

Words, Texts and Worlds in Translation

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By

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PREFACE

When I joined the National Translation Mission, I didn't have much idea of what a translation is. Theoretically, I knew that there was a discipline called Translation Studies, but I did not know what was taught. I had experience of translation when I was in high school; students were asked to translate a piece on a chosen topic from Odia to English, to develop English language skills. Within the syllabus for my Master's degree, there was a seminar on translation, and there I presented my first translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. I translated the text into Odia and presented it in the seminar, which received appreciation from the scholars present. It was with the National Translation Mission (where I am now working), that I came to understand what a translation is, what the theoretical developments in this field are, and various strategies of translation. Here the game was different, as the National Translation Mission's objective is to translate knowledge texts prescribed at UG and PG level courses across Indian universities, into the 22 scheduled languages of India. Before joining the mission, I was only aware of literary translation, but here I gained experience in the field of non-literary translation. While translating non-literary texts or dealing with the translation of knowledge texts, attending workshops for developing scientific glossaries in Odia, meeting with the scholars in Odia and other Indian languages, and discussing scientific translation, and its strategies with them, I became engaged in all the facets of non-literary translation. The mission is not limited to the translation of knowledge texts, it also trains translators, and contributes to the field of Translation Studies. Gradually I became a trainer, and then an Assistant Editor of the journal *Translation Today*. Once I was associated with the journal, I became deeply engrossed with research in the field. I also took in academic interviews with Translation Studies scholars Susan Bassnett, Anthony Pym, Douglas Robinson and Jeremy Munday. During this time, my PhD work on Scientific Terminology in Odia was also continuing, and I wrote research papers which were published in many journals in India and abroad. This book, titled, *Words, Texts and Worlds in*

Translation, is the result of 14 selected papers which have been published in *The Criterion*, *The Muse India*, *Language Circle*, *Journal of English Language Teaching*, *Translation Journal*, *Global Dimension of English*, *Hermes*, and the *Interdisciplinary Research Journal of Humanities*. I am thankful to these journals. The reader will experience a journey through the identity of translation, its existence, its various theoretical aspects, and its determinants. This book does not only deal with literary translation, it also sheds light on non-literary translation.

I hope the readers will have a new experience of translation while reading this book!

Aditya Kumar Panda
Mysore, 16.01.2022

TRANSLATION EXISTS

Translation exists either as a process or as a product, and the purpose behind it is always for 'other'. The existence of 'other' entails the existence of a translation. This chapter will analyze how the other identifies a text as a translation. For an author, its identity is obvious, whereas it is not for others. The chapter will answer the following questions:

- A. How does a translation exist, as a process and as a definite text?
- B. How is it perceived by others?
- C. How does a user process the knowledge of translation as translation?

Keywords: Translation, Existence, Function of Language.

Translation exists because there is always an 'other'. One cannot think about translational acts to take place without the 'other' being there. The existence of an 'other' is the primary condition of a translation. The very etymological definition of translation, 'carry across', is to carry the being and becoming of one to another. Becoming what one is not, is a translation. Getting what one doesn't have is an act of translation. Where there is no Shakespeare or Dostoevsky in a language, to present them in the language is a translation. It is not simply making the texts of Shakespeare or Dostoevsky available, it is the art of the person writing the philosophy and culture of Shakespeare or Dostoevsky. Translation is not simply bringing out existing writing in another language; it brings a world to another world. It is a manifestation of a text that is spoken or written in a medium into another medium that is either spoken or written. Language is one of the media through which to execute this task. It is the visible sign of a language through which we recognize a translation. As far as the traditional debate of translation is concerned, there would be no translation without language. So, the question is, how does a translation exist in a language or in languages? When one asks this, the first answer one may

get is that it exists as a book, as a writing. Translation as a product exists as a text or a piece of writing in which is written ‘translated by’, ‘translated from’, or ‘translators’; and the reader/user is aware of translation as a part of a system/tradition. Both phenomena are not mutually inclusive. The first causes the second to exist. In most of the early literature of modern Indian languages, writings (transcreation/retelling) shape the tradition. If one is aware of the common features of translation through this tradition, then only he/she can identify something as a translation. The common features are source text, source language, target text, and target language.

If one reads the following stanza without being aware of its history, one could not identify it as a translation:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow
 domestic walls;
 Where words come out from the depth of truth.....

