

# Analysis of Istifham Sentences in QS. At-Tin Verse 8: A Study of Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics

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## Abstract

Istifham sentence is not always a question sentence that requires an answer. On the contrary, interrogative sentence can function as a command sentence, news sentence and prohibition sentence. In balagah science, this kind of question sentence is classified as a majazi istifham sentence. It is a polemic in the academic world when balagah science cannot explain the change of sentence function more clearly, only providing a theory when there are interrogative sentence particles, such as the word "hamzah (أ)" or "hal (هل)" in verse. Therefore, this paper wants to explore in more detail the causes of the change of function of istifham sentences using Peirce's semiotic method. Where the concept of Peirce's semiotics is a process of interpretation derived from the semiotic process of objects and representations which will produce interpretants. With the concept of Peirce's semiotics, this paper focuses on exploring the interpretant of the istifham sentence in QS. At-Tin Verse 8. By using literature study and descriptive-analysis, the results of this research show that QS. At-Tin verse 8 as an example of an istifham sentence when studied with Peirce's semiotic theory will find three interpretations. *First*, the istifham sentence in the verse is included in a potential question sentence that is still waiting for confirmation of the possibilities that exist. *Second*, the istifham sentence is included in the majazi istifham which gives the meaning of the statement and its factual nature, its factuality has been recognized in the science of balagah, and *Third*, as an affirmation that the fairest judge and justice is found from Allah Swt, where this is conventional which is found from the semiotic process of objects and representations of the previous verses.

Keywords: *Analysis, Istifham Sentences, Charles Sanders Peirce Semiotics*

## Introduction

The istifham sentence or interrogative sentence or what is familiarly understood as an interrogative sentence has several concepts of use, how much, how,

when, why, or whose words.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the concept of an interrogative sentence is to obtain information, so it is not surprising that the interrogative sentence basically requires an answer. However, with the development of the times, interrogative sentence based on the answer are divided into two, namely total questions that require a yes or no answer which is one about the obligation to provide an answer, and partial questions, which are questions that require answers based on the importance or not of answering the question.<sup>2</sup> Apart from all that, in the study of Qur'anic interpretation, the book that has the highest literary value presents many sentences that require reinterpretation or more depth. One example is the istifham sentence which is normally used to ask questions, but in the Qur'an it has another function than its original function. This phenomenon needs to be studied with various methods, because if it is only viewed in terms of balaghah, balaghah science will only provide calcification of istifham sentences without providing an explanation. Therefore, a supporting theory is needed to explain the process of istifham sentences changing meaning, one of which is semiotic theory.

The discussion of istifham sentences in this paper is not a new discussion, but has been studied in many previous studies, as well as the semiotic study of Charles Sanders Peirce. For example, research on Istifham Sentence in the Qur'an: A balaghah Analysis Study. The paper explains the recodaction of the istifham sentence out of its original meaning as an interrogative sentence to another meaning that can be known from the composition of the sentence it forms. So that some functions of istifham sentences, namely can be as sentences to negate, deny, as an affirmation and so on.<sup>3</sup> In addition, research on Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic study has also been widely applied in previous studies, including research on the Meaning of Salam in the Qur'an with Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotic Analysis, in this study Peirce's triadic concept is very highlighted because so many words of greetings can be found in the Qur'an, so that with Peirce's semiotic theory the word salam can be understood as the word salamah, as a word of praise, as another name for heaven and so on depending on the representament that surrounds the object of the word salam, therefore the existing

<sup>1</sup> Anton M. Moeliono et al., *Tata Basaha Baku Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2017), 405.

<sup>2</sup> Gorys Keraf, *Tata Bahasa Indonesia* (Ende: Nusa Indah, 1984).

