

Denotative and Connotative Meaning for Word “Basar” in Sahih Bukhari

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ABSTRACT

Meaning is a fundamental element in effective text understanding. Ability to decipher the meaning within a text is crucial for ensuring accurate comprehension, especially within religious texts such as the Quran and Prophetic Hadiths. While many studies focus on Quranic semantics, research on word meanings in Hadith texts remains relatively underexplored. This study seeks to examine the denotative and connotative meanings of the word *basara* and its derivatives in Sahih Bukhari. The aim is to distinguish the literal (denotative) meanings of *basara* and its derivatives from their contextual (connotative) meanings within Sahih Bukhari. This study uses secondary data from Sahih Bukhari, gathering Qauli Hadiths that contain the word *basara* and its derivatives. Findings show that *basara* and its derivatives not only refer to physical sight but also convey meanings related to spiritual insight, wisdom, and awareness, depending on the context. These connotations emphasize the depth of meaning in the language of the Prophet, often transcending literal interpretations. The study concludes that the connotative dimension of *basara* significantly enriches its interpretation, providing a deeper understanding of concepts related to knowledge and perception in Islam. This research contributes to the fields of semantic stylistics and Islamic studies by elucidating the nuanced semantic fields at work within religious discourse.

Keywords: connotative, denotative, Prophetic saying, semantic, stylistics

INTRODUCTION

Semantics is the linguistic study of meaning within a given text. The term originates from the Greek word *sema*, meaning symbol or sign. Semantic studies, as a branch of linguistic, were established by the Father of Modern Linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure, in the 19th century. Semantics concerns itself with giving a systematic account of the nature of meaning (Karim Nazari Bagha, 2011). The main focus of semantic is meaning of word, the origin of words and how languages change as time passes.

Denotative and connotative are part of study of meaning. Both types are important as it will convey the meaning accurately. Both meanings are crucial in understanding language, particularly in religious texts such as the Quran and prophetic sayings. Study shows that understanding the meaning is importance in text such as in poem (Sinta Salsabila & Dini Sirma Budi, 2022; Zuhdah & Alfain, 2020), novel (Maharani & Hartati, 2024), song lyrics (Rika Wahyuni, 2019; Siti Zulaichah, 2008), drama (Pakpahan, 2021) and slang (Efransyah, 2020; Mary Fatimah Subet & Muhammad Zaid Daud, 2018; Herianah & M.Ridwan, 2021). Study shows that the importance of the pairs in carry the meaning in details especially in Quran (Noureldin Mohamed Abdelaal, 2019; Noureldin Mohamed Abdelaal, 2018).

This study aims to analyze Hadith texts using a semantic approach, focusing specifically on denotative and connotative meaning in Hadiths containing the term *basara* and its derivatives as found in Sahih Bukhari, by

Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (Al-Bukhari, 1980). The selected Hadiths are those spoken by the Prophet (PBUH) to examine the meaning of terms he used, whether they are employed denotatively or connotatively. This research will contribute to the field of semantics by enabling the study of Hadith texts through the lens of contemporary linguistic methods.

DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING

Denotative meaning refers to the literal or fundamental meaning of a word, without considering context or emotion. It is the most basic meaning, generally understood by the public. In linguistic studies, denotative meaning is regarded as the primary definition provided in dictionaries. For example, in Arabic, the word eyes denote the sense of sight or the organ for seeing. Studies of denotative meaning often emphasize the importance of understanding a word's use in its literal context before exploring more complex interpretations.

Connotative meaning refers to the additional, often emotional, cultural, or symbolic associations tied to a word, depending on context and individual experience. For example, the word eyes in Arabic not only signifies "sense of sight" in the physical sense but can also carry metaphorical meanings such as source of something or leader in a tribe or in army. Thus, connotative meaning is often more subjective and layered, requiring deeper analysis of the context in which a word is used within a text.

Studies related to denotative and connotative meaning mainly focused on

PROPHETIC SAYING

Prophetic saying is the second most important source in Islamic law. Linguistically, the word *hadith* means speech or something new (al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, 1996). In technical terms, it refers to all that is attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in terms of his speech, actions, tacit approvals, and characteristics. Hadith is divided into two main components: *isnad* and *matan* (Nur al-Din 'Itr, 1981) The *isnad* represents the chain of narrators who transmitted the hadith, while the *matan* denotes the text of the hadith, which consists of the words, actions, approvals, or characteristics of the Prophet (Muhammad Abu Laith al-Khayr Abadi, 2011).

