood as weltanschauung Qur'an that is Qur'an vision about universe. To bring into reality the mission, semantic Qur'an will discuss issues how the world exists structured, what element the principle world, and how it all related with one another according of Qur'an view. Semantic analysis will be shape existence ontology and existence on the level of concrete as reflected in the verses of the Qur'an.

The purpose is to bring up ontology type of life that dynamic from Qur'an with analytical study and methodological to the principle concepts, that is concepts that seem plays decisive role in the formation of Qur'anic

vision to the universe.[15] In this analysis method, Izutsu'ss semantic trying make Qur'an interpret the concept themselves and speak for themselves. This analysis in the study of Qur'an would be helpful to provide a deeper understanding of the meaning and interpretation to a certain particular concept.

D. Toshihiko Izutsu's Semantic

As for the steps analysis of semantic Qur'an which is developed by Toshihko Izutsu is as follow:

1. Researching the basic meaning and relational meaning

Basic meaning of a word is something inherent in the word itself, which is carries whit it wherever it goes. The word *kitab* (book), for example, means basically the same thing whether it is found in the Qur'an or outside in the Qur'an. This word, as long as it is actually felt by the speech community to be one word, keeps it fundamental meaning. In this case, a very general and non-specified meaning 'book' wherever it is found, whether it happens to be used as a key term in a given system of concepts or more generally outside of that particular system. This content semantic element which remains attached to the word wherever it goes and however it is used, Izutsu call the 'basic' meaning of the word.[16]

While relation meaning is something connotative that comes to be attached and added to the former by the word's having taken a particular position in a particular field, standing in diverse relation to all other important words in that system. For example, the word *yaum* whose has 'basic' meaning day.

---

[15] Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia, Pendekatan Semantik terhadap al-Qur'an*, trans. Agus Fahri Husein, (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2003), p. 3.
[16] Thoshihko Izutsu, *Op.cit*, p. 11.

The Arabs understand as a common day. Then the word *yaum* in the Qur'an was placed in certain position that is linked to the word *qiyamah* or *bat's*, then it has new meaning that is the day of resurrection or doomsday. Linkages among this word which then give change in the word *yaum* color of semantic that very special, really complex and structure of special meaning that never be retrieved if that word stay keep outside the system. This special meaning is meaning that very important and essential compared the basic meaning itself. Here is called relational meaning.[17]

To know the relation meaning can be done in a way, namely:

a. Doing syntagmatic analysis, i.e. an analysis that trying to determine the word of a word by way, determining the words in front of and behind the words that are being discussed in one particular part. These words have a relation of anxiety each other in shaping meaning of a word. For example Q.S. al-Baqarah verse 328:

حَٰفِظُواْ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلۡوُسۡطَىٰ وَقُومُواْ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾

"Maintain with care the (obligatory), prayers and (in particular) the middle and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient".

The word *ash-sholawat* in this verse, lexically have meaning prayer. Then that word followed by the word *al-wustha* and shaping phrase so that give birth new meaning, that is *ashr* pray.

b. Doing syntagmatic analysis, it is a analysis that compared word or concept of certain with the other word or concept that similar (synonym) or opposition (antonym). For example the word *zhann* (bad thought) and the word *ism* (sin), some of meaning word *zhann*

---

[17] Ibid, p. 12-14.

contain understanding *ism* so that most of bad though is constitute the attitude is not commendable and sin.[18]

The word *kafara*. *Kafara* means not thankful to show a sense of not being thankful towards goodwill or help that showed to others. This word means opposite with the word '*syakaro*' which means thankful. However, when the concept Islam come and giving a new color for vocabulary of Arabic, *kafaro* is not as simple an attitude not thankful, but not thankful to God, or more accurately, deny the goodness of God which had been given.[19]

Then search relation of meaning between one concept with another concept (integration between concept), as well as knowing the position of the concept which has a broader meaning and position of concept that has a narrower meaning, so resulting a comprehensive meaning that appropriate with world view of Qur'an. The terms used in this analysis is the key word, word focus, and semantic field. A keyword is word that plays a role that very crucial in the preparation of the conceptual structure of the basic world view the Qur'an. This keyword is centered around the focus word, that is words that represent and unites the whole group. Focus word is keyword that specifically shows and limiting the conceptual field that relative independent and different in a larger vocabulary and it's constitute conceptual center from a number of these keywords. This focus, word function is as the unifying principle. While the semantic field is the region or area, that is formed by various relation between the words in a language.[20]

For example the word *iman*, where he become the focus word that controls entire field of semantic that structured from keywords

---

[18] Sugeng Sugiyanto, *LISAN* dan *KALAM* Kajian Semantik Al-Qur'an, (Yogyakarta: Sunan Kalijaga Press, 2009), p. 33-37.

