

Translation of كاد in the Quran as an Instance of Lexical Gaps

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Abstract

Writings in the field of contrastive analysis make a rich source of classifications and exemplifications concerning the lexical divergences that occur between pairs of languages. Such a state of affairs is not surprising when being familiar with the abundance of lexicographic work implied by the quantitative evaluation of lexical divergences and discrepancies. In other words, it seems obvious that a contrastive lexical study between any given pair of languages shows that many instances of conceptual mismatches occur, and henceforth, the existence of lexical gaps.

Of such a nature, where a lexical contrastive work is done, is translation. It is no doubt that translation is not a matter of replacing vocabulary or sentences from one language into another. It is a process of communication which requires the creative reproduction of the translated piece of text. So, a translator has to be fully aware of the conceptual mismatches that exist between languages in order to handle them properly in such a dynamic process.

In the present paper, a translation assessment of the Arabic verb of appropinquation كاد in the Quran is attempted with the aim of identifying the various types of lexical items used as its rendition counterparts in English in so far as the meaning would be conveyed

happily, and of investigating whether or not translators are aware of the influential role negative particles would play when used along with كاد. By so doing, the researcher will pass his judgment on the various translations used in the study.

1. Sources of Lexical Gaps

Carrying out a translation work between any pair of languages, i.e. a source language and a target language, reveals the fact of the existence of various types of idiosyncrasies therein. The most common of such are (See Bentivogli and Pianta 2000):

- a- Syntactic, where the translation equivalent does not follow the same syntactic linear order of the source language , as in:
 - The man entered the room
 - دخل الرجلُ الغرفةَ -
- b- Lexical, where the source language and the target language realise the same concept with a different category of lexical unit (word, compound, or collocation), or one of the two languages has no lexical item for the concept. For instance, أوشك, which is an Arabic verb, may be rendered into English as an adverb like 'nearly'.
- c- Connotative, where the target language expression does not produce all aspects of meaning aroused by the source language word. For instance, ثلج in Arabic can be rendered into English as either 'ice' or 'snow' where each has its own connotations (See Salmoné 1987, s.v. ثَلَجَ).
- d- Denotative, where the denotative force of the target language word only partially overlaps with that of the source language; such is the case of having English 'cousin' for instance, as a counterpart for the Arabic “أبن “ (See البعلبكي 2001, s.v. cousin).

Having a close look at these four types of mismatches between languages makes sure that the last three of them, viz. 'b', 'c' and 'd' will lead to the existence of lexical gaps. Hereunder, the concept of a gap is going to be exposed comprehensively so as to achieve the present aims.

2. What is a lexical gap?

Lyons (1977, 301) is concerned primarily with the 'structural' lexical gaps which are defined metaphorically as "a hole in the pattern: that is to say, the absence of a lexeme at a particular place in the structure of a lexical field" (See also Crystal 1985, s.v. gap). By so doing, he has come to state two semantic definitions of lexical gaps. Thus, a lexical gap is defined semantically as being either "the absence of a lexeme denoting an object which happens not to exist in the culture in which a language operates" or being "the absence of lexemes which would encapsulate the absence of contradictory syntagmatic modifiers (e.g. the non-existence of a lexeme meaning "married bachelor" or "square circle") (Lyons, *ibid*).

In so far as translation is concerned, a lexical gap might be seen within the latter concept, especially when the whole matter is completely of lexemes in a given language and how to be rendered into the other language. As such, a lexical gap can be defined as "the state where a language 'SL' expresses a concept with a lexical unit whereas another language 'TL' expresses the same concept with a free combination of words" (Bentivogli and Pianta 2000). Or, as Cvilikaitė (2007, 47) puts it, it is the situation of "lack of lexicalisation where a comparison of two languages is held". She sees it in the following way: "A concept is lexicalised when a language has a lexical item – a single word, a complex word, an idiom or a collocation – to express it. We will assert the existence of a lexical gap only when a concept lacks lexicalisation and is

expressed by a free word combination or any transformation in translation”(ibid).

3. Free Word Combination Vs. Idioms and Collocations

In both of the above definitions of lexical gaps, the notion of ‘free combination of words’ in reference to translation is present. So, such a notion needs to be made clearly distinguished from the other notions of ‘idioms’ and ‘collocations’.