A hadith that records the Prophet Muhammad's words or spoken statements is known as *hadith qauli*, encompassing all verbal expressions, speeches, or statements delivered by the Prophet PBUH in various contexts. In contrast, hadith that records the actions or deeds of the Prophet is known as *hadith fi'li*. Additionally, *hadith taqriri* refers to the tacit approval of the Prophet for the actions of others, indicating his implicit agreement. Lastly, *hadith wasfi* describes the Prophet's physical and moral attributes (Sayd Abdul Majid al-Ghouri, 2019).

SAHIH BUKHARI

Sahih Bukhari is a collection of hadith compiled by Imam al-Bukhari. This book is considered the most authentic book in hadith alongside Sahih Muslim (Al-Bukhari, 1980). This book contains around 7563 hadiths, with repetition, spreading in 98 books, beginning with book of Revelation and end with book of Oneness of Allah. This book has many commentary of it and the most popular is written by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani named Fath al-Bari (Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d.). There are several books that write on the Prophetic sayings by al-Bukhari without repetition named Mukhtasar Sahih al-Bukhari (Zain al-'Abidin Ahmad ibn Abdul Mutalib az-Zubaidi, 2006).

BASAR AND ITS MEANING

Basara is an Arabic verb with the meaning "to see" in Malay, also carry the meaning sight and vision in English. According to the Kamus Dewan (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2013), the word "lihat" (to see) refers to the act of perceiving something visually. The act of seeing, in general, is integral to human daily life. Vision, in this context, is not limited to physical sight but also encompasses inner vision or insight. Furthermore, vision

is closely linked to learning, as our beliefs and knowledge about something are deeply connected to the way we perceive it.

Based on study by Norfarhana Ahmad Ghafar and Hishomudin Ahmad (2023), there are several meanings of word *basar* in Arabic language. The meaning is categorized to three primary meanings known as explicit, implicit and something that draw people’s attention, name of place, belief dimension, name of animal and hyponymy.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research project employing a textual analysis approach. The primary data for this study is sourced from Sahih Bukhari. The research is conducted in two phases: the data collection phase and the data analysis phase.

