The Reflection of Connotative Meanings of *Insan* in the Qur'an: A Translational and Semantic Perspective

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Abstract—**This study aims to investigate the translation of connotative meanings of *insan* in the Qur'an, from Arabic into English and Spanish. Connotative meanings pertained to *insan* in this religious text are negative and hold unfavorable implications such as denial, stinginess, weakness, and hastiness when talking about his behaviors. For ordinary readers, these negative connotations pass unnoticed in the source language and the target language. In Arabic, the link between *insan* and negativity is linguistically under-researched in Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic discourses; this study is conducted and is hoped to translationally fill a linguistic gap, with particular reference to Qur'anic examples. Because of the shortage of studies that refer to this particular link between *insan* and negativity, and because this connotative dimension has not been explored satisfactorily in Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic studies, representative Qur'anic verses are sampled, analyzed and discussed so as to uncover the difficulty of rendering the negativity, associated with *insan* and to suggest translation solutions. Four authentic and authoritative Qur'anic exegeses are selected to support the argument, and two translations (English translation and Spanish translation) of the Qur'an are selected to practically prove the failure of reflecting the negative link between *insan* and negativity in the selected samples.**

Index Terms—***Insan*, connotation, translation, negativity, semantics**

I. INTRODUCTION

A lexical item can be defined as a single word, a part of a word, or a chain of words that forms the basic elements of a language's lexicon (vocabulary). It can be generally viewed to convey a single meaning, such as a lexicon, but is not limited to single words (Crystal, 2018). Stevenson and Merlo (2002) define a lexical item as anything that gets a lexical entry, which is what a grammar says about lexical items.

Lexical items are defined in languages to give specific meanings. That is why they cannot bridge any semantic gap when they replace each other. The lexical item acquires part of its meaning from the combination that it has with other lexical items. At the same time, not all semantic features can be exchangeable between words, parts of words or even a chain of words in any language. Proost (2017) maintains that: "The meaning of lexical items may be described in terms of combinations of semantic features. Not every possible combination of features corresponds to one or more lexical items; some of them fail to get lexicalized" (p. 115).

In Arabic, the lexical item *insan* has many counterparts such as *male man*, *human being*, and *mankind*, which are different from each other and cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts or situations. In the Qur'anic discourse, *insan* is always joined with negativity when handling or discussing his behavior or character. For example, denial, weakness, unthankfullness, arguteness and stinginess are some negative characteristics of *insan in the* Qur'an. (Sarhil & Nassar, 2021).

Translating the lexical item *insan* to English and Spanish results in many semantic problems that are slight at the denotative level but considerable at the connotative level. This study will translationally investigate the use of *insan* in the Qur'an as a challenge at both levels and provide the strategies that are adopted by the two translations, selected for this study. The two translations selected for this study are the English translation of (Abdullah Yousef Ali) and is symbolized by (I) and the Spanish translation of (Isa Garcia) and is symbolized by (II). The choice of both translations is based on their popularity and fame.

II. SACRED TEXTS AND TRANSLATION

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Sacred texts and divine revelations have their own idiosyncratic features which make them unique. The Qur'an is a case in point. It has many peculiar features that made it the challenge for the versed Arabs at the revelation time to come up with even the least of similarity to it. The rhetoric and eloquence of the Qur'an include many linguistic qualities at various levels, being syntactic, semantic, cultural and rhetorical among many others.

Translating the Qur'an into other languages is not an easy task, and that is why all translations are always incongruent to the source Qur'an, which is spiritual though not fictive in nature. Dickins et al. (2002) state that,

> the subject matter of religious texts implies the existence of a spiritual world that is not fictive, but has its own external realities and truths. The author is understood not to be free to create the world that animates the subject matter, but to be merely instrumental in exploring it. (p.178)

The translator should attempt to achieve faithfulness at various levels from different angles. As a mediator, the s/he should compromise between the source text and the target text, and readers of both texts. Perching on the suitable or the appropriate equivalence is the most difficult decision to be taken by the translator as full equivalence is impossible due to lexical items' incongruence (Abdelaal, 2019). Jakobson (1959) is pessimist in this opinion, and is quoted in his article *On Linguistic Aspects of translation,* as saying "a full equivalence between any two linguistic codes is not possible" (p. 234).

