

Approaches to Denotative and Connotative Meanings in the Translations of the Holy Quran

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Abstract

This paper discusses denotation and connotation as areas of difficulty in translating the Quran. The Arabic verses are analysed and compared to the different translations. Then, the different approaches to translating these linguistic phenomena are critically analysed and compared. It is found that the translators' approaches to translating denotations and connotations of words vary.

1. Introduction

The Quranic text is divided into 114 surahs each of which may be regarded as text within the Quranic text. In other words, we have texts within texts. For comparison, we have chosen one surah within the Quranic text, namely, surat al-Baqarah. This surah is the longest Quranic surah ; it consists of 286 verses. Hence an inclusive discussion of all verses classified under the above phenomena is

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impossible as this would need volumes and volumes. Therefore, representative samples are to be selected. The examples selected in this paper are, more or less, representative of the different procedures adopted by the four translators in rendering each of the above mentioned linguistic phenomena .

2. Some Definitions of Denotation and Connotation

Denotative meaning is the objective (dictionary) relationship between a word and the reality to which it refers (Crystal, 1987:418). Connotative meaning, on the other hand, is the communicative power of a word by virtue of what it refers to (Leech, 1974:15). The difference between denotation and connotation is explained by many scholars. For instance, Osgood et al. (1957:320-321) distinguish between denotation which indicates the referent of a linguistic sign and connotation as the diverse emotive reactions to it. Bowers (1989:78), on the other hand, remarks that the distinction between the two terms according to J.S. Mill being that, "connotation" represents the inherent conceptual meaning of a word , in our terms its "intension" and "semantic structure", while "denotation" represents the meaning of a word in terms of the set of objects it names, in our terms its "extension" or "application" .

For Bowers, these senses of connotation and denotation are now old-fashioned and have almost fallen out of philosophic use. Connotation is "still a technical term of linguistics and refers to the aspect of word's meaning which arises from its association in the mind of users with the users' own abstract ideas and values" (Ibid.).

Bell (1991:98-99) makes a good distinction between denotative meaning and connotative meaning saying that "The first refers to meaning which is referential, objective and cognitive and, hence, the shared property of the speech community which uses the language of which the word or sentence forms a part. The second, in contrast, refers to meaning which is not referential but associational, subjective and affective. This kind of meaning, being personal, may or may not be shared by the community at large."

Moreover, connotative meaning, unlike the denotative, is culturally-bound. Connotations tend to change from time to time and from society to society. To a significant extent the connotative meaning is independent of the denotative meaning. Some words are said to have no denotative meaning, but only connotative meaning such as "hurrah", and "boo" which only express or arouse feelings. Two utterances may have the same denotative meaning but very different connotative meanings. Also, word's connotation may vary while its denotation remains unchanged.

3. Denotation, Connotation and Translation

Connotative meaning poses greater difficulty to the translator than denotative meaning because it is variable according to historical period and culture. The wider the gap between the SL and the TL cultures, the more problematic the issue of translatability becomes. Some words with neutral connotations in the SL may have strong emotional overtones in the TL if translated literally (Larson, 1984:131). Further, a word may have a positive connotation in one language and a negative one in another. Nevertheless, there may be various lexical choices a translator may draw based on connotative meanings (Ibid.). 'Mismatches' in connotation between the SL and TL lexemes result in loss in translation especially in literary texts, where any translation, as Savory explains, is but an imitation or recreation of the original; it is only a translation in the primitive sense of being a transcript of its meaning (1957:153).

One should not assume, however, that denotative meaning is easier to translate than connotative meaning since it is often difficult to find denotative equivalents. This is because, as Larson indicates, "languages combine meaning components differently". For example, the word *إسراء* in Arabic denotes "walking at night". In English no single lexeme can be found to have these two components in one and the same lexeme. Hence , the translator

"must not expect that there will be a literal equivalence (Larson, 1984:154). The translator, as Larson suggests, has to bear in mind that a number of words may be employed as an equivalent of a single word in the TL (Ibid.). Thus, the word **إسراء** is equivalent to the phrase "walking at night".