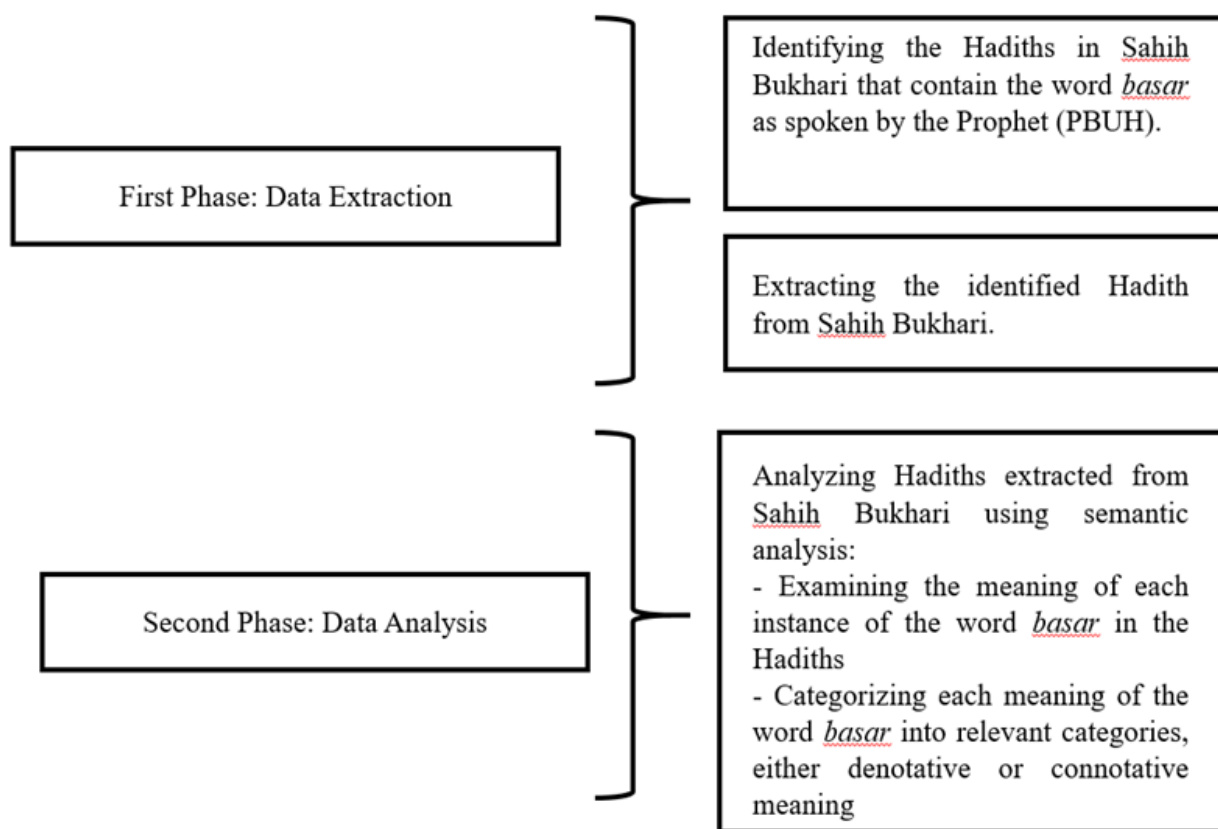


Figure 1: Data collection phases

Phase One: Data extraction is carried out by identifying Hadiths containing the word *basar* in the Hadith Qauli in Sahih Bukhari. The researcher focuses on the terms *basar* and its derivatives, including *basir*, *basair*, *yabsuru*, *tabsuru*, *nabsuru*, *absuru* and *baasir*. A total of 17 Hadiths contain the word *basar* and its derivatives.

Phase Two: The words spoken by the Prophet (PBUH) in the selected Hadiths are analyzed. The data is examined from a semantic perspective by categorizing the meanings derived from the word *basar* and its derivatives into two parts: (1) denotative meaning or the primary meaning, and (2) connotative meaning or meanings that extend beyond the primary meaning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are seventeen hadiths that has been extracted from Sahih Bukhari containing word *basar* and its derivatives:

Table 1: A list of hadiths containing word basar in Sahih Bukhari

Book Name	Chapter	Hadith Number	Word
Revelation	How the Divine Revelation started being revealed to Allah's Messenger	4	بصري
Call to Prayers (Adhaan)	Looking towards the sky during the prayer	750	أبصارهم، أبصارهم
Obligatory charity tax (Zakat)	A property from which Zakat is paid not hoarded money	1408	أتبصر
Virtues of Madinah	Ad-Dajjal will not be able to enter Madina	1882	بصيرة
Oppressions	Open courtyards houses and sitting on the ways	2465	البصر
Oppressions	Robbing away somebody's property publicly	2475	أبصارهم
Beginning of creation	The statement of Allah Taala: And the moving creatures of all kinds that has scattered therein	3297	البصر
Beginning of creation	The best property of a Muslim will be sheep	3308	البصر
Prophets	The tale of three Israelites, a leper, a bald man and a blind man	3464	بصري، فأبصر، بصره، بصرك، بصري
Prophetic Commentary on the Quran	And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread	4510	أبصرت
Prophetic Commentary on the Quran	But it shall avert the punishment of stoning to death from her	4747	أبصروها
Marriage	Whoever is not able to marry, is recommended to fast	5066	للبصر
Asking permission	Asking permission because of looking	6241	البصر
Invocations	The invocation by one who wakes up at night	6316	بصري
Invocations	Invoking Allah while ascending a high place	6384	بصيرا
To make the heart tender	The humility or modesty or lowliness	6502	بصره، يبصر
Afflictions and the End of the world	The coming of the fire	7118	بصري

Table 1 shows all the hadith Qauli from Sahih Bukhari that contains the word basar and its derivatives. There are 23 word basar and its derivatives in 17 hadiths from 13 books in Sahih Bukhari, beginning with book of Revelation, Call to prayers, Obligatory charity tax, Virtues of Madinah, Oppressions, Beginning of creation, Prophets, Prophetic commentary on the Quran, Marriage, Asking permission, Invocations, To make the heart tender and Afflictions and the end of the world.

Based on the word basar in the hadith, the researcher will classify it according to its meaning, either denotative or connotative.

