

The Translation of the English Perfectives into Arabic in Selected Literary Texts

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Abstract

This paper deals with the problems faced while trying to translate the English perfectives (present perfect simple and past perfect simple) into Arabic and suggested solutions to overcome these problems. It handles the tense system in English and Arabic and it shows how difficult the present perfect is for the non-native speakers of English. The paper reveals that little attention has been paid to the past perfect and the relationship between the two tenses has not been taken seriously in most grammar books. It aims to tackle the problem of translating the English present/past perfect into Arabic by suggesting some linguistic devices which can be of semantic and formal equivalents to the English perfect giving it a clear distinction from other tenses with the purpose of achieving the accurate meaning of the original. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will, to a certain extent, help the translators, lexicographers and those who pay great attention to the contrastive studies.

Keywords: Translation, English Perfectives, Arabic, Literary Texts.

Introduction

The process of translating English tense forms into Arabic may often cause a problem for some translators because of several reasons. The main reason is the fact that the number of tense structures in English is more than that found in Arabic a case which

introduces a structural gap between the tense system in both languages represented by the loss of one-to-one correspondence of some tense structures in the two languages subjected to translation. This may lead a translator, to a great extent, to use the same tense structure in the target language as an equivalent to two different tenses in the original language. Consequently, transnational problems may find their way to occur according to the thesis that languages reveal gaps in their tense paradigms because of a group of reasons (Salkie, 1989:14) and that the performance of the grammatical categories of tense and aspect doesn't necessarily have the same function in all languages (Baker, 1992:100).

The perfect (both present and past) represents one of the English tense structures which may lead to a lot of mixing up when translated into Arabic on the basis that the present and past perfect lack one-to-one formal similarity in the two languages. Sometimes, both types are mixed up mostly with the past tense to the degree that no formal and/or semantic difference can be formed between them, particularly in translation into Arabic. For example, one Arabic equivalent may be given to the three forms of the verb "arrive" in the following sentences, though they express different time meanings:

- (1) Ali arrived in Baghdad yesterday.
- (2) Ali has arrived in Baghdad recently.
- (3) I heard that Ali had arrived in Baghdad.

- (1) وصل علي إلى بغداد أمس.
- (2) وصل علي إلى بغداد مؤخرا.
- (3) سمعت أن عليا وصل إلى بغداد.

Tense in English and Arabic

The English perfects (present and past) are formally different from each other and express different meanings (Mansour, 2012: 15). Since the tense systems in both English and Arabic demonstrate different tenses as to their numbers, forms and

meanings, therefore it appears reasonable to introduce a brief description of their tense systems. The importance of tense as an important subcategory of structural equivalence must be taken into consideration. The incorrect use of tense in the translation can lead to a change in meaning (El-Zeini, 1994: 214). "In most cases tense and aspect overlap and one may not easily identify whether this is a tense or an aspect where there are: simple, perfective, progressive, and perfective progressive aspects (Najim, 2012: 24).

The differences concerning systems of the verb can show grammatical differences clearly. The system of tenses in Arabic is completely different from that of English. For example, يشتري can mean, in a standard way, both 'buys' and 'is buying'. Otherwise, the system which is adopted in Arabic can join tense and aspect. Accordingly, the perfect is used to refer to the completion of the action in addition to occurrence in the past as in اشترى 'he bought' whereas the imperfect may denote non-completion of the action irrespective of whether its occurrence is in the past or in the present as in contexts where يشتري is translated as 'is/was buying' (Dickins et al, 2002:99). The incongruity between Arabic and English tenses appears to be one of the translation problems arising from the indeterminacy of meaning (Shamaa, 1978:32). There is no agreement due to grammarians of different schools on the number of English tenses according to their false belief and perplexity between "time" and "tense" on the one hand, and "tense and "aspect" on the other hand. Traditionalists such as Krapp (1936:177) say that there are three tenses: present, past, and future. Others like Hornby (1976: 80-81) believe that there are twelve tenses. Structuralists such as Hockett (1963:237) introduce two main tenses: past and present. Transformationalists, such as Fowler (1971: 7) believe that, depending on their form, there are only two tenses: present and past. However, other grammarians such as Quirk et al., (1972:87) and Chalker (1984: 75) have the same perspective, i.e., to divide tenses into present and past and that each of which may show a variety

of aspects. This clearly indicates that grammarians have described and classified tenses in English by depending on various criteria. However, there are different ways by which tense and aspect can be joined so as to grant or introduce the following contrasts, each of which can be attributed to one of the three ideas of time: present, past and future.