In addition, all languages tend to have closely related pairs of words distinguished from one another only by a single component of meaning (Ibid.: 80). This component is termed as "the contrastive component" which is defined by Nida as "a semantic component which serves to distinguish one meaning from another, whether the meanings belong to one word or several" (Nida, 1964:229).

The contrastive component may be denotative, as in "see" and "show" where the contrastive component (to cause to see) is the distinguishing causative component (Larson, 1984 : 80). It may also be connotative as in the words "exceptional" and "abnormal" where the first is appreciative and the second is depreciative. It is important for the translator to find the components of meaning which distinguish the one from the other if he is to translate accurately (Ibid.).

According to Newmark, literal translation, which to him means giving a close TL equivalent , is the basic translation procedure, if the referent and the pragmatic effect are equivalent.,

Put differently, if "the words not only refer to the same thing but have similar associations" and if "the meaning of the SL unit is not affected by its context in such a way that the meaning of the TL unit does not correspond to it "literal translation is the best translation procedure (1988:70). If this is not the case , the translator can resort to other procedures ranging from definition, componential analysis (CA), synonymy to transference... The translator may also combine two procedures (such as CA and transference) simultaneously for rendering a single SL lexeme, which Newmark terms as coupling (Ibid.).

As Newmark points out, CA in translation is different from CA in linguistics . As he states:

In linguistics it means analyzing or splitting up the various senses of a word into sense components which may or may not be universals, in translation the basic process is to compare a SL word with a TL word which has a similar meaning, but is not an obvious one to one equivalent by demonstrating first their common and then their differing sense components. Normally, the SL word has a more specific meaning than the TL word, and that the translator has to add one or two TL sense components to the corresponding word in order to produce a closer approximation of meaning. (Ibid.)

The translator commonly analyses a word contextually, thereby restricting its TL sense components (Ibid.: 115). CA is useful in translating conceptual words and words which denote "combinations of actions and qualities, that appear to show up a lexical gap in the TL" (Ibid. : 1 17). These CAs are usually performed mentally, according to him , and can be presented in the form of equations. CA is useful in differentiating between close synonyms which are distinguished from each other by a contrastive component (Ibid. : 84). For example the two Arabic conceptual terms ايمان and يقين can be componentially analysed as follows:

يقين = belief (+ firm), thus يقين can be translated as "firm belief. Such pairs will be discussed later.

Transference, as Newmark defines, "is the process of transferring a SL word to a TL text as a translation procedure" (Ibid.: 81). It relates to "the conversion of different alphabets". It is usually complemented by another translation procedure such as synonymy or CA. Synonymy in translation, according to him, means translating a SL word by "a TL near equivalent". Newmark (Ibid. : 84) points out that "a synonym is only appropriate where literal translation is not possible and because the word is not important enough for CA. Here , "economy precedes accuracy".

Such procedures, suggested for translating SL units, as mentioned above should not be resorted to when literal translation is possible. Otherwise, as Newmark rightly observes, such an unnecessary use will be a mark of poor translation (Ibid.: 84). However, as Newmark stresses, in translating an important book, the translator has to "write a preface and notes to discuss the usage and meanings of the author's term, particularly where one sacrifices accuracy for the sake of economy in the translation, or where there is ambiguity in the text" (Ibid. : 93).

4. The Translations of Quranic Denotation and Connotation

The translators of the Quran have written prefaces and most of them have given notes. However, their approaches to rendering the denotative and connotative meanings of words have differed. By way of example, some verses will be cited. The key lexemes of each verse will be analysed in Arabic then compared to the translation.

Example 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

This verse which introduces all the surahs (except for one) has two pairs of closely related words, viz., الرحمن and الرحيم . It also has

the word الله, the Name of the Lord. These words have been translated differently as shown below:

Sale: In the Name of the Most Merciful God

Arberry: In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Dawood: In the Name of Allah, the compassionate, the Merciful

A. Y. Ali : In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

The word الله is rendered by Sale, Arberry and A.Y.Ali as "God" which is not denotatively or connotatively equivalent to الله Allah for many reasons. First, الله is a proper noun referring to the Name of the Lord and names are not translated into other languages but transferred. Second, God (with a capital G) denotes الإله in Arabic which is used in other verses, therefore God should be used as an equivalent to the word الإله. Third, the word الله is a unique Arabic linguistic form, unlike the English lexeme God; hence, God, by no means, echoes the Arabic.