Generally, idioms and collocations may be regarded as composite lexical units. Cruse (1986, 37) defines an idiom simply as "an expression whose meaning cannot be accounted for as a compositional function of the meanings its parts have when they are not parts of idioms ". Or, Idioms are considered as "frozen patterns of language which allow little variation in form and, often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components" (Baker 1992, 63). Along the same way goes Trask’s definition of idiom: “An expression consisting of two or more words whose meaning cannot be simply predicted from the meanings of its constituent parts” (1993, s.v. idiom). At anyhow, these component words cannot be substituted by synonyms.

On the other hand, a collocation, as seen by Crystal (1985, s.v. collocation), is “a term used in LEXICOLOGY by some (especially FIRTHIAN) LINGUISTS to refer to the habitual co-occurrence of individual LEXICAL ITEMS”. For Cruse (1986, 40), a collocation is “a sequence of lexical items which habitually co-occur, but which are nonetheless fully transparent in the sense that each lexical constituent is also a semantic constituent”. Here also, the co-occurring items allow for a limited replacement with other synonymous ones, and have some sort of semantic integrity or cohesion resulting from the nature of their adjacent use. Such integrity will be more prominent when the meaning carried by one (or more) of its constituent elements is highly restricted in contextual terms and different from its meaning in more unmarked

contexts (ibid). Such collocations usually reject literal translation in other languages.

Now, let's see what a free combination of words is. Such a combination constitutes a sequence of lexical items which adhere to follow the general syntactic rules of the language that govern the syntagmatic relations among elements along the linear level of occurrence. That is, the element words are not necessarily associated with or bound to each other specifically and so they occur readily and freely well with other synonymous lexical items.

At any rate, the boundaries between any two of these three categories of lexical units are not crystal clear, but distinctions may be drawn by relying upon the type of knowledge presented in dictionaries, let alone the fact that the three sets exhibit certain structural regularities that can be made use of to automatically distinguish them from among each other with a certain degree of confidence (Bentivogli and Pianta 2000).

4. Meaning of كاد

The verb كاد belongs to the category of the Arabic verbs of appropinquation. These are of two sub-categories: those which indicate the simple proximity of the occurrence of an action that would or did not occur, and those which imply a hope for its occurrence (Wright 1967, 106; الجامي 1983, 303). كاد, which is our concern, belongs side by side with أوشك and كرب to the first subcategory.

Basically, affirmative كاد indicates the bare approximation to the occurrence of an action realised in the form of an imperfect indicative form of verb (Wright, ibid):

كاد زيدٌ يغرق - (4-1)

It should be made clear that the predicate (verb) of كاد requires no أن which, if present, would indicate a farther action than that expressed by the bare predicate (verb) (السامرائي 2003, 250).

The approximation referred to entails the non-occurrence of the action (See *مصطفى* et al 1972, s.v. *كاد*; *السامرائي* 2003, 250; *الأصفهاني* 2005, s.v. *كيد*; and *الغلاييني* 2009, 370). Thus, in (4-1) above, *زيد* nearly drowned, but fortunately he did not.

As such, it seems beyond dispute that grammarians and lexicographers have the consensus upon the denotation of *كاد* when it is not used side by side with a negative particle.

However, divergences in opinion arise as to its denotative force when *كاد* is used along with negative particles. Here, attitudes go under two different tenets:

a- That of those who see that the negative force of the particle dominates the scope of the proximity expressed by **كاد** and consequently the action is not approximated and not carried out or executed. As just an instance in this respect, مصطفى et al (1972, s.v. **كود**) believe that **كاد** is similar to other verbs in respect to its use with negation. In other words, negation will affect the proximity expressed by **كاد** whereas its affirmative use will corroborate such proximity. This same view is adopted by **الزبيدي** (s.v. **كاد**), **الجامي** (1983, 301), **الأشموني** (1983, 301), **الزمخشري** (both cited in **السامرائي** 2003, 252-3), and others.

b- That of those who believe that the co-occurrence of a negative particle with ك will have no effect over it. But, the force of negation will work outside the scope of the action expressed by the predicate of ك . That is, the action is meant to be carried out or executed. In support of this opinion, consider:

فَإِتُّ إِلَىٰ فَهْمٍ وَ مَا كِدْتُ آيِبًا (4-2)