Present simple: (4) He visits his uncle.

Present continuous: (5) He is visiting his uncle.

Present perfect: (6) He has visited his uncle.

Present perfect continuous: (7) He has been visiting his uncle.

Simple past: (8) He visited his uncle.

Past continuous: (9) He was visiting his uncle.

Past perfect: (10) He had visited his uncle.

Past perfect continuous: (11) He had been visiting his uncle.

Simple future: (12) He will visit his uncle.

Future continuous (13) He will be visiting his uncle.

Future perfect: (14) He will have visited his uncle.

Future perfect continuous: (15) He will have been visiting his uncle.

Concerning Arabic, Modern Arab Grammarians say that there are two tenses of verbs: imperfect and perfect. The first refers to an incomplete action, the second indicates a completed action (Wright, 1977:51; Aziz, 1989: 43; Jurf, 2002: 80; Abboud and McCarus, 1983: 154).

The verbs (kataba) wrote كتب (yaktub) write and يكتب can express these two types as in the following successive sentences:

يكتب أحمد قصة (16) Ahmed writes a story. (imperfect)

كتب أحمد قصة (17) Ahmed wrote a story. (perfect)

(Wightwick and Gaafar, 2008:13, 15; Al-Jurf, 2002: 80)

Ziadeh and Winder (1957: 21) argue that these two forms are not really tenses because they can be distinguished in terms of aspect rather than in terms of time, i.e., the Arabic verbs are used mainly to express completion or incompleteness of an action, irrespective of any temporal implications. They (ibid) make a balance between the

Arabic perfect and the English past and also between the imperfect Arabic and the English present or future. A verb in a given context may express diverse tenses or aspects which are semantically equivalent to English tenses even though such tenses are not found in Arabic as in:

(18) Samir resumes his work. يستأنف سمير عمله

Where the verb (yesta'anif) may refer to simple present, present continuous or future (Faris,1974:29).

The perfect in Arabic, or the suffixed form as many linguists (Messaoudi 1985; Belazi 1993 among others) prefer to call it, is available at a wide range of contexts, some of which have no systematic correspondence in other languages (see also Comrie, 1976: 78-80; Dahl, 1985: 80). As well as, Sibawayhi (796: vol. 1: 460) states that there are three different forms of the perfect in Arabic: (i) it stands alone by itself, (ii) it can be preceded by the particle /qad/ giving the complex (qad+ perfect) and (iii) it is possible to be preceded by the complex particle/la-qad/ giving (la-qad+ perfect). The imperfect is used to express a stative verbal form from both the formal, that is, morphological, and the semantico-pragmatic points of view (Bahloul, 2008: 135).

Finally, the Arabic verb system represents, morphologically, the most complex among all of the definite classes. Verbs can be inflected as to 'tense', 'person', 'gender' and 'number' (Al-Jarf, 1990: 75).

On the other hand, English is of too many subclasses of weak and strong verbs. Weak verbs are of four inflected forms but strong ones are of five (Al-Jurf, 2002: 82).

Present Perfective

One of the most difficult English tenses for non-native speakers of English is the present perfect (Catford et al,1974: 98). Sometimes there is a confusion between the

present perfect and the present tense, and at other times with the past. It is sometimes difficult to build exact rules about the situation(s) in which the present perfect is used and the purposes to which it is put (Palmer,1987:174-177; Comrie,1976: 66-71).