Sale's approach to rendering the pairs الرحمن and الرحيم does not reveal the contrastive component which distinguishes between them. He combines the two words in one phrase (the most Merciful). Disregarding such contrastive components in translation leads to inaccuracy. Sale here is giving a striking example of

denotative "undertranslation" which results in sacrificing the expressive meaning.

Arberry gives "the Merciful" for الرحمن and "the compassionate" for الرحيم and Dawood gives the reverse translation. Though this approach is more reflective of the nuances of meaning, it does not show clearly the contrastive component distinguishing the two words. Neither does the lexeme "The Merciful" nor "The Compassionate" carry the complete meaning of الرحمن which is the only Beautiful Name used interchangeably with الله .

A.Y.Ali , however, has "Most Gracious, Most Merciful" for الرحمن الرحيم Ali's approach distinguishes between the two pairs of words الرحمن and الرحيم . Yet , it should be noted that the word الرحمن is the only Name of Allah used as a proper noun interchangeably with الله in the Quran. It occurs as a proper noun rather than a modifier in more than one verse :

(وقل ادعوا الله وادعوا الرحمن) (الرحمن علم القرآن) (الرحمن على العرش استوى)
(الالوسي، بلا تاريخ: 62) (وإذا قيل لهم اسجدوا للرحمن قالوا وما الرحمن) and
Hence, it sounds better to transfer it as ar-Rahmaan and footnote its meaning and usage. This will be more reflective of the Quranic denotations and connotations of these two pairs of lexemes.

Example 2

الذين يؤمنون بالغيب (3:2)

The verse enumerates some of the epithets of the pious. The epithet cited here is that the pious are people who believe in the unwitnessed things, such as Paradise, Hell.... etc. (الصابوني, 1986: 32). The two words *يؤمنون* and *الغيب* are key words in this verse. The translators render them as:

Sale: who believe in the mysteries of faith

Arberry: who believe in the Unseen

Dawood: who have faith in the unseen

A.Y.Ali: who believe in the Unseen

The word *يؤمنون* in Arabic is a verb derived from the participle *إيمان*, literally, "belief" or "trust". The phrasal verb *يؤمن بـ* implies the meaning of "confession or attesting to the truth of something" (see 16:1 968, (البيضاوي). The English verb chosen by Sale, Arberry and A.Y.Ali as an equivalent for the verb is "believe". Dawood has "have faith in". A closely related word is the verb *يوقنون* which is derived from the participle *إيقان*. The verb is in the verse *وبالآخرة هم يوقنون*.

The participle إيمان denotes "belief" whereas إيقان denotes "firm belief" (p. 18). The contrastive component distinguishing between the two closely related pairs of words is "firmness" (الصابوني, 1986: 32). Such a component is, more or less, reflected by the translators as shown in their renderings of (4:2) compared to (3:2):

وبالآخرة هم يوقنون (4:2)

Sale: and have firm assurance in the life to come

Arberry: and have faith in the Hereafter

Dawood: and firmly believe in the life to come

A.Y.Ali: and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter

As regards the word غيب Sale gives "the mysteries of faith". Arberry, Dawood and A.Y. Ali provide "the unseen". As Sale footnotes, the word غيب signifies a thing that is absent, at a great distance or invisible, such as the resurrection, paradise and hell. The word "mysteries" chosen by Sale as an equivalent to the SL word غيب has almost the same denotation of غيب that is "a religious truth that one can know only by revelation and cannot fully understand" (Webster's Dictionary). Yet "mysteries" has a connotation which is not implied by the Arabic word غيب, namely,

inexplicability and being beyond human understanding. This being the case, Sale's rendition of غيب somewhat miscommunicates the meaning.

The word "unseen" given by the remaining translators does not have such a connotation of obscurity like "mysteries" and is also briefer than mysteries of faith, hence preferable. However, the word غيب denotes not only things unseen but also inexperienced (by man). The Arabic antonym of this word is الشهادة as cited on the verse: (94:9) عالم الغيب والشهادة which literally means "the witnessed". Therefore, the term "unwitnessed" is recommended because it is more inclusive of the Arabic sense components given by the term غيب, namely, "unseen", "unwitnessed" and "absent".