<sup>3</sup> Ade Nurdiyanto, "Istifham Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisa Balaghah," *El-Wasathiya: Jurnal Studi Agama* 4, no. 2 (2016): 52.

interpretant is not single.<sup>4</sup> There is also research on Color Symbolization in the Qur'an: Charles Sanders Peirce Semiotic Analysis. This research produces as many as six kinds of colors in the Qur'an, namely colors, red, yellow, green, blue, black and white. These colors are described in 33 verses of the Qur'an contained in 22 surahs, where these colors have differences in their use and sometimes one color has two uses.<sup>5</sup> From the results of existing scientific papers, the paper to be done has a position to redevelop Peirce's semiotic theory into the realm of the study of istifham words, where istifham words do not only stop at the study in terms of balagah alone, but also need to be studied in terms of semiotics, in order to explain other causes of changes in the function on istifham sentences.

Departing from the researcher's interest in studying istifham sentences in terms of Peirce's semiotics, the author assumes that writing will produce research that will reveal the cause of istifham sentences changing functions from question sentences to statement sentences. This can happen because in Peirce's semiotic theory, the interpretant (interpretation/understanding) of a sentence is produced from the process of seiosis of objects and object concepts that surround objects in a sentence. So that the understanding that will be found will vary, because every object that meets or has many representations will produce a variety of interpretants, this has not been touched in balagah studies.

## Research Methods

A scientific study or writing will not be complete without a research methodology. Therefore, in this study the author used a qualitative approach with the type of research in the form of library research, namely studies conducted from the results of recording, reading from documents in the form of books and journals.<sup>6</sup> The data collection technique is documentation, because documents can help to see things that have been done before and to verify the validity of the data, interpret and conclude

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<sup>4</sup> Nurun Nisa Baihaqi, "Makna Salam Dalam Al-Qur'an (Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce)," *Taqaddumi: Jurnal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 1, no. 1 (n.d.): 16.

<sup>5</sup> Hamdan Hidayat, "Simbolsasi Warna Dalam Al-Qur'an Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce," *Ibn Abbas: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (2020): 182.

<sup>6</sup> Suwardi and Muhammad Syaifullah, "Berbagai Pendekatan Hermeneutika Dalam Studi Islam: Sebuah Studi Literatur," *Acta Islamica Counsesnesia: Counselling Research and Applications* 2, no. 1 (2022).

conclusions.<sup>7</sup> As for the data analysis, this research uses a deskriptive-analytical method, by analyzing the study literature relevant to this research, so as to provide a relevant and universally acceptable explanation. Then related to the validity of the data, the author uses source triangulation, namely testing the credibility of the data carried out by verifying the truth of the data that has been obtained through several sources, the author chooses this data validity selection because the reasearch in this paper is a type of library research.<sup>8</sup>

### Concept of Istifham Sentence

Istifham sentences in Indonesia are know as interrogative sentences. In Arabic rules, istifham sentences are the masdar from of the word “istafhama-yastafhimu-istifhaam” which means asking for understanding.<sup>9</sup> Then in terms of balagah science, istifham sentences are sentences used to find out something that was not known berofe by using one of several istifham devices.<sup>10</sup> In tersm of balagah science, istifham sentences are not much different from those difined by Harimurti Kridalaksana, who defines interrogative sentences as verb forms or sentences used to express question.<sup>11</sup> In addition, Gorys Keraf said that an interrogative sentence is a sentence that contains a request to obtain information from ignorence.<sup>12</sup> From several existing definitions of istifham sentences or interrogative sentences, it can be concluded that istifham sentences are sentences in which there are elements of question used to obtain information or understanding about something due to ignorance about it. In the Qur’an also explains the concept of questioning, if someone asks, they should ask someone who has knowledge of the question. As in QS. An-Nahl [16]: verse 43,

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسَأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ۴۳ ﴾ (النحل/16: 43)

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Djaelani, “Teknik Pengumpulan Data Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif,” *PAWIYATAN* 20, no. 11 (2013).

<sup>8</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan (Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D)*, 27th ed. (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Mandhur, *Lisan Al-'Araby* (Beirut: Dar Al-ihya At-Turath Al-'Araby, 1996), 3781.

<sup>10</sup> Jalaluddin Al-Khatib, *Al-Idhah Fi 'Ulum Al-Balaghah* (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyah, 2010), 136.

<sup>11</sup> Harimurti Kridalaksana, *Kelas Kata Dalam Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1994).