The Gitanjali-Song Offerings, R. N. Tagore

If one does not know that Tagore himself translated his *Gitanjali* into English, one cannot identify it as a translation. How is one aware of the existence of a translation? Traditionally, one may be aware of it because of the following criteria:

- 1) There is a source text in a language
- 2) It has been available in a target language as a text.

Primarily, these two criteria suit the so-called definition of translation. Now, if one is asked whether he/she has read *The Stranger* by Stuart Gilbert, one may say no, but if the same person is asked whether he/she has read *The Stranger* by Albert Camus, he/she may say yes. Readers are not aware that the translator has translated *The Stranger*, and Camus did not write it in English. Most of us have read translations without being aware of the fact that we have read translations. How does the translation exist here? How is one aware of a translation? We know from the inside page or back cover, or somewhere in the book that it is a translation (for

example “*The Stranger* by Albert Camus, translated from the French by Stuart Gilbert” written somewhere in the book).

Every day you get to see many signs written in English, then in Hindi, or in any other Indian language. If you go to a bank, you will get the forms in both English and Hindi. Have you ever thought that those documents, and signs are translations? It is not written within a sign or in documents that those are translations. If it is somewhere in a book, it is written as ‘translated by’.

From these phenomena, I would state that a translation exists in two ways: 1) as a product in book form, it is written as ‘translated by’, 2) as a process of a system. I have already hinted about these two ways of existence of a translation. At the outset, traditionally what constitutes a translation is source text, source language, target text, and target language. Most of us are aware of these constituent factors. I am not going to destabilize the notion of these factors, traditionally or post-structurally. As an approach from users who don’t prescribe any notion, one could argue it as descriptive. Before we move to such an approach, I would state that it is the study of a subject that creates prescriptive notions. There is nothing called ‘translation’, it is only the ‘translation relation’ that causes scholastic research and study (Aditya 2016, 6). Without this relationship, translation does not exist. Without a relationship to another language, another culture or another text, a translation does not exist.

Apart from the reasons cited above, what else can a translation have as an identity marker? One can refer to the ‘translationese’ as one of the identity markers. “Translationese (or Third Language, TL) is a generally pejorative term used to refer to TL usage which, because of its obvious reliance on features of Source Language (SL), is perceived as unnatural, impenetrable or even comical” (Shuttleworth, M., Cowie, M., *Dictionary of Translation Studies* 2014). Ungrammatical and awkward expressions in a text due to too much reliance on the source text can be attributed as the markers a translation may have. These markers can be well-justified, provided that such features are not available in the original writing.

Scholars have been divided on two grounds considering the evaluation of a translation, which seems to provide some identity for a translation as different from the original. One is that a translation should read like a translation, and the other is that it should read like an original. To make a translation read like a translation, some scholars like Lawrence Venuti and Jeremy Munday go for foreignization. Foreignization means “a target text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original” (Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997, 59).

The world is developing from the monolingual to the multilingual, and from the mono-cultural to multicultural, and at the same time, it is becoming techno-centric. Go anywhere in the world, and you can witness the movement of people, the existence of multilingual people together, and arrays of items from various cultures collected together. Technology has made this more accessible and available. There is no need to go to the interior part of South Africa, or the Bonda Hills of Odisha, you can Google and find them. Just switch on the TV and the happenings of every hour are in front of you. You can also switch to other languages in all these media. The TV channels are becoming genre-based, and activity based. You can switch from one genre to another easily. On TV, if you want history, the History Channel is there. If you want to watch geography, the Geography Channel is there. If you want to watch the news, it is there. Visit a big shopping mall, and you will experience variety in different sections. This will fulfill all your needs and you will find people from many languages, cultures, and religions transacting together. This multilingual, multicultural, multi-ethnic, environment is growing at high speed, minimizing the functioning of the monolingual world and causing translation and interpretation to take place.

A language never exists, languages and their convergence exist. Likewise, culture is also converging; you will find a traditional community wearing non-traditional attire. You will find a Hindu married woman with vermilion on her forehead, wearing a T-shirt with jeans. Cultures are changing and evolving. Nation, as a category, is becoming multinational, and is going beyond the category itself. These days, categories are countering one another, causing other categories to form. The fact is that a

category has to be there, with or without attribution. Translation as a category exists because of other categories, like original writing, and it intersects and mediates ideology, culture, society, politics, religion, anthropology, linguistics and philosophy.