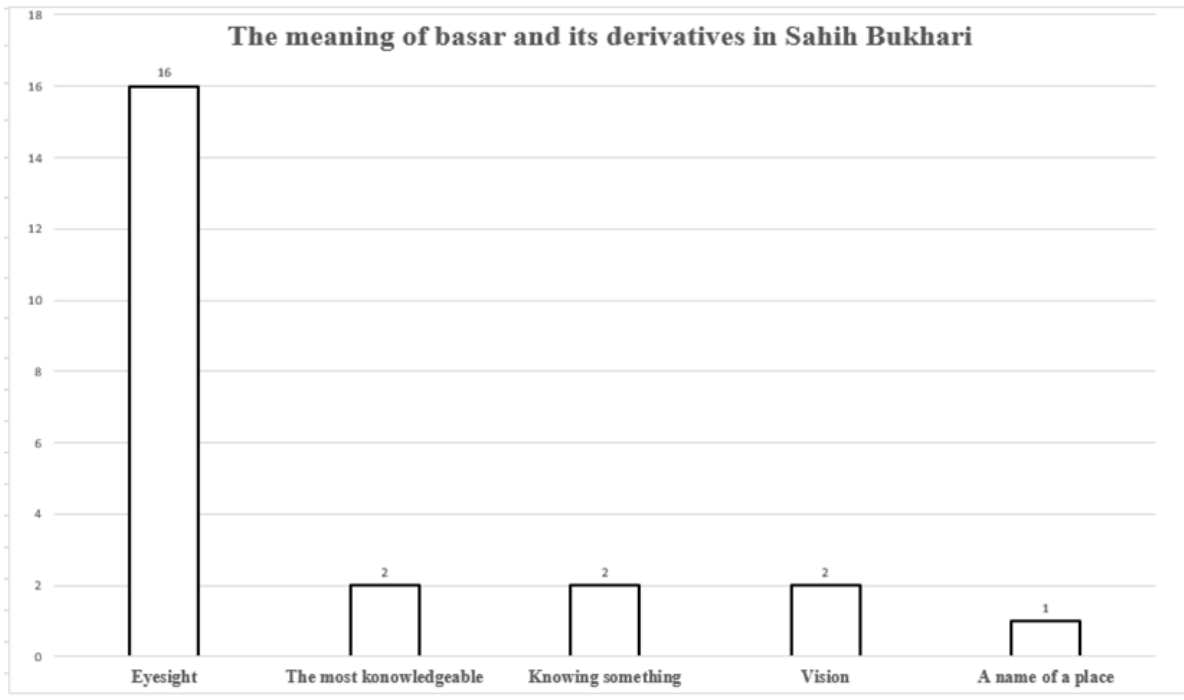


Figure 2: The meaning of basar and its derivatives in Sahih Bukhari

Figure 2 shows the meaning of *basar* and its derivative in Sahih Bukhari. There are differences in meaning despite it is from the same root of word. There are five meaning of *basar* and its derivate in Sahih Bukhari which are eyesight, the most knowledgeable, knowing something, vision and a name of a place.

From figure 2, there are some entries for word *basar* in Sahih Bukhari. The first one is eyesight with 16 times, while three meanings occur two times which are the most knowledgeable, knowing something and vision. Another meaning which is a name of a place comes only one times.

Table 2: Denotative and Connotative Meaning of word *basar* in Sahih Bukhari

Hadith Number	Word	Denotative	Connotative
4	بصري	√	
750	أبصارهم، أبصارهم	√	
1408	أتبصر	√	
1882	بصيرة		√
2465	البصر	√	
2475	أبصارهم	√	
3297	البصر	√	
3308	البصر	√	
3464	بصري، فأبصر، بصره، بصره، بصرك، بصري	√	
4510	أبصرت	√	
4747	أبصروها		√
5066	للبصر	√	
6241	البصر	√	
6316	بصري	√	
6384	بصيرا		√
6502	بصره، يبصر	√	√
7118	ببصري		√

The literal meaning of word *basar* is eyesight. This meaning occur in this study the most, 16 times, in hadith number 4, 750, 1408, 24652475, 3297, 3308, 3464, 4510, 5066, 6241, 6316 and 6502. All of word *basar* in these hadiths carry the literal definition of *basar* which is eyesight. For example, the word *للبر* in hadith number 5066, the Prophet (PBUH) encourage some men to get married if there are able to support, but if they incapable of marriage, they need to lower their gaze, as the gaze is lowered with marriage. The Prophet (PBUH) also stated that other than lowering the gaze, fasting is also a way to restrain oneself.

There are some meaning that need to look closely and pay attention to, so that we can understand the text precisely. Some of this meaning appear in context and ditch the literal meaning completely. Some are use vastly in the text, some are not. For this study, connotative meaning only occur 7 times compared to denotative meaning. The meaning is the most knowledgeable, knowing something, vision and a name of a place. For example, the Prophet (PBUH) refer to word *بيصري* in hadith number 7118 as a name of a place which is Basra. Basra is a city in Iraq that has some relation with the content of the hadith. The message of this hadith is about the end of the world.

Another connotative meaning can be found in hadith number 6384. This hadith discusses a prayer that one recites while traveling, directly invoking Allah Almighty. In this context, the word *بصيرا* refers to the one of names of Allah, emphasizing his attributes of the most knowledgeable above all.

CONCLUSION

From this research, it can be concluded that understanding the denotative and connotative meaning is important in proper interpretation of text, especially in religious text. Denotative meaning describes the direct and literal meaning of the word, while connotative carry the nuances of it. The differences between both can clearly state when it comes to details. Therefore, recognition to both meaning is crucial and vital in understanding text clearly, especially in Islamic religious text.

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