<sup>12</sup> Keraf, *Tata Bahasa Indonesia*.

Meaning: "We did not send before you (Prophet Muhammad), but a man to whom We gave revelation. So, ask those who have knowledge if you do not know. (QS. An-Nahl [16]: 43).<sup>13</sup>

Indirectly, the above verse provides an explanation that the concept of questioning does come from those who do not know to those who know better. Mahmud Yunus in his tafsir book explains that the verse in QS. An-Nahl [16]: verse 43 emphasizes that someone who does not know or has no knowledge, should ask the experts or the book (Al-Qur'an), and the verse is an encouragement for everyone to ask and demand knowledge from people who are experts.<sup>14</sup>

In Indonesian linguistic studies, interrogative sentences (istifham) in terms of semantics are grouped into two forms, namely: informative interrogative sentences and confirmative interrogative sentences. Informative interrogative sentences are interrogative sentences that contain requests for information about something and usually these sentences have question elements such as words, what, who, how and so on. Meanwhile, a confirmative interrogative sentence is an interrogative sentence to get a yes or no affirmation of something asked, so that the answer yes means agreeing and the answer no means rejecting.<sup>15</sup> According to Sudaryanto, a confirmative interrogative sentence is a type of necessity interrogative sentence, the interrogative sentence is indeed aimed at getting justification or denial from others.<sup>16</sup> If a confirmative sentence only aims to get a yes or no answer as a form of confirmation from others, then it is likely that the confirmative interrogative sentence will be characterized by the presence of particles kah, lah and so on after the interrogative word. This type of sentence will be found in the Qur'an, because the Qur'an is sourced from Allah Swt directly who is omniscient and addressed to his servants who do not know.

Istifham sentences in Arabic language rules are also classified into two forms, namely istifham hakiki and istifham majazi. The istifham hakiki sentence is a question sentence that is indeed conveyed by someone who does not know something that is asked. Then the istifham majazi sentence is a question sentence about something but

<sup>13</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan* (Jakarta: LPMA, 2019), 378.

<sup>14</sup> Mahmud Yunus, *Tafsir Qur'an Karim* (Jakarta: Mahmud Yunus Wa Dzurriyyah, 2015), 386.

<sup>15</sup> Mariam L.M. Pandean, "Kalimat Tanya Dalam Bahasa Indonesia," *Kajian Linguistik V*, no. 3 (2018): 80.

<sup>16</sup> Sudaryanto, *Analisis Bahasa* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 1992).

something is already known beforehand. So that the istifham majazi sentence no longer function as a question that requires an answer, but functions as a sentence of command, prohibition, denial, prayer, hope and other purposes.<sup>17</sup> When viewed from the definition of istifham sentences or interrogative sentences in Indonesian and Arabic, both have similarities, so it can be said that a question at any time can turn into a statement depending on what problems and question and who say it. As previously stated, the diversion of istifham sentences from their original function is found in the Qur'an, because the Qur'an is a collection of revelations of Allah Swt, where the arrangement of verses has a very high aesthetic value and even the highest of existing language or literature. So that the use of istifham sentences in the Qur'an is to convey the various messages stored in the verse.<sup>18</sup>

There are several functions of istifham majazi sentences that are often found in verses in the Qur'an, including:

1. Taqriri function, taqriri function is an istifham sentences that functions to stipulate something, where the sentence structure uses the letter hamzah as a particle of the istifham sentence then followed by a prohibition word.<sup>19</sup> An example of this is in QS. Asy-Syarh [94]: verse 1,

﴿أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ۙ﴾ (الشرح/94: 1-1)

Meaning: "Have We not expended your (Prophet Muhammad's) chest".<sup>20</sup> in this verse, the word "alam (أَلَمْ)" which means is not interpreted so that it gives the meaning of decree.

2. Ikhbar or notification function, where this sentence structure usually uses istifham particles of the word "hamzah (إِ)" or the word "hal (هَل)", which aims to strengthen the information conveyed in a sentence,<sup>21</sup> as in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: verse 12,

﴿أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ۙ﴾ (البقرة/2: 12-12)

Meaning: "Remember, it is they who do the damage, but they do not realize".<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Amin Ali and Musthafa, *Balaghah Al-Wadhihah* (Mesir: Dar Al-Ma'arif, 1951), 165.