English present perfect constitutes a problem for Arabic-speaking students because of the fact that it is marked for present time. The student will tend to use adverbs of time which denote past with it due to the possibility of doing this in Arabic:

(19) *I have eaten it yesterday. (Catford et al, 1974: 98)

As the English present perfect has numerous detected uses in the theoretical literature on "tense" and "aspect", most grammarians (Comrie,1976:106-107; 1985:24-25; Leech,1989: 344) often try to put it against the simple past since both include, to a greater degree, a close semantic relationship to refer to the past in one way or another. But Yule (2006: 22) shows that it is clear that the simple past can be used to refer to the completion of the action (a period that ended earlier) whereas the present perfect is used to display the non-completion of the action i.e., to denote a period from the past up to now. Consider the following pair of sentences:

(20) He in ed his leg.

(21) He has injured his leg.

Sentence (20) displays that his leg is better now; sentence (21) refers to the fact that his leg is still bad and it needs time to be better. Consequently, the present perfect conveys an element of meaning called current relevance while the simple past does not (Comrie,1985:25; Canavan,1990:15-16).

In addition, the present perfect is used with events whose time is invariably indefinite. This definiteness of the past time accompanied with this form represents only one of the outstanding features that makes it different from the simple past (Leech,1971:35).

In contrast with the present perfect, it is possible to use the past simple for the purpose of correction an incorrect belief or expectation or to say that it is surely true:

(22) *The area is far more rugged and wild than I have expected.

(23) The area is far more rugged and wild than I expected.

(Foley and Hall, 2003: 64)

Praninskas (1975,185) says that the present perfect is of three main uses which can be summarized as follows:

A. An action or state that was repeated in the past and that may be repeated in the future:

(24) Suha has lived here all her life.

Sentence (24) means that Suha has lived here and is still living here. The action refers to the period of time from the past until the present and may continue to the future.

B. An action or state completed at some indefinite time in the past. There may be accompaniment of adverbials like "already", "yet(neg.)", "recently", "just", etc. with sentences of this type:

(25) John has not had a serious accident yet.

(26) Zeki has (just; already; recently) finished his assignment.

Sentence (26) displays that the action was done either immediately before speaking, at some unspecified time in the past or within a short time past.

C. An action or state which began some time in the past and has continued up to now. Adverbials like "for" and "since" can often go with this type of sentences:

(27) He has not met the dean (since 1991; for 2 years.)

The use of "since" refers to the point of time when the action began whereas the use of "for" refers to the duration of time covered by the action. McCawley (1971:104-7) indicates that the present perfect carries four senses: existential, stative, universal and hot news shown in the following successive sentences:

- (28) I have known him since May 1990.
(29) I have read Hard Times four times.
(30) I cannot come to the party. I have caught the flue.
(31) Malcolm x has just been assassinated.

Accordingly, the "universal" meaning inherent in sentence(28) is used to reveal that a state of affairs dominated throughout some interval stretching from the past up to the present; the "existential" sense represented by sentence(29) is used to refer to the existence of past happenings; the "stative" sense marked by sentence(30) is used to demonstrate that the direct impact of a past event still continues; and the hot news displayed by sentence(31) refers to a person's presupposition that his addressee has not yet known or heard of the news he/she is reporting (ibid; Inoue, 1979:264).

There is always a relationship with "now" while using present perfect:

- (32) Where's your key? I don't know. I've lost it. (I haven't got it now)

Often new information can be given by using the present perfect:

- (33) Ow! I've cut my finger. (Murphy,1994:14)

The present perfect differs from the past simple and this leads to problems for many people because there are several ways of using the present perfect (Bourke, 2003:14). Generally speaking, in a sentence it is preferable to use a past simple verb in the time clause and a present perfect verb in the main clause:

- (34) Since Mr Hassan became president, both taxes and unemployment have increased.
(rather than...has become...)

(Hewings, 2005: 6)

The present perfect is used to express past actions with some importance now:

- (35) I've written to John, so he knows what's happening.

(Swan and Walter,2003:51)

Past Perfective

The past perfect, in comparison with the present perfect, has taken little attention and the relationship between the two tenses has even been neglected in most books of grammar (Salkie,1989:1). They tend to have common thing, but in fact they are different. Salkie (1989) says that the two types of the perfect place event time before a reference point. At any rate, they differ in the relationship between a reference point and the moment of speech in that concerning the present perfect a reference point is simultaneous with the moment of speech whereas regarding the past perfect a reference point can be placed in front of the moment of speech (ibid:4).

