

Denotative and Connotative Meanings in the Holly Text (Surat Al-Baqara) Using Lewis' Method of Meaning Analysis

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze and identify the denotative and connotative meanings in Holly text " Surat Al-Baqara" by focusing on the lexical meaning and associative meanings. The study of meaning normally refers to semantics , where semantics is the study of meaning in language. It means that language must have meaning, language without meaning useless. For this purpose , this study attempts to analyze the meaning of words according to Lewis' method of meaning analysis.

المعاني المعجمية والضمنية في النص ألقراني الشريف لسورة البقرة بطريقة لويس في تحليل المعنى

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ملخص البحث :

إن هذه الدراسة تهدف إلى تحليل وتشخيص المعاني المعجمية والضمنية في النص ألقراني الشريف لسورة البقرة وذلك من خلال إلقاء الضوء على المعنى المعجمي والضمني لبعض المفردات الواردة في هذا النص الشريف .إن الدراسة الحالية تختص بدراسة علم المعاني حيث ان مصطلح (Denotative Meaning) يشير إلى المعنى المعجمي والذي يهتم بدراسة المعنى المعجمي للكلمة بمعزل عن معناه في النص إما (Connotative Meaning) يشير الى المعنى الضمني للكلمة وقد أشار له بعض اللغويون والمختصون في دراسة الأدب بأنة المعنى الارتباطي والذي يحمل عدة معاني ويتوقف معنى الكلمة فيه على السياق (Context of situation).

1.1. Lexical meaning and its kinds

Hikmet (1998: 119) mentions that semantics deals with the description of word and sentence meaning. The term lexical meaning which is used in semantics is interpreted as the meaning of lexeme whether it is lexeme or paraphrasal lexeme . Lyons (1995: 140) concludes that the meaning of sentence depends upon the meaning of its constituent lexemes and the meaning of the same is not all , lexeme depends upon the meaning of sentences in which are occur. Chaer (1994:289)says that the lexical meaning refers to the real meaning , meaning that proper with our sense observation , or for granted meaning. Lexical meaning covers among other things the discussion about denotation , connotation , ambiguity , synonymy , hyponymy polysemy , homophony and homonymy . Where semantics concern with aspect of meaning in language, there are two certain aspects of meaning which are the core of the study. Carnap(1970:64) mention that:

Lewis explains his chief semantical concepts in the following way all terms have meaning in the sense or mode of connotation or extension and all have meaning in the mode of connotation or intension .The denotation of a term is the class of all actual or existent things to which that term is correctly applied.

1.2. Denotative Meaning

6 The denotation of a word is its direct, literal meaning as distinct from its connotation, which is its additional, suggested meaning, an implied or associated idea. Haillday (1978:77) mentions that:

"In semiotics, 'connotation arises when the denotative relationship between a signifier and its signified is inadequate to serve the needs of the community. A second level of meanings is termed connotative. These meanings are not objective representations of the thing, but new usages produced by the language group".

The crucial difference between the traditional and autopoietic views of language is that the latter assumes its connotative rather than denotative nature. As Maturana (1978) points out: denotation

is not a primitive operation, it requires agreement consensus for the specification of the denotant and the denoted. If denotation is not a primitive operation, it cannot be a primitive linguistic operation, either. Language must arise as a result of something else that does not require denotation for its establishment, but that gives rise to language with all its implications as a trivial necessary result. This fundamental process is ontogenetic structural coupling which results in the establishment of a consensual domain.

According to Activity Theory , the meaning of terms is related to standardized forms of human practices. A **hammer** is in standardized human practice used to drive nails into a wood piece. This use of the word "**hammer**" reflects its denotation. It may also be used for non-standardized purposes, e.g. as **a murder weapon**. The last use reflects its connotative meaning. Denotation is when you mean what you say, literally. Connotation is created when you mean something else, something that might be initially hidden. The connotative meaning of a word is based on implication, or shared emotional association with a word. "**Greasy** " is a completely innocent word: Some things," **like car engines, need to be greasy**". But "**greasy**" contains negative associations for most people, whether they are talking about food or about people.

Often there are many words that denote approximately the same thing, but their connotations are very different. Innocent and genuine both denote an absence of corruption, but the connotations of the two words are different: innocent is often associated with a lack of experience. This is the core or central meaning of a word or lexeme, as far as it can be described in a dictionary. It is therefore sometimes known as the cognitive or referential meaning. It is possible to think of lexical items that have a more or less fixed denotation (sun, denoting the nearest star, perhaps) but this is rare. Most are subject to change over time. The denotation of silly is not today what it was in the 16th century, or even the 18th, when Coleridge referred to the silly buckets on the deck. Denotation is thus related to connotation, which leads to semantic change.