<sup>18</sup> Abdul Qahir Al-Jurjani, *Dalail Al-I'jaz* (Jeddah: Darul Madani, n.d.), 111.

<sup>19</sup> Nurdiyanto, "Istifham Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisa Balaghah."

<sup>20</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>21</sup> Nurdiyanto, "Istifham Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisa Balaghah."

<sup>22</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

3. Equalizer function, where the istifham sentence structure uses the word “hamzah (إِ)” or the word “hal (هَل)”, where the sentence before and after the istifham particle word has the same position.<sup>23</sup> For example in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: verse 6,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٦﴾ (البقرة/2:6)

Meaning: “Indeed, those who disbelieve are the same to them, whether you warn them or not, they will not believe”.<sup>24</sup> In this verse explains the nature and character of the disbelievers who are the same, whether they are reminded or not reminded.

4. Hint and reminder function, usually this istifham sentence is used as a self-evaluation matter,<sup>25</sup> as in QS. Gafir [40]: verse 82,

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَا أَعْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ٨٢﴾ (غافر/40:82-82)

Meaning: “have they not traveled the earth, and seen the end of those who were before them? They were more numerous and more powerful, and their traces of civilization on earth were more numerous, and what they attempted could not help them.”<sup>26</sup> This verse indirectly gives a message to make history from the past as a lesson and as a foothold to look to the future.

5. Providing understanding function, an istifham statement that has the context of the verse after it, where the question gets an answer as well as providing understanding in the verse after it.<sup>27</sup> As in QS. Taha [20]: verse 17-18,

﴿وَمَا تِلْكَ بِيَمِينِكَ يَا مُوسَىٰ ١٧ قَالَ هِيَ عَصَايَ ۖ أَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهَا فَيَهْجُرُنِي بِهَا عَلَىٰ غَنَمِي وَلِيَ فِيهَا مَآرِبُ أُخْرَىٰ ١٨﴾ (طه/20:17-18)

Meaning: “17. What is that in your right hand, o Moses?” 18. (Moses) said, “It is my staff. I (can) lean on it, thresh (leaves) with it for (the food of) my goats, and have other needs with it.”<sup>28</sup>

6. Motivation function, where the istifham sentence leads the ratio and feelings to lean towards the idea in the istifham sentence,<sup>29</sup> as in QS. Aş-Şaff [61]: verse 10,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ١٠﴾ (الصّٰفّٰت/61:10)

<sup>23</sup> Nurdiyanto, “Istifham Dalam Al-Qur’an: Studi Analisa Balaghah.”

<sup>24</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur’an, *Al-Qur’an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>25</sup> Nurdiyanto, “Istifham Dalam Al-Qur’an: Studi Analisa Balaghah.”

<sup>26</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur’an, *Al-Qur’an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>27</sup> Nurdiyanto, “Istifham Dalam Al-Qur’an: Studi Analisa Balaghah.”

<sup>28</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur’an, *Al-Qur’an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>29</sup> Nurdiyanto, “Istifham Dalam Al-Qur’an: Studi Analisa Balaghah.”

Meaning: "O you who believe, shall I show you a trade that will save you from a painful punishment?".<sup>30</sup>

7. Order function, where the istifam sentence becomes it is own beauty value in it is composition because the meaning of the order usually uses the word command,<sup>31</sup> as in QS. An-Nisa [4]: verse 75,

﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ۗ ٧٥﴾ (النساء/4: 75)

Meaning: "Why do you not fight in the cause of Allah and (defend) the weak from (among) men, women, and children who pray, "O our Lord, take us out of this land (Makkah) whose inhabitants are unjust. Give us a protector from Your side and give us a helper from Your side."<sup>32</sup>