The way a language functions, or the way people use a language, has become translational in form and function. The naming of Bollywood films is an example. The name of one Hindi film is *Players*. In many Bollywood songs, English and other Indian languages are used with Hindi. The use of language in advertisements and signage is translational. Novels written in Indian languages and English novels written by Indian writers have the same form of language. This is why it is very difficult to distinguish Indian writing in English from Indian writing in English translation.

In this age of technology, information is available, regardless of language, on the internet. If you search for *Ratha-Yatra*, you will get pages on *Ratha-Yatra*. In English it is Car-Festival, but the word *Ratha-Yatra* does not need any translation. Likewise, there are many such words in various cultures; they don't need translation, and they are used with explanation in English. This is the way the internet provides us with information. Everywhere, languages and cultures are merging with one another; it is a time of confluence. At this time, things are on the move, and categories are becoming fluid. There are two distinct reasons behind this fluidity: to create a new category as an upshot of a deliberate motive of recognition, and to make the established categories unstable; and to understand something deeply. One is a deliberate action, whereas the other is for the sake of knowledge.

Knowledge as such does not need a category to be communicated. We create categories to communicate something clearly, but creating categories is not the aim, to communicate the knowledge is the aim. 20th and 21st century approaches are for the discussion of the categories, which is not what their knowledge is for. Why do we need a separate category called Feminism at all? Or Post-colonialism, or Queer Studies? It is as if such studies were not there before. The concept of translation itself problematizes the so-called 'becoming of categories' in the 20th and 21st

centuries. When one defines translation as a faithful rendering of a source text in a target language, it imposes fixity on the concepts of translation which is a pre-20th century western notion. The 20th century witnessed many philosophers, linguists, and literary critics delimiting the fixed notion of translation.

Walter Benjamin starts questioning the different purposes of an original writing and its translation. He attaches a specific significance to the relationship between an original writing and its translation. There is a specific significance that is inherent in the original which manifests itself in its translatability (Benjamin 1923). In this essay, Benjamin establishes translation as an art form in its own right, and gives importance to the task of the translator, as distinct from the original author. Benjamin's arguments state that translation is a continuum. It supplements the original. With such an approach towards translation, he seemed to desist the stereotypical debate on translation in the 20th century. Such critical thoughts on translation and original writings pose the following question: What is the purpose of all forms of writing/speaking original/translation/interpretation? One of the possible answers would be that to write/speak is to communicate; original writing or translation or interpretation is to communicate. Then the next question will be what the purpose of communication is. As Horace (c. 19 BC) states, "the aim of the poet is to inform or delight, or to combine together, in what he says, both pleasure and applicability to life". It is unequivocally accepted that pleasure and information, or both together, are the objects of any form of communication. As I have already mentioned above, a user does not differentiate an original writing from its translation, it is only scholars or students who are studying translation who do it. A user reads something either for pleasure or for information. He/she is not concerned about whether what he/she is reading is a translation or not.

To sum up, translation exists as a heterogeneous entity. The text that we consider as a translation is a product of not one factor, but several. A translation exists as a word, as a book, as a language, as a medium, as a culture, as a category, as a subject, as a movement, as a form, as a sign, and so on and so on.

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WORDS, SOURCE, CONTEXT AND SPEAKER: DETERMINANTS OF TRANSLATION

Translation, as a phenomenon, has its own elements of becoming. These elements decide the structure of a translation. Determining the structure of a translation includes many factors. In this chapter, I would like to highlight four factors which determine the structure of a translation; these factors are words, source, context, and speaker.

Keywords: Words, Source, Contexts, Translation.

Do we translate individual words or isolated sentences? The question is about what we translate when we translate words. The existence of words is not merely the existence of words. Words exist within worlds. Therefore, when we translate words, we translate the words in the world. The world brings a context in which the words occur. We don't translate words, we translate words in contexts, and we translate sentences in contexts. What do we mean by context? *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (OUP 2015) defines the context as 1) "the situation in which something happens and that helps you to understand it"; 2) "the words that come just before and after a word, phrase or statement and help you to understand its meaning". The first definition helps us understand the word 'context' better. We use words in sentences in the situation in which we exist. In reality, we don't speak words but sentences that carry words. The sentences I am writing about have contexts of occurrences, and these sentences are not possible without words. While translating something, a translator translates words and sentences, words in sentences, sentences, and sentences in contexts. All these steps are mutually inclusive, and there is no hard-and-fast rule that these steps are followed diagonally or horizontally. The context is the element in translation that determines meaning, and a source determines the context. A source can be a speaker, a society, an institution, or an author, or anything that is relevant in deciding the context.