Moreover, the present perfect cannot go with a time adverbial which points to a definite time or point in the past while the past perfect can:

(36) *I have arrived yesterday.

(37) John had arrived on Tuesday.

On the one hand, sentence (36) is unacceptable, but sentence (37) is acceptable on the other hand. Sentence (37) is used to mean either that Tuesday was the time of his arrival or that it is the reference point before which his arrival is situated (Comrie,1985:79).

Leech (1971:42) points out that the past perfect generally denotes "a time further in the past, seen from the viewpoint of a definite point of time already in the past":

(38) I had written some letters before I visited him.

(39) Sami came very tired. He had worked in his office for ten hours.

(40) Ahmed returned late last night as he had walked all the way home instead of driving his car.

Praninskas (1975:179) indicates that there are three principal uses of the past perfect which can be outlined below:

A. to refer to the time relationship between two events in the past, particularly in case of that the clause marker does not demonstrate this relationship:

(41) Zeki had already dismissed the class when he announced the exam.

Consequently, the first action "dismissing the class" is put in the past perfect whereas the second one "announcing the exam" have to be in the simple past.

B. to report declarations occurred in the past or the present perfect:

(42) The student said "I (have)lost my key" (Direct Speech)

(43) The student said that he had lost his key. (Reported Speech)

C. to refer to the wishes and unreal conditions which occurred in the past:

(44) The economist wishes he had not missed the bus.

(45) If he had not missed it, he would not have been late.

(46) I wish that he had remembered his invitation.

Time expressions, however, whose beginning is "by", "after", "before", are often used with the past perfect:

(47) By (November; then) the same thieves had robbed three banks.

(Bing, 1989:101)

The past perfect can often be used to report what was originally said or thought in the present perfect or past simple:

(48) I have met him before. ~ I was sure that I had met him before. (not...I met him...)

(Hewings, 2005: 10)

The past perfect can be used when one past action happened before another past action:

(49) By the time we arrived, the plane had taken off. (First the plane took off, then we arrived.) (Bourke, 2003: 28)

A verb in the present perfect tense refers to an action started in the past and completed in the present. A verb in the past perfect tense denotes an action that started in the past and ended in the past, before something else happened in the past:

(50) I have always helped my friend. (always= I have helped my friends of the time.)

(51) He had often pulled a red wagon. (It had been his habit to pull a red wagon.)

(Swick, 2010: 19-20)

The past perfect is usually used after "when" and "after" for the purpose of revealing that something was completely done:

(52) When he had painted the kitchen and bathroom, he decided to have a rest.

(Swan and Walter, 1997: 167)

Translating the present perfect

As Wightwick and Gaatar (2008:13) state that the basic two tenses concerning Arabic regular verbs are past and present, it can consequently be concluded that the present perfect in English has no equivalent in Arabic. Accordingly, we can use the compound structure which is composed of the particle /qad/ plus any verb in the Arabic perfect. The particle /qad/ is however applied to affirmative statements as in sentences (55,56). It cannot be used in negative, interrogative or in relative clauses with the present perfect as in:

(53) He has not come.

ما قد جاء*

(54) I have not finished the story yet.

لم انته من القصة بعد

(55) She has left the place.

لقد غادرت المكان

(56) (Indeed)He committed/has committed this crime on his own.

قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً.

(Aziz, 1989: 51,61; Ryding, 2005:450)

Dahl and Talmoudi(1979:55) declare that the basic function of /qad/ is to refer to the adequate evidence which the speaker has to support his statement. Azmi (1988: 94) clarifies that certain things (whether expected or unexpected) have actually taken place under the influence of using /qad/. For this reason, he says that it can be translated into "already", "really", and "now".