### Charles Sanders Peirce's Concept of Semiotics

Charles Sanders Peirce is a semiotic figure born in 1839, precisely on September 10 in Cambridge. Peirce was born into a highly intellectual family, where his father was a professor of mathematics at Harvard university. Therefore, Peirce's intellect had begun to be nurtured and developed rapidly while studying at Harvard and he earned his BA degree in 1859 as well as his MA and B.Sc degrees consecutively, namely in 1862-1863.<sup>33</sup> In his age, Peirce lived contemporarily with other leading philosophers, including Willian James, Rosia Royce, Ernst Schroder and John Dewey. Peirce is known as the founding father of semiotics and the founder of pragmatism, where he believed that every theory should be connected to a specific experience or practice. Peirce's semiotic theory was very influential on the thinking of other figures such as Willian James dan John Dewey. During his life, Peirce was very productive in writing, so many of his writings, including is Illustration of The Logic of Science, How To Make Our Thoughts on Science, The Fixation of Truth,<sup>34</sup> and so on, in pursuing his career, Peirce could not be maximized, because it was limited by opportunity and age. Peirce closed

<sup>30</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>31</sup> Nurdiyanto, "Istifham Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Analisa Balaghah."

<sup>32</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>33</sup> Indiwana Seto Wahyu Wibowo, *Semiotika Komunikasi Aplikasi Praktis Bagi Penelitian Dan Skripsi Komunikasi* (Jakarta: Mitra Wacana Media, 2013), 17.

<sup>34</sup> Baihaqi, "Makna Salam Dalam Al-Qur'an (Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce )."



his age on April 19, 1914 in Milford.<sup>35</sup> As mentioned earlier, Peirce is known as the originator of semiotic theory, in addition there is also another figure who is also known as the originator of this semiotic theory, namely Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), Peire in America and Saussure in Europe. Saussure's scientific background is more in linguistics, known as semiology, while Peirce's background is in philosophy and logic, known as semiotics. Despite the different scientific backgrounds, the two theories initiated by the two philosophers can be used as a basis and reference in understanding the science of signs.<sup>36</sup>

The doctrine in Peirce's theory is that a parson's ability to think is because it is assisted by a sign, because the existence of a sign indicates that there are external facts, where these facts will help a parson in thingking so that it will produce knowledge. The characteristics of Peirce's semiotic theory look simple, but very detailed. Peirce is known for his trichotomous or triadic semiotics, consisting of three components, namely object, representation and interpretation. Not only that, each of the three components has three more divisions. The object can consist of icon, symbol and index.<sup>37</sup> The form pf the icon can be seen from the similarity of the sign with the marker. The index is seen from the causal relationship of a sign with a marker, then the symbol can be seen from the agreement of a group on a sign.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the representament also has three categories, namely qualisign, sinsign and legisign. Qualisign is the quality contained in the object, usually based on adjectives such us hard, soft and so on. Sinsign is the existence of an object based on existing events or it is appearance. Legisign is the concept of an object based on norms established in a culture and generally accepted.

And interpretant, this third part is a further process of semiosis of objects and representations for the meaning of a sign, so that interpretants are sometimes also referred to as researchers with the interpretation process.<sup>39</sup> Interpretant has three parts, namely rhem, desesign and argument. Them is the meaning of an object based on

<sup>35</sup> Ilmi Solihat, "Makna Dan Fungsi Patung-Patung Di Bundaran Citra Raya Kabupaten Tangerang Provinsi Banten (Kajian Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce)," *Jurnal Membaca* 2, no. 2 (2017): 186.

<sup>36</sup> Jafar Lantowa, Nila Mega Marahayu, and Muh Khairussibyan, *Semiotika: Teori, Metode Dan Penerapannya Dalam Penelitian Sastra* (Sleman: Deepublish, 2012), 1.