It is viewed that in (4-2) the speaker in question أَب (went back) to the tribe of Fahm when he thought of not doing so. Thus, negation affected neither كاد nor its predicate. Again, consider:

فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ (البقرة: ٧١) (4-3)

Here, an instance of such a meaning of كاد is a corroboration to the latter tenet of linguists. They believe that the action of slaughtering the cow (referred to by the pronominal ها) was carried out because of the co-occurrence of the negative particle along with كاد. Nonetheless, the former group sees this verse as to mean that the situation indicated involves a composition of two distinct occasions relevant to two different times. The first involved the people in question as having never thought or approached the action of slaughtering the cow, but then after a period of time, they did it (See كيد s.v. الأصفهاني; كاد s.v. ابن منظور).

In the light of the above presentation, it is made clear that the two attitudes supporting either the proximity towards or the execution of the action are based mainly upon the presence or absence of negative particles. So, no attention was paid to the context in which each instance of كاد is used. Nonetheless, discrepancies exist, and consequently attitudes either quivered towards or away from the occurrence of the action.

A distinguished opinion in this concern is expressed by السامرائي (2003, 255). Not only does he take care of the linguistic context, but he looks at the context of situation within which كاد operates as well. In this way, he makes a compromise between the two disputing parties. He believes that in order to arrive at the right meaning from behind such a controversy surrounding such situations, one has to follow the linguistic and contextual clues there. In other words, elements of co-text and contexts will co-operate so as to arrive at the correct interpretation of the Quranic message, and so the interpretation may follow either of the two groups, with no specific predisposition in mind.

5. Limits of the Study

An assessment of the translation of كاد in the Quran is carried out by reviewing all the instances of Quranic verses involving كاد.

This review, of course, will have to discuss these verses in contingency upon كاد and the way it is rendered into English in the following five translation versions:

- Arberry, A. J. 1964. **The Koran Interpreted** (A., henceforth).
- Dawood, N. J. 1978. **The Koran** (D., henceforth).
- Al-Hilali, M. T. and M. M. Khan. 1417 A.H. **Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language** (H., henceforth).
- Irving, T. B. 1985. **The Koran** (I., henceforth).
- Pickthall, M. M. 1954. **The Meaning of the Glorious Koran** (P., henceforth)

6. Statistics

In whole, كاد occurs in twenty-four Quranic verses; eighteen of them are used affirmatively, and the other six involve the use of كاد along with negative particles. Eight affirmative instances are going to be examined side by side with the six negative ones. Tables (6-1) and (6-2) show the types of lexical items adopted by the five translators as English renditions to كاد .

Table (6-1): Distribution and Translation of Affirmative كاد in the Quran

Affirmative كاد					Translation				
No.	Surah	Verse	Tense		Translator	Lexical Item Used	Type		
			Past	Present			Adv.	V. Cons.	Adj.
1	التوبة	117	=		A.	well-nigh	=		

					D.	were on the point		=	
					H.	nearly	=		
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	almost	=		
2	القصاص	10	=		A.	well-nigh	=		
					D.	would have revealed		=	
					H.	was very near			=
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	would have betrayed		=	
3	الأعرا ف	150	=		A.	well-nigh	=		
					D.	almost	=		
					H.	were about to		=	
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	almost	=		
4	الأسراء	74	=		A.	wert near to			=
					D.	might have made		=	
					H.	almost	=		
					I.	nearly	=		
					P.	almost	=		
5	طه	15		=	A.	would conceal		=	
					D.	choose to		=	
					H.	almost	=		
					I.	am keeping		=	
					P.	will to keep		=	
6	الملك	8		=	A.	well-nigh	=		
					D.	as though		=	

						bursting			
					H.	almost	=		
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	would burst		=	
7	النور	34		=	A.	well-nigh	=		
					D.	almost	=		
					H.	almost	=		
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	almost	=		
8	الحج	72		=	A.	well-nigh	=		
					D.	barely	=		
					H.	ready			=
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	all but attack		=	

Table (6-2): Distribution and Translation of Negative كاد in the Quran

Negative كاد					Translation				
No.	Surah	Verse	Tense		Translator	Lexical Item Used	Type		
			Past	Present			Adv.	V. Cons.	Adj.
1	البقرة	71	=		A.	scarcely	=		
					D.	nearly	=		
					H.	were near not			=
					I.	almost	=		
					P.	almost	=		
2	ابراهيم	17		=	A.	scarce	=		
					D.	scarcely	=		
					H.	find great difficulty		=	
					I.	not quite	=		
					P.	hardly	=		
3	الزخرف	52		=	A.	scarcely	=		
					D.	scarcely	=		