Denotation as stated by Hikmet (1998:119), is that aspect of meaning of a particular word or group of words ,which is based on a clear reference to a given section of the observable ' external world' and on some kind of conventionalization. While Lobner (2002:25) relates the term of denotation with the truth condition where the denotation of a word is more than the set of all existing of that kind , it includes real referents as well as fictitious ones, usual exemplars and unusual ones. The denotation of a word is more than the set of all existing entities of that kind. It includes real referents as well as fictitious ones ,usual exemplars and unusual ones, maybe even exemplars we cannot imagine because they are yet to be invented.

1.3. Connotative Meaning

It is kind of lexical meaning which is related to the certain item it refers to. Yule (2006:57) defines the connotation is the meaning which appears by association of language used by the speaker or listener about the language which they speak or read. The term connotation has been adopted by those logicians who follow Mill in the practice of discussing as though they were primary and paramount two senses in which a symbol may be said to mean : (1) It means the set of things to which it can be correctly applied and the members of this set are said to be denoted or indicated by the word , or to be its denotation (2) it means the properties used in determining the application of a symbol (Ogden & Richard ,1989:178 and Ullman,1979: 74). Brinton (2000: 132) affirms that words have literal or referential meanings (denotation) but also evoke feelings, attitudes or opinions.

According to Jeffries (1998: 109) states that the connotation is a word we use lightly and often in everyday language to refer to obvious, but indirectly expressed emotion. Connotation is a subjective cultural and emotional colorations in addition to the explicit or denotative meaning of any specific word or phrase in language (Fodor, 1980:65). A word's connotation is what the word suggests ,or what we associate the word with , that goes beyond its formal definitions, the word " **house**" and " **home**" both refer to a building or structure in which people live, these words have, then the same denotation . But the word " **home**" for most people suggests or is associated with concepts and feelings of family and security (Merriam, 1953:195).

Connotative meanings are often culturally conditioned . A word which has a positive connotation in one culture may actually have a negative connotation in another. There are two types of connotations: personal and general , personal connotations are the result of the experience of the individual man and woman. The way of reaction to ideas and objects . General connotations result when the reaction of the majority of the people to a specific word is substantially the same.

1.4. Denotative and Connotative meanings in Logic and Grammar

The difference between denotation and connotation is often illustrated by the fact that the two words roughly " mean" the same , one has a complimentary ,

the other an unflattering ,connotation. At times the context in which a word is used will determine the word's connotation (Chandler,2002:141).

Separating the connotation from denotation grammatically is important because while one might assume that a word's denotation is fully intended ,whether a word's connotation is intended much more difficult to determine. Connotations are often emotional in nature , and thus if they are intended , it may be for the purpose of swaying a person's emotional reactions rather than the logical evaluation of an argument(Barker,2000:67). In grammar , denotation refers to roughly equivalent to its lexical definition .The word " **atheist**" denotes a person who disbelieves in the existence of Gods. The connotation refers to any subtle nuances that might or might not be intended by its use(Barthes ,1967:34).

In logic , the uses of denotation and connotation are very different . The denotation , or extension , of a term is the list of a class of objects referred to by the word. Thus the word "**planet**" denotes specific objects such as Venus and Earthetc.(Palmer,1981:67). Another famous criterion advanced by Mill is that the denotative function of proper names as opposed to the connotative value of common nouns. Proper names; he says , are not connotative : they denote the individual who are called by them, but they do not indicate or imply any attributes as belonging to those individuals(Ullmann,1979:74).

1.5 Text Analysis

Depending on the previous explanation of the denotative and the connotative meanings in Surat Al-Baqara(three parts)which are analyzed according to the Lewis' Method of meaning analysis,(Interpretation of Qur'an Approximation to Minds) by AyotAllah Al-Odhma Mohammed Al-HusseinyAl-Shirazi and Oxford Wordpower Dictionary.

((حَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ)) ((P:1,V:7))

The above-underlined Arabic word is a verb which is translated into English seal

Seal(v).

Denotative meaning:

There are four related meanings of this word. First (seal some thing up/down) means to close or fasten a parcel, envelop, etc. second (seal something up) means to fill a hole or cover something so that air or liquid does not get in or out. Third ,to show formally that you have agreed something. fourth (seal something off) to stop any person or thing from entering or leaving an area or building(Oxford wordpower,20006: 690).