The use of the particle qad/ in front of the perfect near the beginning of the clause (preceded only by 'wa' or 'la') can be observed when that clause takes place at the beginning of a paragraph or inside it:

- (57) wa /qad/ qaala raadiyuu isra'eel
and/qad/ say. (perfect) radio Israel
"Radio Israel announced..."
- (58) la-qad hadatha fii hayaati-naa shay'un fadhee'un
la-qad happen. (perfect) in life-our something terrible
"Something terrible happened in our life." (Bahloul, 2008: 78)

With respect to the questions, the perfect of the verb can be the Arabic equivalent to the English present perfect tense as in:

- (59) Have you met her? هل قابلتها؟

Concerning English clauses, adverbial or adjectival, in which the present perfect tense can be used in place of the present tense used for the future, the perfect or the imperfect of the verb may be the Arabic equivalent to the English present perfect as in:

- (60) If he has finished (finishes) his homework, he will go to the game.
إذا انتهى من أداء واجباته، سيذهب إلى المباراة
- (61) He will not go to the game, until he has finished (finishes) his homework.
لن يذهب إلى المباراة، إلى أن ينتهي من أداء واجباته

(Al-Jarf, 1990: 81)

It is noticeable that the compound structure of /qad/or/laqad/ + perfect can be of great benefit to add emphasis and certainty to the meaning of the verb. This structure grants the meaning of near perfect (الماضي القريب) to the verb that follows (Ahmed, 2008: 84; Hassan, 1990: 126-30). The illustration above can be documented as follows:

- (62) while you have gone in unto each other, and they have taken
from you a firm and strong covenant?
(An-Nisa' Surah: 21) وقد أفضى بعضكم إلى بعض وأخذن منكم ميثقا غليظا

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 110)

(63) Now has come to you Our Messenger making (things) clear unto you.

قد جاءكم رسولنا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ (Al-Ma'idah Surah:19)

(ibid: 146)

(64) and I have reached the extreme old age.

وقد بلغت من الكبر عتياً (Maryam Surah:8)

(ibid: 402)

(65) Certainly I have created you before, when you had nothing!

وقد خلقتك من قبل ولم تك شيئاً (Maryam Surah:9)

(ibid)

(66) O my father! Verily there has come to me of the knowledge that which came not unto you.

يأبىء إني قد جاءني من العلم ما لم يأتك (Maryam Surah: 43)

(ibid: 407)

(67) and has counted them a full counting. لقد أحصهم وعدهم عداً (Maryam Surah: 94)

(ibid: 413)

(68) Musa said: Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none?

قال أقتلت نفساً زكيةً بغير نفسٍ لقد جنت شيئاً نُكراً (Al-Kahf Surah: 74)

(ibid: 396)

(69) [Musa(Moses)] said...you have received an excuse from me.

قد بلغت من لدني عذراً (Al-Kahf Surah: 76)

(ibid: 397)

(70) Indeed the Word (of punishment) has proved true against most of them, so they will not believe.

لقد حق القول على أكثرهم فهم لا يؤمنون (Ya-Sin Surah: 7)

(ibid: 588)

(71) That has been the Way of Allah already... سنة الله التي قد خلت من قبل (Al-Fath Surah:23)

(ibid: 696)

(72) And indeed, you have already known the first form of creation.

ولقد علمتم النشأة الأولى (Al-Waqi'ah Surah: 62)

(ibid: 736)

(73) While He has created you in(different) stages. وقد خلقكم أطوارا (Nuh Surah: 14)
(ibid: 788)

(74) a- We have certainly created man... لقد خلقنا الإنسان

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(74) b- Verily, We created man...

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 842)

(75) a- And We have already sent messengers before you...

ولقد أرسلنا رسلا من قبلك (Ar-Ra'd Surah: 38)

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(75) b- And indeed We sent Messengers before you

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 327)

(76) a- And he has failed who instills it. وقد خاب من دستها

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(76) b- And indeed he fails who corrupts his ownself.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 838)

(77) a- And he has already seen Gabriel in the clear horizon. ولقد رءاه بالأفق المبين

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(77) b- And indeed he saw him in the clear horizon.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 819)

The construction of /qad/or /laqad/ + Arabic perfect can be used in Arabic poetic verses (classical and modern) as shown in Al-Mutanabbi's poetry below:

(78) If men of insight people's stuff could taste
I have devoured it whole, left nothing waste
إذا ما الناس جريهم لبيب فأنى قد أكلتهم وذاقا

(Mumayiz,1977: 38)

Imru' al-Qays said:

(79) and my friends said, "They have escaped you, so chase them!"