Example 3

أولئك الذين اشتروا الضلالة بالهدى (16:2)

The verse refers to the hypocrites and their preference of perversity over guidance. The Arabic word الهدى means "guidance". It is rendered as follows:

Sale: Those are the men who have purchased error at the price of true direction.

Arberry: Those are they that have bought error at the price of guidance

Dawood: Such are those that barter away guidance for error

A.Y.Ali: These are they who have bartered Guidance for error

Sale translates الهدى as "true direction" whereas Arberry, Dawood and A.Y. Ali give "guidance". Sale here is overtranslating the word and sacrificing economy for no obvious reason. The proper procedure here would be to give a close TL equivalent, because there is a TL word that matches the SL denotation and connotation. Thus Sale's rendering leads to sacrificing the expressive meaning in addition to precision. The other translators, on the other hand, do not adopt Sale's procedure and give more informative and expressive meanings. Strikingly enough, Sale renders the word هدى in the verse (2:2) which describes the Quran as "direction".

ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين (2:2)

This shows his inconsistency because the meaning of the word is the same in the two verses. However, the other translators are consistent in rendering هدى as "guidance".

Example 4

وإذ قال ربك للملائكة إني جاعل في الأرض خليفة (30:2)

This verse tells the story of Adam, that is, when Almighty Allah told the angles His plan to make a representative for Himself on earth. The word خليفة denotes someone who takes another's place

in some matter (حجزي 27:1957). Here it is the case of deputizing man to carry out Allah's judgements and commands on earth (الصوابوني, 48:1986). The verse is translated as follows:

Sale: when Thy Lord said unto the angels, I am going to place a substitute on earth.

Arberry: And when thy Lord said to the angels: "I am setting in earth a viceroy".

Dawood: When your Lord said the angels : "I am placing on the earth one that shall rule as My deputy".

A.Y.Ali: Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth".

The word خليفة is rendered as "substitute" by Sale "Viceroy" by Arberry, "deputy" by Dawood and "vicegerent" by A.Y.Ali. The word "substitute: denotes a person (or thing) serving on place of another. "Deputy" signifies a person appointed to act as a substitute for or as an assistant to another. "Viceroy" and similarly "vicegerent" indicate "the governor of a country or province who rules as the representative of his king or sovereign" (Webster's Dictionary). As such, the denotation of "viceroy" is wider than "substitute"; it refers to a substitute for a sovereign. Put differently, in addition to the sense component of deputation the word "viceroy" has the component of ruling, which is not denoted by "substitute"

and not necessarily denoted by deputy. It is to be noted that Dawood adds this component by using the word "rule" with "deputy". Moreover, "substitute" may connote the absence of any supervision by the one who appointed the deputy; in this context, it is Allah. The lexemes "viceroy" and "vicegerent" do not have such a connotation because a "viceroy" represents a king somewhere while the king is simultaneously in possession of power and supervises him. As such, the word "substitute" is not equivalent to خليفة but a distortion of its meaning. Further, the connoted meaning of conferring a special favour to man by deputizing him by Allah to implement his judgements and commands is lost in rendering خليفة as "substitute", but implied by "viceroy" and "vicegerents".

Thus, Sale's translation of the lexeme خليفة misrepresents the original.

Example 5

ولكم في القصاص حياة يا أولي الألباب لعلكم تتقون (179:2)

This verse illustrates the condition of a community where lives are protected through that stability and security established by that divine ordinance of retaliation, sanctioned by the Quran. The murderer should be killed, for he or she has deliberately deprived an innocent man or woman of life. The verse is rendered as follows:

Sale: And in this law of retaliation ye have life, O ye of understanding, that peradventure ye may fear.

Arberry: In retaliation, there is life for you men possessed of minds; haply you will be godfearing.

Dawood: Men of understanding! In retaliation you have a safeguard for your lives; perchance you will guard yourselves against evil.

A.Y.Ali: In the Law of Equality there is (saving of) life to you, O ye men of understanding; that ye may restrain yourselves.