Connotative meaning:

From the whole meaning of this surat, the word (seal), in addition to its denotative meaning, has a connotative meaning. It means that it is difficult for the hearts and ears of the unbelievers to believe in right since God has made them so for they being used not to listen right and follow right path.

((وَعَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ)) (P:1,V:7)

The above-underlined Arabic word is a noun which is translated into English **cover**

Cover (N).

Denotative meaning

This word has seven related meanings. First ,something that is put on or over something in order to protect it. Second, the outside part or of a book or magazine. Third (the cover) the blanket, sheet, etc that cover somebody in bed. Fourth (cover against something) means insurance against something so that if something bad happens you get money or help in return. Fifth, it means shelter or protection from the weather ,damage, etc. Sixth (a cover for something) something that hides the real nature of something , especially illegal. Seventh, doing somebody's job for him/her while he or she is away from work(Oxford wordpower ,2006:180).

Connotative meaning:

Here there is a simile between the meaning of a cover as concrete thing and its meaning as connotative. The obstinate unbelievers do not see the right as if there was a cover on their eyes which prevent hem to see the concrete things .

((في قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا)) (P:1,V:10)

The above-underlined Arabic word is a noun which is translated as **sickness**

Sickness (N).

Denotative meaning:

This word has three related meanings. First, the state of being ill. Second, a feeling in your stomach that may make you throw up food through your mouth. Third, a particular type of illness(Oxford power word,2006:130).

Connotative meaning:

This word refers that the hearts of the hypocrite are circuitous and their selves are crooked and do not want the righteousness.

((أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَى (P:1,V:16)))

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a verb which is translated as **buy**

Buy (v).

Denotative meaning:

This word means to get something by paying money for it(Oxford wordpower,2006:187).

Connotative meaning:

Here the hypocrite as if they gave the right guidance in return for error. They gave themselves instead of deception while it is supposed that they should give themselves for the right way.

((P:1,V:16) فَمَا رِبَحْتَ تِجَارَتُهُمْ))

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a noun which is translated as **trade**

Trade(N).

Denotative meaning:

This word means (1) the buying or selling of goods or services.

(2)a job for which you need special skill.

(3)trade(in something) means a particular type of business(Oxford Wordpower ,2006:177).

Connotative meaning:

The hypocrite have lost their selves when they substituted the right guidance for error.

(P:1,V:17) صُمُّ بُكْمٌ عُمًى

The underlined Arabic words in the above verse are adjectives which are translated as deaf, dumb and blind successively

Deaf(Adj.)

Denotative meaning:

This word has two related meanings. First , it means unable to hear anything or unable to hear very well. Second (deaf to something) means not wanting to listen to something(Oxford Wordpower ,2006:200).

Connotative meaning:

The hypocrite and the deaf are alike ,they do not get advantage of the right saying.

Dumb(Adj)**Denotative meaning:**

This word has two meanings, first, it means unable to speak, second, it means stupid(informal) (Oxford Wordpower,2006:245).

Connotative meaning:

The hypocrite and the dumb are alike. They do not say the right.

Blind(adj)**Denotative meaning:**

1-unable to see ;

2- not willing to understand or notice ;

3-without reason or thought and

4-impossible to see round(Oxford Wordpower,2006:47).

connotative meaning:

the hypocrite and the blind are alike, they cannot envision the right.

((وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ))

(P:1,V:42)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a verb which is translated as **dress**

Dress (V).

Denotative meaning:

1-to put clothes on somebody or yourself ;

2-to clean and put a bandage and

1-(dress up) to put on special or unusual clothes for fun or for a play(Oxford Wordpower,2006:240).

Connotative meaning:

Here it means not to mix the truth with the falsehood that you follow some and leave some in torah according to what you see useful or not for you.

(P:1,V:118)

((تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ))

The underlined Arabic words in the above verse are translated as the hearts of those who have no knowledge are **all alike**

Denotative meaning:

The hearts of those who have no knowledge are all alike means their hearts may have the same size or shape or design (Oxford Wordpower,2006:20).

Connotative meaning:

Here those who have no knowledge connotatively refuse and deny what the prophet Moses says as their ancestors said to their prophet.

((يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ)) (P:2,V:183)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a verb which is translated as **write**

Write(v):

Denotative meaning:

This word means to make words or letters ,etc, especially on paper using a pen ,pencil, etc. (Oxford Wordpower,2006:881).

Connotative meaning:

This word means connotatively that fasting is prescribed (must be done) for you.

((هَنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ)) (P:2,V:187)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a noun which is translated as **apparel**:

Apparel (N).