					H.	scarcely	=		
					I.	scarcely	=		
					P.	hardly	=		
4	النساء	78	=		A.	scarcely	=		
					D.	show such lack		=	
					H.	fail to		=	
					I.	scarcely	=		
					P.	come not nigh		=	
5	الكهف	93	=		A.	scarcely	=		
					D.	barely	=		
					H.	scarcely	=		
					I.	scarcely	=		
					P.	scarce	=		
6	النور	40	=		A.	well-nigh	=		
					D.	scarcely	=		
					H.	scarcely	=		
					I.	scarcely	=		
					P.	scarce	=		

7. Translation Assessment and Discussion

7.1 Affirmative كاد

Affirmative كاد occurs in eighteen Quranic verses in different forms indicating either past (nine instances) or present tense (nine instances) in relevance to distinct persons (first, second, or third) of different genders (masculine or feminine) being either singular or plural. To avoid redundancy, the researcher has chosen four distinct instances of each tense.

1- مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ (التوبة: ١١٧)

- A: "...after the hearts of a part of them well-nigh swerved aside".
- D: "...when some of them were on the point of losing heart".

- H: "...after the hearts of a party of them had nearly deviated".
- I: "...after the heart of group of them had almost flattened".
- P: "After the hearts of a party of them had almost swerved aside".

By having a look at these renditions, it becomes obvious that translators try to express the mere proximity to an action which did not occur. To achieve this, they use translation equivalents (TEs) realised as adverbs like well-nigh, almost and, nearly. Hornby (2000, s.v. well-nigh) states that well-nigh is an adverb meaning 'almost'. Leech and Svartvik (1994, 114) state that adverbs like almost and nearly indicate "a position near the limit of the scale" of the word's meaning.

As for D.'s rendition "be on the point of", it represents a free combination of words explaining the single notion of proximity. So, all translators, whether using single lexical items or free word-combinations, produce happy translations.

2- وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَى فَارِغًا إِنْ كَادَتْ تُخْبِي بِهِ (القصص: ١٠)

- A.: "The heart of Moses' mother became empty, and she well-nigh disclosed him".
- D.: "She would have revealed who he was, had We not...".
- H.: "She was very near to disclose his secret".
- I.: "She almost revealed who he was".
- P.: "She would have betrayed him, if We had...".

In essence, the meaning intended is that Moses' mother got burdened with concealing the secret of who her son really was, and therefore, she was about to reveal it because of despair or hopelessness. Any use of an adverb denoting simple proximity will indicate such a state of affairs. As such, it can be judged that A., H., and I. are successful to arrive at the right denotation of the verse

because they use expressions like well-nigh, be near to, and almost respectively. But, a syntactic structure like would have +past participle form of the verb involving no proximity adverb at all would no doubt indicate a hypothetical unreal intention to carry out the action (See Leech 1987, 122-3), a case which may not express the real feelings and emotions that Moses' mother had been through at that time of sensational calamity. As such, D. and P. make no reference to proximity and so they produce unsuccessful renditions.

3- إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضْعَفُونِي وَكَادُوا يَقْتُلُونَنِي (الأعراف: ١٥٠)

- A.: "Surely the people have abused me, and well-nigh slain me".

- D.: "the people overpowered me and almost did me to death".

- H.: "Indeed the people judged me weak and were about to kill me".

- I.: "the people felt I was weak and they almost killed me".

- P.: "the folk did judge me weak and almost killed me".

Undeniably, the meaning is very plain to state. Moses' people felt that his brother was weak and intended to kill him, and so they were near to do so (As an instance, see السيوطي و المحلي و السيوطي, 215). Translators provide TEs clearly indicating such a meaning. Expressions like well-nigh, almost, and be about to truly mean this.

4- لَوْلَا أَنْ تَبَيَّنَّاكَ لَقَدْ كِدْتَ تَرْكُنْ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا (الإسراء: ٧٤)

- A.: "...and had We not confirmed thee, surely thou wert near to inclining unto them a very little."