وقال صحابي قد شأونك فاطلب

(Sumi, 2004: 38, 201)

Al-Buhturi said:

(80) Abu al-Ghawth has already given me a drink, generously,

قد سقاني، ولم يُصرِّدْ أبو الغوث

(ibid: 104, 216)

Ibn Zamrak said:

(81) How many a complaint of love have you allayed

فكم من شكاةٍ في الهوى قد رَفَأَتْهَا

(ibid: 165, 225)

Hilal el-Faraa said:

(82) They have grown up

لقد كبروا (الفارغ)

(Mezyed, Munir and Abdul-Latif, Abdul-Settar, 2007: 546)

(83) Say I, my boy: Whereof hath people's power gone?
; Justice the throne has wickedly left

أين الشريعة يا بني؟؟ لقد هوى
حكم العدالة من غلا أبراجها (هزاع)

(Gorgis, 2007)

The same construction mentioned above has recently appeared to be of great value in the language of mass media as shown below:

(84) This funding has contributed...

وقد ساهم هذا التمويل...

(85) Thus far, COELBA has electrified more than 200,000 households.

وقد أمنت مؤسسة كولبا حتى الآن إمداد أكثر من 200 ألف منزل بالتيار الكهربائي

(<http://www.wata.cc/forums/showthread.php?2399>)

Translating the Past Perfect

Sometimes, the particle /qad/ can be put in front of the Perfect verb. Its function is confirmatory and may make the verb definitely Past Perfect, for example:

(86) He has arrived. قد وصل Not 75. He arrived.

This particle, at any rate, may also make the verb Pluperfect, to the extent that the verb given, in accordance with the context, might also mean:

(87) He had arrived.

(Haywood and Nahmad, 1965: 100)

The Pluperfect can be achieved by using the perfect /kana/ كان in association with the perfect of another verb and the normal position of the subject will be between the two verbs:

(88) Zaid had written . كان زيد كتب

In case of the subject is plural and it denotes human beings, /kana/ will be in the singular governed by the preceding verb. However, there is to be an agreement in number between the second verb and its subject which has been mentioned already:

(89) The men had drunk. كان الرجال شربوا

(90) American lawyers had participated. كان محامون أمريكيون شاركوا

The insertion of /qad/ can also happen to indicate the same meaning, for example:

(91) The men had drunk. كان الرجال قد شربوا

(92) He had studied. (before some time in the past) كان قد درس

(93) The ambassador had arrived Friday evening. كان السفير قد وصل مساء الجمعة

(ibid: 104-105; Ryding, 2005: 448)

The past perfect in the two languages, Arabic and English, is similar enough to the extent that the Arabic-speaking student encounters, somewhat, a little problem while learning it in English (Catford et al, 1974: 98).

Below is an example of Pluperfect without subject noun:

(94) He had accused them of provoking him. كان اتهمهم بالتحرش به

(Ryding,2005: 449)

The Holy Quran is a good example to illustrate what has been mentioned above:

(95) a- Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none?

أقتلت نفسا زكية بغير نفس لقد جئت شيئا نكرا

(Al-Kahf Surah: 74)

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 396)

(95) b- [Moses] said, Have you killed a pure soul for other than [having killed] a soul?

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(96) a- And indeed they had already made a covenant with Allah not to turn their backs.

ولقد كانوا عهدوا بالله من قبل لا يولون الأدبر

(Al-Ahzab Surah: 15)

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 561)

(96) b- And they had already promised Allah before not to turn their backs and flee.

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(97) a- ...among the previous generations of jinn and mankind have passed away.

في أمم قد خلت من قبلهم

(Al-Ahqaf Surah: 18)

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999:683)

(97) b- ...among nations which had passed on before them

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(98) a- Indeed, We sent(Messengers) before you ولقد أرسلنا من قبلك

(Al-Hijr Surah: 10)

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 339)

(98) b- And We had already sent [messengers] before you

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

(99) a- And indeed We conferred a favour on you ولقد مننا عليك

(Ta-Ha Surah:37)

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1999: 415)

(99) b- And We had already conferred favor upon you

(Dukes, 2010: n. p.)