Sale, Arberry and Dawood render the word قصاص as "retaliation". The Arabic word denotes "returning like for like, in the cases of [intentional] murder and [intentional] injury"^(*) (see لسان العرب). The English word "retaliation", on the other hand, refers to the act of retaliating, i.e. "to repay (as an injury) in kind : to return like for like ; esp: to get revenge" (Webster's Dictionary).

The Arabic and English words are not denotatively or connotatively equivalent, although they are close in their denotations. An important difference between their denotations is that قصاص denotes like-for-like punishment in cases of intentional murder or injury only; it is not applicable to all kinds of evil like the

(*) القصاص القود، وهو القتل بالقتل، والجرح بالجرح.

English word "retaliation". Further, the divine ordinance of قصاص is prescribed by Allah, as a law, to be implemented by the Muslim Ruler, not by the injured person, so as to keep the peace of society. In addition, the connotation of vengeance implied by "retaliation" mismatches that of قصاص which connotes equality. The connotation of equality shows especially in the context of the immediately preceding verse:

"يا أيها ال ذین امنوا کتب علیکم القصاص فی القتلۃ الحر بالحر والعبد بالعبد والأنثى بالأنثى فمن عفی له من أخیه شیء فإتباع بالمعروف وأداء إلیه بإحسان ذلك تخفیف من ربکم ورحمة فمن اعتدى بعد ذلك فله عذاب الیم" (172:2)

According to the verse, one life only (free for free, slave for slave, woman for woman) is to be taken for the lost life, and if the aggrieved consents forgiveness, with a specified compensation, it is strongly recommended. Therefore, the word "relaliation" is connotatively deviant and denotatively undertranslated by Sale, Arberry and Dawood.

As Yusuf Ali advocates, "retaliation" is more suitable for rendering the Arabic word ثأر, literally, "bloodfeuds", a pre Islamic custom mitigated by Islam (Ali, 1968:70). The Arabic word ثأر connotes private and tribal vengeance. Ali remarks that قصاص is close to the Latin term "lex Talinosis" which he modifies as "the Law of equality" and uses as an equivalent so as to avoid technical

terms. However, Ali's term "law of equality" is a good rendering provided that it is explained in a footnote, as Ali did. Another approach is to transfer the term into English as Qisas and explain its meaning in a footnote.

It should be noted here that mistranslating the denotation and connotation of this particular word will lead to deviation at the directive level of meaning. This is because the verse is a speech act of command according to which a Muslim is supposed to act (see Ahmed, 2002 for more detail on legal speech acts). For example, one will generalise and use retaliation against anybody for any minor harm, which is against the spirit of Islam. In general, Muslims are recommended to forgive and pardon each other.

The lexeme لعل is mistranslated in this verse. It has three alternative interpretations (1) hope (on the part of the addressees) (2) recommendation (by God to the addressees) meaning "apply the law of Qisas taking the chance offered to you to be one of those who fears Allah" (3) purpose, meaning "so that you might fear Allah. Other commentators give a fourth interpretation, namely, expectation with probability, meaning "you may fear Allah" (الزمخشري، بلا تاريخ، 333).

Mistranslating such a word miscommunicates the meaning. The phrase **لعلكم تتقون** explains the benefits of applying this law of Qisas. The word **لعل** is rendered by Sale as "peradventure" which is an archaic word denoting (1) perhaps, possibly or (2) by chance (Webster's Dictionary). Dawood uses the literary word "perchance" which denotes (1) by chance or (2) perhaps; possibly (Webster's Dictionary). As explained above, **لعل** does not denote accidentally but it may denote possibility. Arberry has "haply" which denotes possibility. However, in this context, **لعل** connotes probability, but "haply" connotes doubt. Therefore, the connotations of the SL and TL lexemes "mismatch".

Thus, Sale and Dawood mistranslate the denotation of the Arabic word **لعل**. Arberry, on the other hand, gives a wrong connotation of **لعل**, i.e. "doubt" instead of probability.

A better rendering is that of A.Y. Ali. He uses "may" which is more inclusive of the Arabic meanings, that is, "used in auxiliary function expressing purpose, expectation or contingency" (Webster's Dictionary) This word, as well, does not have exactly the same connotation of the Arabic lexeme but is acceptable because it does not have an opposite connotation like "haply".