- D.: "Indeed, had We not strengthened your faith you might have made some compromise with them."

- H.: "And had We not made you stand firm, you would nearly have inclined to them a little."

- I.: "If We had not braced you, you might have almost inclined a little bit towards them."

- P.: "And if We had not made thee wholly firm, thou mightest almost have inclined unto them a little."

Exeges, like شبر (2005, 289) and بلا تاريخ) المحلي و السيوطي (374), state that the meaning here is that Allah made the Messenger Muhammad stronger and stronger in faith by power of his being infallible, and thus he never thought of inclining unto the unbelievers. Therefore, D. , I. , H., and P. all express the hypothetical meaning of the inclination towards the unbelievers. They use a hypothetical reference marker "might + have + p.p." (Leech 1987, 122-3) involving a literal reference to proximity in the form of an adverb like almost or nearly, except for D.'s TE which does not involve such a reference. A.'s TE appears as a free word combination including the predicative use of the attribute 'near' after an archaic form of be, viz. 'wert'. By such a way, it is possible to say that all produce happy translations.

5- إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أُخْفِيهَا لِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا تَسْعَىٰ (طه: ١٥)

-A.: "The Hour is coming; I would conceal it that... ."

-D. : "The Hour of Doom is sure to come. But I choose to keep it

Hidden."

-H.: "Verily, the Hour is coming and I am almost hiding it from

myself that... ."

-I. : "The Hour is coming; I am keeping it hidden so that... ."

- P.: " Lo! the Hour is surely coming .But I will to keep it hidden."

Quranic explanations, as in الطباطبائي (1997, XIV: 142, 158), make reference to the usual course of denotation by كاد to proximity to the action of concealing the time of doomsday which is surely to come, not from people however, but from the subject of the action Himself, Allah. Allah is about to conceal

such a thing from Himself, how then should He the Almighty expose it to people? This is just to make some sort of exaggeration of the indicated action so as to emphasize the idea of concealing it from people. Such a meaning is so clear and obvious in H.'s rendition which comprises all those nice connotations of indicating proximity by using 'almost'.

Other explanations, such as المحلي و شبر (2005, 313) and (407, بلا تاريخ) السيوطي indicate that أكاد here is to express a will towards the concealment of the action and has nothing to do with proximity. This same meaning is so clearly referred to in A., D., I., and P.'s renditions which emphasize the idea of the sure coming of the doomsday, as well as its being kept concealed and hidden. Here, all translators have opted for the expression of concealing the time from people, i.e. the entailed result of concealing it by Allah from Himself. As such, it seems that the two directions of meaning are satisfactorily and appropriately met and expressed.

تَكَادُ تَمَيِّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ (الملك: ٨) -6-

-A.: "...the while it boils and well-nigh bursts asunder with rage".

-D.: "...they shall hear it roaring and seething as though bursting with rage".

-H.: "It almost bursts up with fury."

-I.: "...they will hear it gasping as if it seethes almost bursting with rage."

-P.: "As it would burst with rage whenever... ."

This part of verse is to say that hellfire is in a state of fury against its habitants and so it is about to go asunder. In translation, A.'s rendition involves the adverb well-nigh to indicate proximity to an action which would not happen. I., and H. use the adverb almost

for the same purpose. However, D.'s rendition makes no reference to proximity at all, but involves an expression of hypothetical similitude 'as though'. On the other hand, P. makes use of a structure indicating a certain habitual action: whenever ..., would +infinitive. By so doing, he avoids making any type of reference to proximity.

يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارُ (النور: ٣٤)-7

-A.: "... whose oil well-nigh would shine... ."

-D.: "Its very oil would almost shine forth... ."

-H.: "... whose oil would almost glow forth... ."

-I.: "... whose oil will almost glow... ."

-P.: "... whose oil would almost glow forth... ."

So obvious is the meaning here that all renditions agree by involving similar expressions within structures of similar syntactic denotations: meanings expressed by translators are somehow identical: all use the adverb almost except for A. who uses well-nigh. No single problematic issue is there. So, all produce happy renditions.

يَكَادُونَ يَسْطُونَ بِالَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا (الحج: ٧٢)-8

-A.: "...well-nigh they rush upon those who... ."

-D.: "They can barely restrain themselves from assaulting those who..."