Other scholars, however, are optimistic when they argue that translation is possible despite the linguistic and cultural loss. Vinay and Darbelnet (2004) think that translation from language to another is possible despite the cultural and linguistic limitations, and therefore we should aim at attaining situational equivalence.

Since the Qur'an is subject to an on-going interpretation, it is untranslatable in the sense that full reproduction in a different language is virtually impossible. Irving (1985) maintains that the Qur'an could be considered untranslatable and literally impossible because its interpretation in another language is an on-going process, especially with a document that must be used constantly. Describing his experience in reading the Qur'an and interpreting it, he says: "Almost every day I learn a new rendering for a word or phrase; then I must run this new thread of meaning through other passages. The Qur'an is a living Book" (p. xli). And warning from deforming this divine script, he continues saying: "We must respect yet find a way to interpret this sacred text, and not deform its meaning" (Irving, 1985, p. xli).

The only way to fully understand the Qur'an, capture its sense, and reflect its semantic depth in translation is resorting to exegeses and analyzing its texture. The resort should be made to authentic exegeses that reflect the divinity of the sacred text, and avoid any possible deformation. Abdel-Raof (2001) maintains that,

> only exegetical translation can eliminate misconceptions among target language readers. The purpose of commentaries is to plug cultural gaps and are useful translation strategies: they are translation troubleshooters that can counter ambiguity and illuminate the fog of the target language (p. 40).

III. DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE PROBLEMS IN TRANSLATION

In his book *The Oxford companion to the English Language,* Macarthur (1992) defines denotation by saying,

> denotation, also known as cognitive meaning, refers to the direct relationship between a term and the object, idea, or action it designates (…). Denotation refers to the meaning of a word or expression in relation to everyday life and to other words and expressions (p. 257).

In contrast, he defines connotation as follows: "Connotation, also known as affective meaning, refers to the emotive and associational aspect of a term" (McArthur, 1993, p. 257).

Similarly, and in more details, Crystal (1985) defines denotation as,

> a term used in semantics as part of classification of types of meaning: opposed to connotation: its main application is with reference to the emotional associations (personal or communal) which are suggested by, or are part of the meaning of a linguistic unit, especially lexical item and the non-linguistic entities to which it refers- it is thus equivalent to referential meaning (pp. 66-88).

The connotation according to him is "a term used in semantics as part of a classification of types of meaning: opposed denotative meaning involves the relationship between a linguistic unit, especially a lexical item" (Crystal, 1985, pp. 66-88)

The denotative meaning of a word is stemmed from and is related to its resemblance in the real world. Richards (1991) states that this type of meaning relates the word or the phrase it denotes to phenomena in a fictional or a real world and it is semantically central and core. It is debatable among scholars that this meaning is equal to the cognitive and conceptual meaning, though some philosophers and linguists make a distinction between these concepts. In his view, for example, the denotative resemblance of bird is a two – legged, winged, egg – laying, warm – blooded creature with a beak.

Connotative meanings are those beyond and above the denotative meanings of lexical items. Richard (1991) defines the connotative meanings as the additional meaning that a word or phrase has beyond its central meaning. It reflects people's emotions and attitudes concerning what the word or the phrase refers to. For him, affectionate, a nursing, lovably sweet, mischievous, noisy, irritating, grubby are connotative features of a *child* that are added to *child* as a *young human being.*

Bell (1991) differentiates between the denotative and connotative meanings as follows,

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 (pp. 98-99).

In his article *Translation Denotative Meaning in the Holy Qur'an: Problems and Solutions*, Abdelaal (2019) maintains that there are denotative and connotative problems in translation, saying "the two types of meaning among others cause problems in translation between any two linguistic codes. Denotative meaning sometimes poses difficulty in translation due to the lack of equivalency problem which causes lexical gaps' problems" (p. 19).