Arabic poetry can be a good field of such constructions:

Ibn Zamrak said:

(100) and the souls in it had reached the point of ascending

وقد بلغت فيه النفوس التراقيا

(Sumi, 2004: 168, 226)

(101) O how I wish I had died unmourned

For I have lived, yet with nothing to call my own

لَيْتَنِي قَدْ مِت مَأْسُوفًا عَلَيَّ (مسعود)

هَا أَنَا قَدْ عَشْتُ لَا شَيْءَ لَدَيَّ (زعرور)

Sample of Translated Texts

Now, we adopt some literary texts for the purpose of revealing how the English perfects have been translated into Arabic by different translators.

A. The Old Man and the Sea

(102) We've made some money. (1952: 6)

لقد كسبنا بعض المال (نصار: 20)

فقد ادخرت بعض النقود (زكريا: 12)

(103) I have not wished to open the container... (ibid: 15)

ولم أشأ أن أفتح العمود (زكريا: 23)

لم أرغب في فتح الوعاء (نصار: 29)

(104) He's got something (ibid: 26)

وجد شيئا (نصار: 39)

بل قد لمح شيئا بالفعل (زكريا: 35)

(105) 'But you have not slept yet, old man,' he said aloud. (ibid: 65)

ولكنك لم تتم حتى الآن أيها العجوز. (نصار: 76)

قال بصوت عالٍ: لكنك لم تتم بعد يا عجوز. (زكريا: 72)

(106) He's found fish (ibid: 30)

لقد وجد سمكة (نصار: 43)

لقد رأى سمكا (زكريا: 38)

(107) and he had gone eighty-four days now... (ibid: 5)

وقد أمضى أربعة وثمانين

يوما حتى الآن (نصار: 19)

وقد عبرت به حتى الساعة، أربعة وثمانين يوما (زكريا: 11)

(108) The boy had brought them... (ibid: 14)

كان الولد قد أحضرها (نصار: 28)

- (109) I have seen lions... (ibid: 16) وكان الغلام قد جاء بالطعام (زكريا: 22)
وقد رأيت أسودا (نصار: 30)
ورأيت هناك السباع (زكريا: 24)
- (110) That school has gotten away from me (ibid: 27) ابتعد ذلك السرب عني (نصار: 41)
لقد أفلت مني هذا السرب (زكريا: 36)
- (111) and he had sung at night sometimes (ibid: 31) وقد غنى أحيانا في الليل (نصار: 44)
وكان يلذ له الغناء في الليل (زكريا: 39)
- (112) He had pushed his straw hat (ibid: 37) كان قد دفع قبعته القشبية (نصار: 50)
وكان قد لبس قبعته المصنوعة من الخوص (زكريا: 45)
- (113) He has slowed much (ibid: 47) لقد أبطأت كثيرا (نصار: 59)
لقد تباطأت السمكة في السباحة (زكريا: 55)
- (114) the male fish had stayed by the side of the boat. (ibid: 41) وبقي الذكر معها طيلة الوقت (نصار: 53)
أما الذكر، فبقي إلى جانبها (زكريا: 48)
أخذتها (نصار: 48)
- (115) He's taken it (ibid: 35) لقد ابتلعها (زكريا: 43)

B. Othello

- (116) I have already chosen my officer. (1976: 1) لأنني والله سبق أن اخترت الضابط الذي أريد (جبرا: 72)
لقد اخترت ملازمي (مطران: 19)
- (117) What, have you lost your wits? (ibid: 5) ماذا، هل فقدت عقلك؟ (جبرا: 75)
ما هذا الهديان؟ أمجانين أنتم؟ (مطران: 22)
- (118) Though in the trade of war I have slain men. (ibid: 11) لنن اكن في صناعة الحرب قد أرديت رجالا (جبرا: 79)
لقد تعودت القتل في الحروب (مطران: 26)
- (119) ...true I have married her. (ibid: 23) صحيح أنني تزوجتها (جبرا: 87)
حق أنني اقترنت بها (مطران: 34)