-H.: " They are nearly ready to attack with violence those who"

-I.: " They almost pounce upon those who... ."

-P.: "They all but attack those who... ."

The concept of proximity realised by يَكَادُونَ indicates an intention near to fulfilling the action realised as يَسْطُونَ. The TE which meets such a requirement is that produced by D. who makes it clear that those-who-want-to-attack are merely able to prevent themselves from attacking those-who-recite. P. sees that those-who-want-to-attack may do anything harmful to those-who-recite except the

attack, a rendition which says more than expected. As regards H.'s rendition, it sees the situation to be 'nearness' to being ready to attack. But, it is a situation of being near to attack, and simultaneously nearness itself involves in essence readiness. The mere proximity to attacking is presented by A. and I.'s TEs that include adverbs like well-nigh and almost.

7.2 Negative كاد

Negative كاد occurs in six Quranic verses. In so far as being of a controversial status, all of its instances will be dealt with and discussed.

1- فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ (البقرة: ٧١) -

A.: "...and therefore they sacrificed her, a thing they had scarcely done."

D.: "And they slaughtered a cow, after they had nearly failed to do so."

H.: "So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it

I.: "...and they slaughtered her though they almost had not done so."

P.: "So they sacrificed her, though almost they did not."

Exegeses and linguists mostly agree that the verse-part in question involves two distinct situations relating to two different times (الطباطبائي, 1997, I:199; الأشموني, cited in الجامي, 1983, 303; شبر, 2005, 11; السامرائي, 2003, 253). Therefore, any reference to such a two-action proposition using the same grammatical tense will no doubt miss the point. Accordingly, A., D., and I.'s TEs touch upon the real meaning of this part of verse. They make use of a two-clause construction in which one is expressed in simple past tense while the second in past perfect tense so as to make clear the time relation between the two. As such, it is indicated that the action of

slaughtering the cow occurred at a time surely after that of not wanting to. Thus, they produce happy translations.

Unexpectedly, H. and P.'s TEs use a construction involving two clauses with the same tense, viz. simple past, a situation which roughly means that the two actions took place in a way as though no time limit in between.

يَنْجَرُّهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِغُهُ (أبراهيم: ١٧)-2

A.: "...that which he gulps, and can scarce swallow..."

D.: "...they will sip, but scarcely swallow" .

H.: "He will sip it willingly, and he will find a great difficulty to

swallow it down his throat."

I.: "He will gag on it and not quite swallow it".

P.: "... which he sippeth but can hardly swallow."

This verse is interpreted by الزمخشري (cited in السامرائي 2003, 252) as follows. He believes that كاد is used to trigger the sense of exaggeration about the person-in-question's total undesirability and inability to swallowing the liquid for its evil taste. Along the same trend, شير (2005, 257) views the person here never approaching or thinking of swallowing it because of its taste.

Going through the renditions above, it becomes evident that four renditions refer to difficulty of 'swallowing'. H.'s rendition indicates this sense literally: "find a great difficulty". A., D., and P.'s renditions use adverbs like scarcely and hardly. But still, they miss the point of inability and undesirability that are nicely employed in the verse. I.'s rendition states that the person-in-question will find the difficulty of attempting to swallowing it by having the bad sense in the mouth and even in the stomach, and will never swallow it. This is indicated by the use of the adverb not quite which means not completely (Swan 2005, 489). This is the meaning there.

أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ (الزخرف: ٥٢)-3

A.: "...am I better than this man, who is contemptible and scarcely

makes things clear?"

D.: "Am I not mightier than this despicable wretch, who can scarcely make his meaning plain?"

H.: "Am I not better than this who is despicable and can scarcely

express himself clearly?"

I.: "Surely I am better than this wretch who can scarcely explain a thing!"

P.: "I am surely better than this fellow, who is despicable and can

hardly make (his meaning) plain!"

المحلي و 493, 2005 شبر; XVIII:112, 1997, الطباطبائي) Exegeses agree that وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ is a description employed by Pharaoh about Moses' status before becoming a prophet. Accordingly, Moses was then unable to express himself clearly. Presently, it seems obvious that translators are able to render this same meaning because they make use of the adverbs scarcely (four instances) and hardly (P.'s use) where both roughly mean almost not. In consequence, they produce happy translations.