Connotative meaning is harder or more difficult to preserve or reflect in translation. That is because this meaning is more subjective and more personal, and that may result from one's experience in life, and the cultural sense that such a meaning is coated with. In this regard, Larson (1984) argues that,

> 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 (p.131)

Connotative meanings are culturally distant and they resemble things differently even within the same culture. These meanings are open ended and can be interpreted differently. Al-Azzam (2005) is quoted as saying: "connotative meanings may differ from one community to another and even within the same community" (p.108). Similarly, Gutt (2000) maintains that,

> connotative meanings are encyclopedic by their nature and are assumed to be open-ended, allowing for the constant addition of new information. He argues that the translator will normally need to deal with the kind of information that is typically part of the encyclopedic entry of a concept: that is, information in some way associated with the concept, but not an integral part of it (p.135).

In short, the translator is expected to encounter more translation challenge at the connotative level, due to the various implications of certain lexical items. As such then, the translator should support the translation with explanatory detail to bridge any possible connotative gap, between the source text and the target text.

IV. DISCUSSION

The following part is a discussion of the selected examples that reflect the negative connotations of *insan* in the Qur'an.

A. Denial

وَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنسَانَ ضُرٌّ دَعَا رَبَّهُ مُنِيبًا إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلَهُ نِعْمَةً مِّنْهُ نَسِيَ مَا كَانَ يَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ مِن قَبْلُ وَجَعَلَ لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا لِّيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ۚ قُلْ تَمَتَّعْ بِكُفْرِكَ قَلِيلًا ۖ إِنَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ (39:08)

I. (When some trouble toucheth **man**, he crieth unto his Lord, turning to Him in repentance: but when He bestoweth a favour upon him as from Himself, (man) **doth forget what he cried and prayed for before, and he doth set up rivals unto Allah, thus misleading others from Allah.s Path. Say, "Enjoy thy blasphemy for a little while: verily thou art (one) of the Companions of the Fire!)** (p. 323)

II. (Cuando al **ser humano** le acontece una desgracia, invoca a su Señor y se vuelve a Él [pidiéndole que lo auxilie]; pero luego, cuando Él le concede una gracia, **olvida que Lo había invocado antes e iguala a sus ídolos con Dios [dedicándoles actos de adoración y súplicas], descarriando a otros de Su sendero. Dile [a quien se comporte de esta manera]: "Disfruta por poco tiempo de tu incredulidad, pues serás de los moradores del Infierno)** (p. 448)

Denial means the refusal to satisfy a request or desire. That applies to people, regardless of their age, gender, position, level of education and social position. In his life, man passes through many difficult circumstances. These hard conditions might be financial, physical, psychological and sometimes mental. When these difficult situations are not resolved and overcome by man himself, he resorts to Allah for help and release through invocations. The example under discussion shows that man is unthankful to Allah, although He has saved him from all types of afflictions. Though the invocations are divinely responded, *insan* in this example is thankless in taking a partner with Allah.

As for connotative meanings, unthankfullness, ungratefulness, and denial are associations of the Arabic lexical item *insan*. These connotative meanings cannot be easily realized in translation. In fact, these connotations are unfavorable attributions of *insan* which cannot be easily detected by ordinary readers, and could only be observed by those who enjoy enough semantic sense (Ibn Kathir, 1372).

Investigating the two translations considered for the study, it can be stated that the Arabic lexical item *insan* has been correctly rendered into English as *man* and into Spanish as *human being*. However, denial, as a negative connotation attached to the Arabic lexical item *insan* in the verse, is not explicitly shown or illuminated in the two receptive languages. To put it differently, these translations have not shown the strong link between *insan* and denial as a bad contribution in the Qur'anic discourse.

Thus, to ensure preserving this negative link between man and this immoral feature, reference should be made to Qur'anic exegeses that have explained this link to enable target language readers to comprehend this link. According to

Bentivolgi and Pianta (2000), the cause of connotative loss in translation is due to divergences in connotation, between the source language (Arabic language in our study) and the target languages, (English and Spanish).

B. Physical and Spiritual Weakness

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ **الْإِنسَانُ ضَعِيفًا** (4:28)

I. Allah doth wish to lighten your (difficulties): For **man** was created **weak** (in flesh). (p. 53)

II. Dios facilita las cosas, ya que el **ser humano** fue creado con una naturaleza **débil**. (p. 98)

By nature, man is created as weak. The weakness can be physical, psychological and financial. Man's spiritual weakness, for example, can be through his need to a female partnership as shown in the current example which's taken from the chapter of women. The word *insan* in Arabic is polysemous in the sense that it has many different but related meanings. This feature is reflected in having many counterparts in English and Spanish as two languages into which the examples of the study are translated. The various meanings of *insan* in Arabic are man in general, man as a male, and human being. These three denotative meanings are employed in the Qur'anic discourse with different semantic allusions.