Words are not solid objects that have material existence, but conventionally, as has been mentioned, words can be made as the referents for solid objects. Things that don't have solid existence and things that don't have any source to decipher, or to determine, are prone to many interpretations - like the word 'God'. Either of these conditions seems to be responsible for interpreting something in more than one way. Words may refer to solid objects like light, acid, iron, book, etc. Such words are subject to definite translation, whereas words like love, devotion, and life are subject to indefinite translation.

All words are subject to many interpretations until a reference for each of them is fixed by an established source (an individual, or a group, or a society or institution). This fixity is questioned by the poststructuralists because it is arbitrary. There is no logic behind the fixity of a reference for a word by a source, and such fixity of reference may change in time and space, and from one source to another. There comes a conflict when one source differs from another in the process of fixing the reference, or when there is no source. Such conflict and the plurality of interpretation in translation may cause fatal consequences. History can bear witness to many tragic incidents due to the plurality of interpretation in translation. One can cite many examples from the past to prove that a mistranslation or an ambiguous translation was disastrous, particularly if it was concerned with an action that followed translation. The effect of mistranslation differs from domain to domain. If the domain is political, legal, or medical, the effect of action is more, whereas the effect of action is less in the domain of literature. In other words, translation in applied domains does have more effect and affect than the theoretical domains. Mistranslation in a literary text may not have a disastrous effect, but mistranslation in a letter, in a newspaper, or legal or medical documents may cause an atom bomb to fall. One such example is the Japanese word, *mokusatsu* which caused the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima. At the time of World War II, Japanese Prime Minister Suzuki said "*mokusatsu*" in reply to the Potsdam declaration. This Japanese word has more than one meaning: 'take no notice of'; 'treat (anything) with silent contempt'; 'ignore [by keeping silence]'; 'remain in a wise and masterly inactivity'. International news agencies spread the translation of Suzuki's *mokusatsu* as 'not worthy

of comment'. The US took this translation as something authoritative, and as the Japanese authority's denial of the declaration, and this caused the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima. The meaning of this word was in Suzuki's mind. He knew what he had meant. But the translator meant something else. No doubt, the word is ambiguous. The media interpreted one of the meanings, but it was not the meaning Suzuki intended. The translation of the Japanese word *mokusatsu*, and the action which followed, are well justified by the American analytical philosopher W.V. Quine's 'indeterminacy of reference'. When Quine says that the meaning is in the speaker's mind, he is right. If the speaker is not there, then the message will have multiple meanings. A source reduces the ambiguity which prevails in a communication. A written word can have more than one meaning. No one knows the definite meaning of a written word from a source, if the source is not there. Quine speaks about two kinds of sentence: the first is 'occasion' sentences and the second is 'standing' sentences. The degree of mistranslation is lesser in the case of the standing sentence, and greater in the case of the occasion sentence - like that delivered by Prime Minister Suzuki. Standing sentences refer to the general condition, or the truth, and their contexts don't differ much, whereas it is difficult to know the meaning of an occasion sentence, as it is determined by the stimulation that is in the speaker's mind. When there is no direct connection to the stimuli of an uttered sentence, it is difficult to translate it. One can translate it by taking any possible stimulus meaning into account. This is why occasion sentences depend on intuition, which is difficult to decipher. In this context, Quine states that translation is indeterminate. A speaker or a writer stabilizes the meaning. The absence of a speaker, writer, or author, delimits the meaning. This is why many textual items (of which there is no author, or the author is no more) are interpreted in more than one way. There was no apple tree in the Garden of Eden. There was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. In the original Hebrew version of the Bible, there was no mention of an apple, just a fruit. In the Latin Bible, it is *pomum* which means any fruit, not necessarily an apple. Many translators and scholars took this fruit to be an apple; some others thought about it as a pomegranate, some others took it to be grapes. John Milton established the fruit as an apple. Islamic tradition understands the fruit as fig or olive. Before Milton, many scholars treated the fruit as

the apple. There is no definite answer to it, as the author is not there.