The last key word in this verse is **تتقون** For this verb Sale, has "fear", Arberry has "godfearing", Dawood gives "guard yourselves

against evil" and A.Y.Ali has "restrain yourselves". Sale uses the verb fear as an intransitive verb in which case it denotes "to be afraid or apprehensive" (Webster's Dictionary). This is not the appropriate meaning in this religious context. The proper usage of the verb (fear) in such a context is as a transitive meaning "profound reverence and awe esp. toward God". (Webster's Dictionary). Therefore, Sale mistranslates the verb تتقون. He alters the denotation and consequently the connotation.

Dawood's translation is deviant from the original. The word evil in "to guard yourselves against evil" is an undertranslation of the original which leads to semantic deviation. In the translation the word "evil" is too general. In the Quran it is a specific kind of evil. In other words, man is advised not to commit murder as it would incur his dying by way of just punishment. According to another interpretation, people of understanding are ordered to guard themselves against Allah's wrath or hell fire if they disobey Allah by disregarding the law of Qisas (52: (الالوسي، بلا تاريخ).

A.Y.Ali's rendition of تتقون as "restrain yourselves" does not express the proper denotation and connotation of the SL since it is also an undertranslation generalising the meaning intended.

Arberry's translation of تتقون as "godfearing" is evocative of the meaning. Yet it is not a proper collocation in English.

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the three words of the verse are either distorted or deprived of their connotations in the translations with the result that the meaning of the whole verse is miscommunicated (as in the case of Sale and Dawood) or not adequately rendered (as in the case of Arberry and A.Y.Ali) .

Example 6

"ولهن مثل الذي عليهن بالمعروف وللرجال عليهن درجة" (2:228)

The verse prescribes the rights and obligations of men and women as husbands and wives. It states that men have rights, in return for their obligations, while men have a degree above women. The two words carrying the core meaning of this verse is بالمعروف and درجة. They are rendered as follows:

Sale: The women ought to behave towards their husbands in like manner as their husbands should behave towards them, according to what is just : but the men ought to have a superiority over them.

Arberry: Women have such honourable rights and obligations, but their men have a degree above them.

Dawood: Women shall with justice have rights similar to those exercised against them; although men have a status above women.

A.Y.Ali: And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them.

The word **بالمعروف** denotes "kindness and justice" (see **لسان العرب**). Sale, Dawood and A.Y.Ali communicate only the meaning of "justice" leaving "kindness" out. Justice without kindness and good treatment is not **معروف** but **عدل** which is not the word given in the verse. Thus, kindness, the contrastive component distinguishing between **العدل** and **المعروف**, is not expressed by the three translators. This contrastive component is significant in this particular context because the verse stresses kindness to women more than being just to them. Sale gives as equivalent to **بالمعروف** "according to what is just", Dawood has "with justice" and A.Y. Ali provides "according to what is equitable". The undertranslation of the denotative meaning may result in offering the wrong vocative meaning ; i.e. to observe justice to women and disregard kindness.

Arberry, however, gives "women have such honourable rights as obligations" to express the components of justice and kindness. This premodification of rights as 'honourable' is both semantically and syntactically deviant. The Arabic word بالمعروف is an adverb modifying manner not an adjective qualifying the noun 'rights'. Therefore, it should be rendered by an equivalent adverb, not an adjective, so as not to change the meaning. A slight modification as "women shall honourably have such rights as obligations" may be more reflective of the original informative meaning and structure. Though not inclusive of justice and kindness, 'honourably' is acceptable because it is closer to the directive meaning. Also, we have inserted the model "shall" which has the illocutionary force of obligation for the verse is a legal provision.

The second word to be discussed is درجة which Sale renders as a 'superiority', Arberry and A.Y.Ali as 'a degree' and Dawood as "status". In Arabic درجة denotes "a step of a stair or a degree in a hierarchy" (see لسان العرب). It is used here to refer to having more rights by men or a rank immediately above women because of shouldering , maritally, more responsibilities towards them (see 120: 1968, (البيضاوي) and (حجازي, 135:1957)).