Particularly, *insan* in this verse, means a male human and this meaning is figured out from the context of the verse under discussion. The Arabic lexical item *insan* as polysemous can lead to a translation challenge that can be resolved by considering the context. Nida and Taber (1969) do not consider polysemy to be a serious problem, justifying that the different meanings of a single word are rarely in competition, because normally they have different markers which help in differentiating the meaning, so they are diverse with one another for the same semantic domain.

Translators, as readers, should contextualize the lexical item *insan* to arrive at its exact meaning. The two translations have not highlighted that *insan* in the verse refers to man as a gender. This meaning is stemmed from the verse, where man as a male is described as weak because he cannot live without a female partner. This meaning of weak partnership is physical, where he can't live without having sexual intercourse (Al-Saboni, 1981).

This meaning of physical weakness is shown in Ali's translation, when he supported his rendition with (*in flesh*) to confirm the physical weakness of *insan*, which is a negative connotation. The other weakness of *insan* in the current verse is spiritual. That weakness is represented in man's impatience on being without a female partner, which is also a negative connotation of *insan* in Arabic (Ibn kathir, 1372).

The two translations failed partially in conveying the denotative meaning of *insan* into English and Spanish, when rendering it respectively as (man) and (human being). Neither man nor human being in the translations refers to maleness of *insan* in the verse, which is a translation loss at the denotative level. Weakness, whether physical or spiritual, as a negative connotative meaning of *insan* in the verse is a translation loss, too. The translations have not linked between *insan* in the verse and its undesirable associated meaning of weakness. This loss at both levels, can be compensated by referring to exegeses that highlight or illuminate the negative connotation of weakness as a permanent feature of *insan* in the Qur'an.

C. Invocation for Affliction and Hastiness

وَيَدْعُ **الْإِنسَانُ** بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ ۖ وَكَانَ **الْإِنسَانُ عَجُولًا** (17:11)

I. The prayer that **man** should make for good, he maketh for evil; for **man** is given to **hasty** (deeds) (p. 182)

II. El ser humano ruega a Dios el mal con la misma facilidad con que ruega pidiendo el bien: **el ser humano es muy precipitado** (p. 272)

The current verse handles two negative associations of *insan* in the Qur'an, which are invocation for evil and hastiness. In this verse, *insan* calls for evil in the same manner he calls for good. To continue, *insan* in the verse is described as hasty in the wait for the affliction to befall him. Like many examples in the Qur'an, *insan* is used in this verse to denote human being as general. It has addressed all people regardless of their gender.

What makes this example distinct is that when man is angry, he calls Allah to afflict him, afflict his children and afflict his property (Al-Qurtubi, 2006). In an ordinary situation, a normal human being always prays for good and might not be hasty in the response. What is strange in this example above is that the behavior of *insan* is strange and odd. In the first place, he prays for evil on himself, his children, and property, and in the second place, he is described as impatient for receiving an instant punishment.

Translating *insan* to English and Spanish, respectively as (man) and (human being) shows the translator's ability to convey the referential meaning which is defined by Diane Levine and Bruce Rowe (2018) as follows: "The referential meaning of an utterance describes the referent, an action, or a state of being" (p.142). However, the denotative translation in both languages does not reflect the negative attributions of *insan* in the verse. It is worth mentioning that there is an established relationship between the lexical item *insan* and its negative inseparable connotations, which cannot be rendered in the literal translation. As Vinay (1995) confirms, literalness in translation should only be sacrificed because of structural and meta-linguistic requirements and only after checking that the meaning is fully preserved. In contrast, Ernest Wendland (2014) affirms that the literal translation which omits connotative meaning may doggedly assume equivalence, but equivalence is not there.

Link between *insan* in the qur'anic discourse and its negative connotations can only be made clear in footnoting or paraphrasing. Thus, and in order to ensure transmitting the negative attributions of *insan* in target languages, translators should consult or refer to Qur'anic commentaries that refer to such a negative link.