[19] Toshihiko Izutsu, *Op.cit*, p. 14.

[20] Ibid, p. 18-20.

that each other represents an essential aspect of thought of the Qur'an with own way from a special viewpoint. Semantic field with the word *iman* as the focus, in other words that encircling in the diagram are the key words that mark the specific aspects and partial from the concept *iman* itself or keywords that represent concepts that are closely related with *siman* in the context Qur'an. See the following diagram:

```
              Allah
   Takdhib           Tasdiq
           Iman
   'Isyan             Islam
      Kufr    Syukr
```
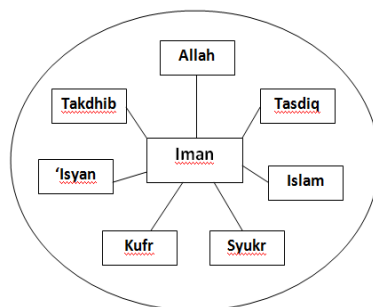
The diagram above give illustrates a simple framework structure, where any concepts that diverse linked to the core of concepts of *iman*, also shows how the key words related to each other in the small groups who also joined to each other either by means of positive and negative, and finally incorporated in the big semantic field, that is *iman*. In the semantic field of *iman*, the key words have relation meaning with *iman*, *iman* as a focus word has a broader meaning then another the key words whose meaning is narrower. The keywords that define and clarify the meaning itself are independent. Thus it can be the meaning of differentiator between the focus word and the keywords.[21]

2. Pay attention to aspects of the synchronic and diachronic

Diachronic as etymology is a view towards language, which principally focuses on the element of time. Thus, as the diachronic vocabulary is a set word that each grows and change freely with it's own distinctive way. A view word in the group it may stop growing in terms of stopping it is used by the community in a specific time period. While

---

[21] Thoshihko Izutsu, *Op.cit*, p. 22-23.

the others words can continue to be used in a long period of time. One again, the new words can be making his debut at the rink at the certain point of time and began the history in that period.[22]

In other word, there is a vocabulary that is in line with the time is forgotten and not used by the public. So, the vocabulary is called dead or not growing. The other time, there are new words that just included in treasury of word and used by the community at the time.

Vocabulary which collected at the time of farming a network and pattern of sentence is as a result of the cultural community. In this case, Izutsu call as the surface. On the surface like that and just on the surface of it alone, these words appear in front of us in the form network of concept that complex. So the standpoint that crosses the historically lines of these words in this way allows us to obtain a system of static words, called synchronic.[23]

Vocabulary in this particular sense, i.e. the word surface that static, is actually something artificial. It is a static condition that produced artificially by one stroke in the current history to all words in the language at the some point of time. The resulting cross-section gives the impression to us as something static, but in fact it just seems like that. In other words, it is only static when viewed from a macroscopic viewpoint. As macroscopic, the surface make shocked the life and movement. That situation seemed very clear when languages are in critical period and revolutionary.

Historical semantic is not tracking the history to an individual words only, to see how these words change their meaning because the history. The real semantically history only begins when we do a study on the history of words based on all the static system. In other words, if we compare the two surface or more than one of the same language, it will

---

[22] Ibid, p. 32.
[23] Ibid, p. 33.

bring up the stages of different histories, which each other separated by a time interval.[24]

The Interval can be long or short depending on the purposes our analysis. For example, even the language of the Qur'an itself can be considered as a historical process that lasted for more than twenty years with a typical period, the period of Mecca and Medina. In such cases, it is normal if we make two horizontal pieces that across the historical development of the language at important points, then compare the two cross-sections between the one with the other, if our goal is doing study the semantic to develop of Islamic thought within the limits of Qur'an.[25]

Then Izutsu made efforts to show this problem by way a simple and as clear as possible, with isolates three surfaces of semantic which different in the early history of the vocabulary the Qur'an. First, before the revelation or times of ignorance, Second the period of decline of theQur'an, and the last time after the revelation of the Qur'an.[26]

Thus, at the stage, i.e. pre-Islamic period, we have three the words systems that different with three worldviews underlying that different also: (1) vocabulary of pure Badwi that represents Arabic weltanschauung extremely ancient and character are very nomadic, (2) vocabulary of merchantmen group, which in fact is closely related to and based on the vocabulary of Badwi, which even represent the spirit very different in looking at the world, but it's the result of the latest development of economic trade in Mecca, which is very influenced by the words and ideas which became characteristic of merchantmen in the city, and (3) vocabulary of the Judeo-Christian, a system terminology religious used among Jews and Christian who lived in Arabic, which also includes the issue of system *hanifiah* that many more issue. All three of these elements are important elements of pre-Islamic Arabic vocabulary.[27]

---

[24] Ibid, p. 33.
[25] Ibid, p. 34.
[26] Ibid, p. 35.
[27] Ibid, p. 35.