The word 'superiority' employed by Sale denotes having a higher rank, which matches denotatively the word درجة. Yet,

connotatively 'superiority' mismatches *درجة* ; the first does not imply closeness of the ranks like the latter. The same applies to the lexical item "status" used by Dawood. The Arabic connotation is taken from the original meaning of the word; namely, 'a step in a stair' where steps are immediately above each other. Hence, the rule organising marital life is not clearly rendered to the reader, giving room to misconceptions in such a critical issue.

It should be noted that the English lexical item 'degree' used by Arberry and A.Y.Ali is not an ultimate equivalent to the Arabic word *درجة*. The SL word implies highness vertically not horizontally (135: *الالوسي، بلا تاريخ*), which is not necessarily implied by the TL word 'degree'. However, Arberry and A.Y.Ali add the words 'above' and 'over' to give the meaning.

5. Conclusion

From looking at the renderings of the four translators, it is evident that the translators' approaches to translating the denotations and connotations of words vary. Sale's approach to rendering denotation sometimes deviates from the original, as in his translation of the word *تتقون* and *لعلكم*. His translation 'equivalents' mismatch the connotations of the SL and in most cases distort the meanings; examples are his translation of the word *خليفة* as 'substitute' and *الغيب* as 'the mysteries of faith'. However, he sometimes succeeds in reflecting the nuances of meaning which

distinguish between closely related pairs of words, such as يؤمنون and يوقنون for which he gives 'believe' and 'have firm assurance' respectively. Yet, in some other cases he fails, like the other translators, as in rendering بالمعروف as 'according to what is just' leaving the meaning component of 'kindness' which differentiates this word from العدل. On the whole, it cannot be said that Sale has not been successful in applying his claimed approach of doing the original 'impartial justice' and not presenting it 'in any one instance, either better or worse than it really is' (Sale, 1694: ix). Neither has he kept scrupulously close to the text , for he is not faithful to the connotative meaning .

As for Arberry, his translation equivalents have a tendency for matching the denotations of the SL words except for some rare cases such as قصاص which is rendered as 'retaliation' . His echoing of the nuances of meaning is almost successful, thereby reflecting an aspect of the expressive meaning of the original as well as its 'dynamic impact and most moving beauty' (Arberry , 1964:xii).

However, his rendering of connotations, in some cases, is not in line with the original as in translating لعل as 'haply' which connotes 'doubt' but the original connotes 'probability'. Yet, he avoids many of the connotative deviations committed by Sale. Therefore, Arberry is more faithful to the expressive meaning and more successful in achieving his purpose than Sale .

Dawood is, in most cases, consistent with his approach of rejecting adhering rigidly to literal rendering of the Arabic idioms. In some cases he does not give the correct denotative meaning or gives an ambiguous rendering. For instance, he renders لعل as 'perchance' and تتقون as 'guard yourselves against evil'. As far as connotation is concerned, his approach is fluctuating, like Arberry and Sale. His renderings of درجة as 'status' and بالمعروف as 'with justice' are not connotatively equivalent. Neither does he show the nuances of meaning between the word العدل and بالمعروف which is used in other verses.

A.Y.Ali's approach to the denotations of words is as precise as possible. Yet, his precision is not always ultimate. For example, بالمعروف which is rendered as 'according to what is equitable' is not ultimately precise. He avoids some mismatches in connotation produced by others, as shown in his translation of the word قصاص as 'the law of Equality'. Yet his translation of the word تتقون as 'restrain yourselves' clashes connotatively with the original. In a word, it can be said that Ali's rendering is typical of his approach and belief that "the English shall be, not a mere substitution of one word for another, but the best expression I can give to the fullest meaning which I can understand from the Arabic Text" (1968:iv).

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ملخص

مناحي لدراسة المعاني الدلالية والإيحائية في ترجمات القرآن الكريم

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يتناول هذا البحث الصعوبات التي تواجه المترجم في ترجمة دلالة المفردة القرآنية وإيحائها. إذ تم تحليل الآيات القرآنية وموازنتها مع الترجمات المختلفة، ثم تم تحليل الطرائق المختلفة لترجمة هذه الظواهر اللغوية تحليلاً انتقادياً. وقد تبين تنوع الطرائق التي استخدمها المترجمون في ترجمة دلالات المفردات القرآنية وإيحائها.

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