D. Despair and Hopelessness

لَا يَسْأَمُ الْإِنسَانُ مِن دُعَاءِ الْخَيْرِ وَإِن مَّسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَيَئُوسٌ قَنُوطٌ (41:49)

I. Man does not weary of asking for good (things), but if ill touches him, **he gives up all hope (and) is lost in despair** (p. 339).

II. El hombre no se cansa de pedir más y más bienestar, pero si le sucede alguna desgracia **se desanima y se desespera** (p. 469).

Despair is based on one's loss of hope. In ordinary situations, man insists on getting what he hopes to have. Allah responds to his servants' supplication but man is very unappreciative and ingratitude. This is clear in the above verse which explicitly states that *insan* is persistent in what he wants and unthankful at the same time.

Despair is one of the negative attributions of the lexical item *insan* in the Qur'an, that cannot be observed from an ordinary reading. This failure in understanding this link between *insan* and despair is reflected in translation. Concerning the two translations above, English and Spanish the denotative meaning of *insan* is conveyed successfully as man and human being.

Simultaneously, the translations have furthermore transferred the denotative meaning of يئوس as despair in English and desperate in Spanish. The lexical item قنوط which immediately comes after يئوس partially carries similar semantic allusions. The fact that قنوط and يئوس are partially synonymous justifies the translator strategy of omitting قنوط in the English version. Indeed, this is a real translation loss at the denotative level. The English translator is unaware of the importance of describing man as قنوط which is to confirm, intensify, and emphasize the negative attribution of man, being desperate. As for the Spanish translation, it has dropped an elemental part related to قنوط, forgetting that قنوط is used to emphasize يئوس and add more negative meaning to it. In this regard, Katharina Reiss (2000) is quoted as saying,

> ignoring the semantic component of a text is a critical factor preserving the content and the meaning of the original text. Failure to recognize polysemous words and homonymous, the lack of congruence between source and target language terms, misinterpretations and arbitrary additions or omissions are the greatest source of danger for the translator , and consequently offer the most inviting opening for the critic (p.117)

Although the two translations have managed to convey the denotative meaning of *insan* and يئوس in the verse, they have not clearly shown the negative connection between the two elements, which is arbitrary in the Qur'anic discourse. Lack of reference to this relationship may be due to the ignorance of the translators in such a tight correlation between *insan* and يئوس. The only way to clearly reflect such a bond is referring to semantic studies that explicate the description of *insan* in the Qur'an as desperate (Ibn kathir, 1372).

E. Stinginess

قُل لَّوْ أَنتُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَائِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّي إِذًا لَّأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الْإِنفَاقِ ۚ وَكَانَ الْإِنسَانُ قَتُورًا (17:100)

I. Say: "If ye had control of the Treasures of the Mercy of my Lord, behold, ye would keep them back, for fear of spending them: for **man** is (ever) **miserly**!" (p.189)

II. Diles: "Si tuvieran en sus manos las arcas de mi Señor, no las compartirían por temor a empobrecer. ¡Qué **avaro** es **el ser humano**!" (p. 280)

Stinginess means not generous and having the sense of sparing or scant in using, giving, or spending. One more negative overtone of *insan* in the Qur'anic context is stinginess. This negative attribution of *insan* is based on not giving or spending even on oneself. According to the verse under discussion insan does not like to spend the least even when sustained with endless treasures. This is clear in the verse which shows that *insan* would surely withhold from spending for fear of poverty (Al-Saboni, 1981).

The English and the Spanish translations of the verse have captured the denotative meaning of *insan*, consecutively as man and human being. Moreover, the two translations have conveyed the attribution of *insan* in the verse by rendering it adverbially as (miserly) in English and adjectively as (stingy) in Spanish. Due to the excessiveness of the negative attribution, the two translations have closed the verse with an exclamation. This manner of the verse closure shows how negative the attribution is. The Arabic adjective قتور(stingy) is a hyperbole, which is one of the rhetorical devices in Arabic. In this regard, Mahsa Sattari et al. (2021) confirm,

> arabic is the language of Qur'an, and rhetorical devices are frequently used in Arabic language. What is sought in these literary devices is that they contribute to better conveyance of the original message, which is away from misinterpretation. By the use of figurative language, especially exaggeration, this aim would be achieved, as they provide the reader with deeper explanation and example about the issue. If these figures of speech help us in better understanding of a content, they have fulfilled their intended purpose and increased the eloquence of language. Otherwise, they will mislead the reader due to their overstatement (1905)

Connotatively, the two translations have not shown any relatedness between negativity of the attribution and *insan* in the Qur'anic text. Readers of the receptive languages would not grasp this established tie between man and stinginess, which is a real connotative loss. The unfavorable attribution of stinginess cannot be easily detected as an association of *insan*. Therefore, it has passed as unnoticed by the translators, in the first place, and by their readers in the second place.