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا (النساء: ٧٨) -4

A.: "How is it with this people? They scarcely understand any tiding."

D.: "What has come over these men that they should show such lack of understanding?"

H.: "So what is wrong with these people that they fail to understand any word?"

I.: "What is wrong with such folk that they scarcely understand why

anything happens?"

P.: "What is amiss with these people that they come not nigh to understand a happening?"

بلا (المحلي و السيوطي (90, 2005) شبر (8, V: 1997) الطباطبائي agree that كاد is used here as a negated lexical verb involving the total absence of the proximity towards the action realized by the verb يفقهون. Three instances of translation refer to such a meaning. These are D., H., and P.'s renditions. All three involve free-word combinations strictly denoting the meaning identical with that named just above. A., and I.'s renditions make use of scarcely to refer to that meaning. Such a state of affairs misses half of the truth.

وَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا (الكهف: ٩٣) 5-

A.: "...he found ... a people scarcely able to understand speech."

D.: "...and found a people who could barely understand a word".

H.: "...he found...a people who scarcely understand a word."

I.: "...he found a folk...who scarcely understand any speech."

P.: "he found a folk that scarce could understand a saying."

As for exegeses, they seem to agree that the people mentioned in the Quranic verse would only understand others' language slowly or not easily because of their unknown language (See الطباطبائي 1997, XIII: 359; شبر 2005, 355; and المحلي و السيوطي (393, بلا تاريخ, المحلي و السيوطي (ibid). Translators agree that the people would have a difficulty in their understanding by using the adverbs almost and barely (used solely by D.). Thus, happy renditions are introduced.

إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكْذِبْهَا (النور: ٤٠) 6-

A.: "when he puts forth his hand well-nigh he cannot see it."

D.: "If he stretches out his hand he can scarcely see it."

H.: "...if a man stretches out his hand, he can scarcely see it."

I.: "when he stretches his hand, he can scarcely see it."

P.: "when he holdth out his hand he scarce can see it."

To begin with, let it be known that exegeses (الطباطبائي 1997, XV:133); (شبر, 2005, 355; and بلا تاريخ, المحلي و السيوطي 465) have the consensus that the person in question will never be able to see his hand that is right under his eyes because of the very intensified darkness created around him. Unfortunately, all translators agree that this person will be able to see his hand but with difficulty. They all employ the adverb scarcely, except for A. who uses well-nigh cannot. The renditions are unhappy.

8. Conclusions

Rendering كاد into English manifests a state of instability due to the absence of a one-to-one equivalent on almost all occasions. That is to say, there is no sole definite word-class item that can be used as the only counterpart to كاد in English. The seventy English translated versions of the fourteen selected Quranic verses, focusing on كاد, involve translation equivalents belonging to different word-classes, namely adverbs, verbal constructions, and adjectives.

From among these three, adverbs make fifty instances. Almost all instances of negative *كاد* have been rendered into English in the form of negative adverbs, i.e. adverbs which in essence contain negation, such as 'scarcely' and 'hardly' instead of using the negative particle 'not' along with any other adverb of proximity. Next to adverbs come verbal constructions with sixteen instances, and adjectives rank last with only four instances. Such a variety of lexical items used as renditions to *كاد* in English refer to the fact that English has a hole in its lexicon in so far as translating Arabic *كاد* is concerned (In this respect, see Bentivogli and Pianta 2000).

Moreover, **كاد** shows some sort of a connotative mismatch between English and Arabic because any use of an English translation equivalent to

كاد will certainly fail to express those aspects of meaning usually aroused by it. Accordingly, كاد is a lexical gap as is being defined by Cvilikaitė (2007).

The instability in rendering كاد into English is further complicated by its occurrence with a negative particle such as لا, ما, and لم, a situation which is so controversial still to Arab linguists and exegeses, let alone translators into other languages, like English.

As well, translators were so indulged in the Quranic co-text meaning that they sometimes have missed the contextual message behind the verse. In other words, the contextual elements crucial to the arrival at the meaning in the Quranic message have been ignored totally and in consequence unhappy translations were produced.

Strange enough, however, was the case of rendering كاد (in only one verse) into a form which encapsulated the concept of intention and no reference was made to proximity which is the essential concept of meaning for which كاد is originally put to indicate in Arabic.

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