(120) That I have passed. (ibid: 25)

منذ أيام الصبي (جبرا: 89)
التي شهدتها (مطران: 36)

(121) ...she had something heard. (ibid)

قد سمعت منها نتفا (جبرا: 90)
قد سمعت منها نتفا (مطران: 37)

(122) For I have served him, (ibid: 41)

لأنني خدمته (جبرا: 103)
فقد خدمت تحت إمرته (مطران: 48)

(123) ...it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers

(ibid: 47)

فلسوف تتمنى لو أنك لم تكثر من تقبيل أصابعك الثلاث (جبرا: 108)
كان خيرا لك وأنت عازم على استبقاء منصبك ألا تجعل أصابعك الثلاثة في فمك (مطران: 54)

(124) ...I had nothing known. (ibid: 103)

ما دمت أنا في جهل من الأمر (جبرا: 149)
على أن لا أعلم (مطران: 91)

(125) But now I find I had suborned the witness, (ibid: 119)

ولكني أرى الآن انني تواطأت مع الشاهد (جبرا: 161)
أما الآن فأرى أنني رشوت الشاهد (مطران: 103)

(126) What if I had said I had seen him do you wrong? (ibid: 123)

وماذا لو قلت انني رأيته يسئ إليك؟ (جبرا: 166)
إذن ما كنت تصنع لو أبلغتك أنني رأيته يسلب عرضك (مطران: 107)

(127) And would in action glorious I had lost those legs (ibid: 67)

وأتمنى لو أنني في قتال مجيد فقدت ساقَي هاتين (جبرا: 122)
ولكنني كنت أود لو فقدت ساقاي في حرب شريفة (مطران: 68)

(128) I had thought you had received some bodily wound. (ibid: 71)

حسبت أنك أصبت بجرح في جسمك (جبرا: 125)
ظننت وأيم نزاھتي، أنك أصبت بجرح بدني (مطران: 71)

Conclusions

1. The English perfects (present and past) are formally different from each other and express different meanings.
2. The composition constituted of the particle /qad/+the Arabic perfect can be used as an equivalent to the English present perfect. This is applied to Arabic affirmative sentences only. Sometimes, the Arabic perfect(past) is used in place of the construction above as in sentences (110), (116), (119), etc.
3. The structure composed of the particle /qad+/kana/ +Arabic perfect or/kana+/qad/+perfect to be used as an equivalent to the English past perfect. This is applied to both Arabic affirmative and negative sentences. Sometimes, some translators tend to use the Arabic perfect (past) in lieu of the two or three constructions mentioned above as in sentences (114), (124), (125), (126), etc.
4. As English tense in a given sentence can be rendered into more than one Arabic tense and vice versa since translation is not a matter of replacing surface forms by rules of correspondence but it contains analysis, transfer and restricting, all of which are governed by linguistic and non-linguistic factors.
5. This paper does not mainly concern itself with the grammarians, controversies over the concepts of time-tense relations, but with the problems of translating some English tense structures into Arabic.
6. Depending on the literary texts given, we can conclude that the translators differ from each other while translating the English 'perfect' into Arabic. Rarely, may the translators agree with each other as occurred in sentence (121).
7. The English equivalents to the Arabic verses of Holy Quran used by Al-Hilali and Khan differ sometimes from those used by Dukes. Different Translators do not give

the same structure concerning the matter of translating the meanings of the Noble Quran from Arabic into English.

8. As the sentences (103 and 105) are negative and they are in the present perfect simple, so the construction /qad/+ the Arabic perfect is not used when translating them into Arabic.

9. As the sentence (126) is interrogative and it is in the past perfect simple, therefore the structure /qad/+ /kana/+ Arabic perfect or /kana/+ /qad/+ perfect is not used when translating it into Arabic.

10. The translators would appear to be unfaithful if they translated the English perfects (present and past) by using a verb of the pattern (fa'ala), because it almost always refers to the simple past. That means that these constructions differ, formally, from each other and they are of different meanings as well.

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