Translators could have shown the link between *insan* in the verse and stinginess, had they referred to commentaries and exegeses of the Qur'an that have underlined this negative feature. Attaining lexical adequacy and semantic

equivalence of Arabic hyperbolic terms is not possible due to language differences, and this applies on قتور in the example under discussion.

F. Arguetness

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآن لِلنَّاس مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَكَانَ **الْإِنسَانُ** أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ **جَدَلًا** (18:54)

I. We have explained in detail in this Qurʾán, for the benefit of mankind, every kind of similitude: but **man** is, in most things, **contentious** (p. 195).

II. Expuse en el Corán todo tipo de ejemplo, pero **el ser humano** es **un gran discutidor** (p. 287).

Arguetness is an attribution or an aspect that denotes a person who is described as debating and contentious. The lexical item *insan* in the Qur'an is connoted as arguing in the sense that he is strict and self-centered in his thoughts and does not show an agreement of others' ideas and opinions. In the current verse, Allah bestowed *insan* with all he needed and has favored him over other creatures. For example, *insan* is different from other creatures in having mind. However, he is ungrateful and dissatisfied with all the grace given to him by Allah. It is an instinct of *insan* in the Qur'an to oppose or even reject what others say or propose. *Insan* as shown in the verse above opposes the teachings that the prophets came with, although the prophets came with clear signs that prove their prophecy (Al-Saboni, 1981) .

Due to the fact that *insan* in the Qur'an is arguing by nature, the verse underestimates him and considers him as a (thing). This underestimation has come as a consequence of his bad behavior in opposing the divine message of Allah. The underestimation is lost in translation when Ali does not refer to the *thingity* of man, and states that man is arguing in most things, instead. This same lack of reference is also shown when the Spanish translator, Garcia, totally ignores it, and stresses on the superficial argument shown in his use of discussion to describe the man's disagreement or rejection of others' ideas.

The lexical item *insan* in the verse has been accurately rendered as mankind in English and human being in Spanish. The translations have thus succeeded in conveying the referential meaning in the receptive languages. Connotatively, however, the negative attribution of *insan* has not been explicated in the target languages by any means. Consequently, target language readers would not understand the negative link between *insan* as signified and arguteness as a signifying designation. In translation, this is considered as an implicit loss of the connotative meaning of *insan*. As-Safi (2011) defines the implicit loss in translation as,

> conspicuously, the most serious loss in translation is when the meaning, be it denotative or connotative, is lost or distorted, which undermines the purpose or skopos and even the justification of translation as an act of bilingual communication (p. 67).

To avoid such implicit losses in translation, Bratcher (1971), in his article "The Nature and Purpose of the new Testament in Today's English Version" claims that,

> where there is information implicit in the text itself the translator may make it explicit in order to allow his readers to understand the meaning of the text. Contrary to what some might think this does not add anything to the text: it simply gives the reader of the translation explicit information which was implicitly made available to the original readers (p. 97)

G. Ignorance and Self-Tyranny

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْض وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا **الْإِنسَانُ** ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ **ظَلُومًا جَهولا** (33:72)

I. We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but **man** undertook it; he was indeed **unjust** and **foolish**. (p. 293)

II. Le propuse a los cielos, a la Tierra y a las montañas revelarles el Mensaje, pero se rehusaron a cargar con ello porque sintieron temor (De la enorme responsabilidad que implicaba ser portador del Mensaje). Pero **el ser humano** aceptó llevar la carga; el ser humano fue **injusto** [consigo mismo] e **ignorante** [de las consecuencias de asumir esa responsabilidad]. (p. 414)

In the verse under discussion *insan*, refers to Adam, the father of all mankind. Allah addresses him clearly and entrusts him with the divine mission. Before entrusting him with this heavenly message, Allah has proposed the trust to heavens, earth, and enormous mountains, which they all refused to undertake. The refusal came as a result of the heavy burden that they would be in charge of in case of approval.