Denotative meaning:

It means a piece of clothing worn by men or women (Oxford Wordpower,2006:32).

Connotative meaning:

As the apparel protects the body and is stuck to it , so it means connotatively the strong connection between man and woman in the sexual pleasure.

((نَسَاؤُكُمْ حَرَّتْ لَكُمْ فَأَتَوْا حَرَّتْكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ)) (P:2,V:223)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a noun which is translated as **tilth**:

Tilth(N).

Denotative meaning:

1-Cultivated land

2-The state of aggregation of a soil in relation to its suitability for crop growth

(Marriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary ,2007:1308)

Connotative meaning :

Here it means a man's sexual pleasure with his wife which is the place of sexual pleasure.

((وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَبُغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأُمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ)) (P:2,V:231)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is verb which is literally translated as **hold**:

Hold(v).

Denotative meaning:

1-to take something or somebody and keep it/him/her in your hand;

2-to keep a person in a position or place by force;

3-to contain or have a space for a particular amount;

4-to have something usually in an official way;

5-to have an opinion, etc.;

6-to remain the same;

7-to believe that something is true about person;

- 8-to organize an event;
- 9- to wait until the person you are calling is ready;
- ; 10- (hold it!) means wait! don't move!
- 11- (hold sb/sth back) means to prevent sb/sth from making progress;
- 12- (hold on)means to wait;
- 13- (hold on to sb/sth)means to not let sb/sth go;
- 14- (hold out) means to last (in a difficult situation);
- 15- (hold sth out)means to offer sth to sb;
- 16- (hold out for sth) means to continue to ask for sth;
- 17- (hold sb/sth up)means to make sb/sth late
- 18- (hold up sth) means to rob sth using a gun(Oxford Wordpower,2006:378).

Connotative meaning:

Here this word means connotatively to retain .the general sense of this verse is that men when they divorce women and they (women) reach their prescribed time , men can retain women in good fellowship.

((لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ)) (P:2,V:236)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a verb which is translated as **touch**:

Touch(v).

Denotative meaning:

- 1-to be or go so close together that there is no space between them;
- 2-to make sb feel sadness;
- 3-to be as good as sb/sth;
- 4- (touch wood) means an expression that used by people to prevent bad luck;
- 5- (touch down) means to land and
- 6- (touch on/upon sth) means to talk or write sth for a short time(Oxford Wordpower,2006:418).

Connotative meaning:

Here this word means to do sexual intercourse.

((يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ)) (P:3,V:255)

Denotative meaning:

This above verse means that Allah knows what is before them and what is behind them(Oxford Wordpower,2006:437).

Connotative meaning:

Here this verse means that Allah knows what people do whether good or bad deeds in their life and knows what they have left after their death as a school or bar .

((وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ)) (P:3,V:255)

The underlined word in the above verse is a noun which is literally translated as **chair**:

Chair(N).

Denotative meaning:

- 1-a piece of furniture for one person to sit on;
- 2- (singular) the person who is controlling a meeting
- 3-the position of a university professor (Oxford Wordpower,2006:119).

Connotative meaning:

Here it means that Allah's knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth . In a sense Allah's authority is existent everywhere.

((الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا)) (P:3,V:286)

The underlined Arabic word in the above verse is a verb which is translated as **eat**:

Eat(V).

Denotative meaning:

- 1-to put food in your mouth then chew and swallow it and
- 2- to damage or destroy something gradually (Oxford Wordpower,2006:249).

Connotative meaning:

Here it means dealing with usury and taking money without any interest.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study provides a clear view on how the words not only have denotative meaning (lexical meaning), but also have connotative meaning (associative meanings) especially in Holy text. Based on the finding of this study on the analysis of denotative and connotative meaning of Holly

text(Surat Al –Baqara –three parts), there are some points are noticed , there are words , phrases and sentences refer to the Islam Religious Concepts such as,

" ختم الله على قلوبهم وعلى سمعهم "

" في قلوبهم مرض فزادهم الله مرضا "

" ولا تلبسوا الحق بالباطل "

" يا ايها الذين امنو كتب عليكم الصيام....."

There is an important point that could be noticed : two points need the explanation in talking about connotation. First, Connotation is the subject which varies from culture to another. According to the analysis connotative meaning may be rather subjective and not shared in the same way by all the readers . All the readers of the texts agree on the denotative meaning of words even in the Holly text while the readers cannot control the connotative meaning of words in Holly texts (Surat Al-Baqara).Second, The connotative meaning in Holly texts are analyzed according to the context of Surat Al-Baqara , thus connotation in Holly text is unique and idiosyncratic meaning.

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