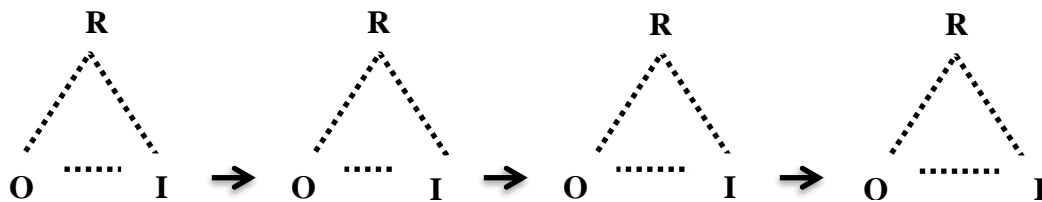
<sup>37</sup> Hidayat, "Simbolsasi Warna Dalam Al-Qur'an Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce."

<sup>38</sup> Laksmi Kusuma Wardani, "Simbolisme Liturgi Ekaristi Dalam Gereja Katolik Sebuah Konsepsi Dan Aplikasi Simbol," *Dimensi Interior* 4, no. 1 (2006): 17.

<sup>39</sup> Badiatul Mardiyah, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Film In Syaallah Sah (Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce)" (UIN Sunan Ampel, 2019), 26.

existing concepts but it is nature still renews in possibilities, then Design is the meaning of an object with existing concept and it is nature is in accordance with reality. And Argument is the meaning of an object with justified reasons. Not only that, the discussion of Peirce's semiotic theory also has the terms firstness, secondness and thirdness.<sup>40</sup> Firstness is an understanding of a sign that is still potential, then Secondness is an understanding of a sign that is factual because it is related to reality, and Thirdness as a level of understanding based on conventional or general agreement. Peirce's semiotic theory is a continuous or non-singular signification process,<sup>41</sup> meaning that the interpretant of an object with a representation will change if the interpretant meets a new object and representation, so on and so forth. So, Peirce's semiotic theory is described in the form of a continuous triangle, for example, Object (O), Representament (R) and Interpretant (I):

**Figure 1:** Peirce's semiotic theory



### Analysis of QS. At-Tin Verse 8

﴿الَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ﴾ (التين/95: 8)

Meaning: "Is not Allah the most just judge?" (QS. At-Tin [95]: 8).<sup>42</sup>

From the istifham sentence, that is a majazi istifham sentence, where it is no longer interpreted as an interrogative sentence as the original. Because there is the addition of the particle "hamzah (")" as an element of an interrogative sentence before the word "laisa (لَيْسَ)" which shows a majazi meaning as a certainty or necessity of

<sup>40</sup> Baihaqi, "Makna Salam Dalam Al-Qur'an (Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce )."

<sup>41</sup> Lantowa, Marahayu, and Khairussibyan, *Semiotika: Teori, Metode Dan Penerapannya Dalam Penelitian Sastra*.

<sup>42</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

something,<sup>43</sup> therefore the verse above no longer means “Is not Allah the most just judge?”, but becomes “Allah must be the most just judge”. Indeed using the balagah point of view, the analysis that can be done only reaches the change in meaning from an interrogative sentence to a statement sentence due to presence of the word “hamzah (إِ)” istifham before the word “laisa (لَيْسَ)”. However, when viewed from Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotic theory, the istifham sentence will have three interpretants, remembering that an object will never have one interpretant result. Thus, by using Peirce’s semiotic theory on QS. At-Tin [95]: 8 produces several interpretants, including:

1. The verse is considered as question sentence, where the question sentence in the verse is a type of affirmative question sentence. So if it is formulated in Peirce’s semiotic theory, it will be: the question sentence as a representament and will produce a potential to get confirmation yes or no. This can be found in the book of interpretation Jalalain, where the mufassir gives a confirmation yes or no. This can be found in the book of tafsir Jalalain, where the mufassir gives a confirmation yes as justifying the sentence. Because in the commentary of Jalalain, it is explained, it is said in the hadith: when someone recites Surah At-Tin until verse 8 or until it is finished, let him say:<sup>44</sup> وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ<sup>44</sup>, which means “It is true, and we are witnesses to it.”
2. The second interpretation, which is still with the same structure, where the istifham sentence in the verse becomes the object, then the concept of the majazi istifham sentence as the representament, because in the science of balagah it self the istifham sentence in the verse is clearly recognized as a majazi istifham sentence marked by the letter “hamzah (إِ)” as a question element then followed by the word nafi (absence) with the word “laisa (لَيْسَ)” which means not. Therefore, the interpretant becomes a change of function from a question sentence to a statement sentence. This can be found in the Qur’an Karim and its Translation which was translated by KH. Zaini Dahlan with a team of experts by KH. Bahaudin Noersalim. The translation of this verse is written “Is not Allah the wise ruler”,<sup>45</sup> which no