Having a thorough reading of the verse it can be observed that the three enormous natural components, heavens, earth, and mountains immediately refused the divine mission due to the unwelcome consequences. That is clear in their response (فأبين) where the conjunction (ف) in Arabic serves to convey immediacy and sequence (Muhsin, 2014). In contrast, *insan* accepted this unbearable task without hesitation and caring about the consequences. In his first American version of the Qur'an translation, T. B. Irving (1985) emphasizes that conjunctions form a real translation challenge, especially between the languages that are linguistically remote from each other such as Arabic, English and Spanish.

In the two translations, this lexical item is rendered as man in English and human being in Spanish. Both translations have succeeded in preserving the denotative meaning in the target languages. This is noticed in the general reflection of *insan* in both the source text and the target text.

At the connotative level, however, the two translations have not shown the link of negative connotation between man or human being and unawareness, carelessness and inconsideration of consequences (Al-Qurtubi, 2006). The Spanish translation is different from the English, in the sense that it provides the parenthesized element (unjust on himself and

ignorance of his choice consequences) to relay some of the *insan's* connotation. Such technique followed by the Spanish translator is strongly recommended in translation of religious texts. Elewa (2014) states that this type of addition in the target language permits to transfer the connotative meaning of the SL. This explanatory addition helps in bridging the original texts with its counterpart's readers.

Although the two translations where able to transmit the denotative meaning, and the Spanish translation was able to partially transmit the connotative meaning, they have not referred to the constricted connection between *insan* in the verse and the negative connotation of recklessness and thoughtlessness of the consequences.

H. Self-Negative Whispering

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا **الْإِنْسَانَ** وَنَعْلَمُ مَا **تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ**ۖوَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ (50:16)

I. It was We Who created **man**, and we know what **dark suggestions his soul makes** to him: for we are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein (p. 368).

II. Creé al **ser humano** y sé cuáles son **sus debilidades**. Estoy más cerca de él que su propia vena yugular (p. 507).

Allah has created *insan* and He is omniscient and cognizant of all his affairs. Allah is all knowing of how man thinks or behaves, and that is why the verse has come in the form of warning to man to beware of his thoughts and actions before happening.

The two translations have translated *insan* as man and human being as in most cases. The translation challenge is more complicated when it comes to the reflection of self-negative whispering, as a connotative meaning of *insan* in the verse. *Insan* is described here as always obsessed with self-dark ideas. Allah in the verse warns *him* to be careful even before the evil thought comes to mind as Allah is nearer to him than his jugular vein. What is more problematic and challenging than referring to self-whispering as a negative connotation of man is the link between *insan* in the Qur'an and this bad quality (Al-Razi ,1981).

In order to hold as much connotative meaning as possible, the translators should exert more efforts to uncover the grounded link between *insan* in Arabic and the negative connotation of dark obsession. This inseparable link can be reached by a scrutinizing reading or by consulting authentic references that investigate the semantic allusions of *insan*. While the English translation has made reference to the self-dark whispering as (dark suggestions his soul makes) which is a translation credit to him, Garcia has mistranslated وسواس in his generalization of whispering when rendering it as (weaknesses). According to Michael Loughride et al. (2003) such generalizing translation can be acceptable on two conditions: first that the TL offers no suitable alternative: second that the omitted detail either is clear and can be recovered from the overall context of the TT, or is unimportant to the ST.

I. Suffering and Toiling

لقد خلقنا **الانسان** في **كبد** (90:4)

I. Verily we have created **Man** into **toil and struggle**. (p. 444)

II. Que creé al **ser humano** para **una vida de continuas dificultades**. (p. 593)

Allah has created man with strife and struggle and this can be physical or spiritual. At the physical level, man, works hard and toils in order to ensure a decent living, and this requires him to exert too much effort to overcome hardships to obtain that. Spiritually, however, *insan* is not patient enough and might not be wise in all circumstances. He always thinks of how life is difficult and how achieving a decent life with satisfaction is extremely hard, if not impossible. The continuous toiling of man in this life is expressed in the preposition في in Arabic which shows that *insan* is dipped in hardships.

Translating the above verse which includes the Arabic lexical item *insan* into English and Spanish, is not problematic at the denotative level, as man and human being. However, and at the connotative level, readers of the receptive languages would not comprehend the link between *insan* in Arabic and its allegations.

The lexical item *insan* in the Qur'an is always attributed with negative connotations that cannot be understood from the literal translation of the verse above. Toiling is the negative attribution of *insan* in the current verse and it shows that *insan* continuously suffers in this life. Man starts suffering from the moment it is created in mother's womb, delivery, growth, youth and seniority (Al-Razi, 1981).

This negative connotation of man should be made explicit in the target languages, and that can be made either by paraphrasing or footnoting. The negative connotations of *insan* in Arabic cannot be detected easily, and that's why it is uneasy to transfer that in translation. A recommended strategy to translate such cases is to paraphrase or footnote. In her book *Meaning in Translation*, Barbara Tomaszczy (2010) maintains that paraphrasing and footnoting are the only cultural resource and are required in translation. This strategy provides receptive readers with supplementary information without affecting the loyalty to the original text and should be very brief to avoid interrupting the fluency of reading.

J. Disobedience to Parents

وَوَصَّيْنَا **الْإِنْسَانَ** بِوَالِدَيْهِ **إِحْسَانًا**ۖحَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا (46:15)

I. We have enjoined on **man kindness** to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. (p. 357)

II. Le he ordenado al **ser humano hacer el bien** a sus padres. Su madre lo ha llevado [en el vientre] con esfuerzo, y con dolor lo dio a luz. (p. 492)

Parents struggle enough to raise their children. The suffering starts from the pre-birth moments, where the mother undergoes severe pain in bearing and giving birth. The fact that parents suffer too much in bringing up their children requires recompense from the side of the children. That is why Allah has commended sons to be kind and grateful to their parents in several places in the Qur'an. Sons' repudiation or denial of the favor provided by parents is considered one of the unpardonable sins in Islam (Al-Razi, 1981).

What is surprising in the verse under discussion is that it has not referred to a negative association of *insan* in the Qur'an. Different from the examples of this study that have linked explicitly between *insan* and negative attributions, this verse has indirectly linked between *insan* and negativity, based on hypothesis that *insan* will be ungrateful to parents. Therefore, many verses of the Qur'an recommended *insan* to be kind to his parents and forefathers. This was also emphasized by many prophetic hadiths (traditions) that have called for kindness and gratefulness to parents.

Both translations have succeeded in conveying the denotative meaning of *insan* in the receptive languages. The translation challenge lies in making no reference to the negative connotation of ungratefulness to parents that is possibly to be committed by *insan*. This implicit link between *insan* and unthankfullness in the verse has come in a form of precaution. Allah is all knowing of *insan*'s inner where disobedience is an established negative feature of him in the Qur'an. The frequent emphasis on *insan* to be kind to parents stems from the role of the father and mother in parenthood. So, man should be dutiful to his parents. Allah warned him repeatedly against any disrespect and disobedience in many chapters in the Qur'an, associating and connecting kindness and obedience with the worshipping of Allah Alone.

Literal translation can convey the denotative meaning of the text, and that is why the two translations have accurately delivered the denotative meaning. However, they have not referred to the relation between *insan* and disobedience to parents as a negative association. Commending and ordaining sons to be kind and respectful to their parents' entails that they should not show disobedience and unthankfullness, which signify *insan* as a carrier of this bad aspect in the Qur'an.

V. CONCLUSION

This study has translationally investigated the reflection of the negative connotations of *insan* in the Qur'an. It has shown that the link between *insan* and its negative implications is not clear and is hard to observe by source language readers as well as by target language readers. It has made clear that the two translations (the English and the Spanish) have managed to convey the denotative meaning of the verses that are selected for the study. However, they have not illuminated the strong and the established connection between *insan* and its various negative connotations, as shown in the examples. Thus, the paper has concluded that exegeses, which highlight the connection between *insan* and bad connotations, are helpful in helping translators to refer to this inseparable tie.

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