<sup>43</sup> Izzuddin Abdussalam, *Majaz Al-Qur’an: Salah Satu Kunci Utama Untuk Memahami Kandungan Kitab Suci*, ed. Ulya Fikriyati (Jakarta: Qaf Media Kreativa, 2023), 24.

<sup>44</sup> Jalaluddin Al-Mahalli and Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi, *Tafsir Al-Qur’an Al-Karim* (Semarang: Maktabah ‘Alawiyah, n.d.), 504.

<sup>45</sup> Zaini Dahlan, *Qur’an Karim Dan Terjemahan Artinya* (Yogyakarta: UII Press, 1999), 1115.

longer includes a question mark at the end of the sentence, in contrast to the Ministry of Religion's 2019 translation which still includes a question mark at the end of the sentence.

3. This last interpretation is the focus of this paper, but it does not ignore the first and second interpretations. Because it goes back to Peirce's semiotic concept, where interpretation is never singel. For this third interpretation, where it is still with the existing structure, namely the istifham sentence in the verse becomes the object, then the previous verses in Surah At-Tin as the representament which will produce an interpretation that the istifham sentence in the verse becomes an affirmation that allah is the most just judga among the judges. Because *first*, from a theological point of view, Allah created humans in the most perfect form compared to other creatures created by Allah. Then Allah turned the situation of human beings to the lowest state or condition because of their own actions. In another verse Allah says which means: "whoever does a zarah of good, he will see his reward. And whoever does an avil deed weighing as much as a zarah, he will see his reward". (QS. Az-Zalzalah [99]: 7-8).<sup>46</sup> Mahmud Yunus in the book of tafsir explains QS. Az-Zalzalah verse 7-8, it is clear that Allah's punishment is just. Whoever does a good deed, even if it is as heavy as fine dust, surely Allah will reward that good. Likewise, if he does evil then Allah will reward that evil.<sup>47</sup> *Secondly*, from a sociological point of view, humans as social beings are under the auspices of government law wich is comprehensive and coersive, where every citizen as a whole must obey the applicable law and the law applies to all citizens. But in fact there is still confusion in the legal order, especially the legal order related to justice. No wonder everyone is equal before the law, but not necessarily before the judge. Therefore, boththeologically and sociologically, the verse in QS. At-Tin [95]: 8 can beinterpreted as an affirmation that God is the most just judge, in which God's justice is thoroughly recognized by Muslims. This kind of interpretation is the third level of Peirce's semiotics, which is conventional, recognized and conventionally believed among Muslims.

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<sup>46</sup> Lajnah Pentashihan Al-Qur'an, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya Edisi Penyempurnaan*.

<sup>47</sup> Yunus, *Tafsir Qur'an Karim*.

## Conclusion

From the result of previous research on istifham sentences and Charles Sanders peirce's semiotic study, it turns out that until now there are still shortcomings that open up spece for new research. Based on previous research, it turns out that istifham sentences in the Qur'an only provide information that there are times when istifham sentences become statement sentences, command sentences and so on. However, the change in function is not accompanied by a more detailed explanation. To complement this, the results of this study show, QS. At-Tin verse 8 as an example of an istifham sentence when studied with Peirce's semiotic theory will find three interpretations, *first*, the istifham sentence in the verse is included in a potential question sentence that is still waiting for confirmation of the possibilities that exist. *Second*, the istifham sentence is included in the majazi istifham which gives the meaning of the statement and it is factual nature, it is factuality has been recognized in the science of balaghah, and *Third*, as an affirmation that the fairest judge and justice is found from Allah Swt, where this is conventional which is found from the semiotic process of objects and representament of the previous verses.

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