A source word may have more than one equivalent in a target language. The word, ‘duty’ has *dharma*, *karma*, and *kartabya* as its equivalents in Odia, and in many other Indian languages. There has been an established tradition of using each of these equivalents in their respective contexts. This established tradition prioritizes the possible equivalents as primary or secondary. In Odia, it is the equivalent, *kartabya*, which is treated as the primary equivalent for the English word ‘duty’. If one translates *dharma* into English, the primary equivalent may be the equivalent word ‘religion’ and the equivalent word ‘duty’ will come as the secondary one. Such prioritizing is the work of the context. If the word, ‘bank’ has more than one meaning, it depends on the context to decide which is intended. We don’t use all the meanings of the word ‘bank’ at a time. Similarly, we do not use all the equivalent target words at a time, unless it is for the compilation of a dictionary. Meaning is always context-bound. When I say something, it doesn’t mean anything unless I mean something. In other words, when I say something is meaningful, I give context to it. If I don’t give a context to whatever I say, it will be meaningless. So, it is the context which is required to determine whether we mean the bank of a river, or a financial institution, or a store of something. And the source is an integral part of the context which decides the meaning. In other words, meaning in context is decided by a source. If a context is interpreted devoid of a source, it is subject to difference from the meaning that is meant by a source while producing the context. Suzuki’s word *mokusatsu* and its interpretation by the media illustrate this point.

A context is always a mutually agreed and shared phenomenon that has been established by a society. Conventionally, we speak in a context that others can understand through acquired understanding. A context is only for ‘others’. From its creation, it is for others. A context in translation is for the ‘other of others’. It is to facilitate meaningful communication among the individuals in a society, and a context in translation is to facilitate the same in another society. A context limits, or controls, a language. If I am looking at a table, I can say that I am looking at a table, I can’t say that I am looking at a dog or a cat. By seeing a table, if I say that I am looking at a dog or a cat, I also have a context. By saying that a

context controls a language, I mean that the language that we use to speak or to write is always a controlled phenomenon, although the language is unlimited.

A native speaker or translator does not necessarily know everything of a language that he/she speaks or translates into. There are words in a language that the speaker or the translator might not have come across. This necessitates the availability of various domains of knowledge nomenclature, and of the various people who are skilled in their respective domains.

If I say that a context is a situation, in either a real or in an imaginary life, I might be adding to the definition of context mentioned above. By saying this, I am bringing two indispensable elements to decide the meaning in translation. One is 'the source', and the other one is 'the context'. We are aware of the contexts which are possible in our real life and in our imaginary life. Of these two, it is the source element which has to decide the meaning in both the contexts. The famous quoted sentence, *colorless green ideas sleep furiously*, is illogical in a real-life context, but it is a possibility in the context of an imaginary life. Disapproval of such a statement could be seen from the scientific point of view, but it could well be justified in literature which takes much stuff from our imagination.

It is a difficult task for a translator to choose a meaning out of many such as the number given for *mokusatsu*. Here, while choosing a meaning, a translator cannot keep herself or himself away from his or her own subjective notion. When someone speaks or writes, he/she chooses words to speak or write. Such choosing or selection is inevitable in the act of translation. If the selected words in translation don't get approved by the target speakers or by other translators, conflict arises. Two points come to mind here, one is approving the words which the target authority has been selecting; the other is disagreeing with them, and providing other words. This happens because sometimes the traditionally approving authority approves something that is linguistically or socioculturally incorrect, and the translator disagrees with this and provides linguistically and socioculturally correct words. Etienne Dolet's addition of *rien du tout* (nothing at all) to a passage in the translation of Plato's dialogues cost him his life at the hands

of the Roman Catholic Church. This execution by an authority was due to his disbelief in immortality which the added phrase illustrated to the authority. Bakhtiar's translation of the *Quran* illustrates the point quite critically. Sometimes, the traditionally approving authority is right in this respect, and the other authority is not. The linguistic and sociocultural correctness of a translation is subject to the forces of an authority who is in power. Such power has its own agenda. It may approve a blind belief, or it may disapprove a scientific point, or vice versa. If one thinks about a translation excluding this authorial power, it looks different, it means something different. More than the source and contexts of a word, or words, or text, it is the authorial power which may decide the words, the meaning and the worlds. This determiner may overpower other determiners of translation in a non-democratic set up. Under a democracy, the target readers or users have the power to disapprove an authorial imposition. This is why the word, *harijan* has been replaced with other terms. This is why a blind person is not called 'blind' officially, but is described as 'visually impaired' these days. Language has great potential to influence people. The use of words determines who the speaker is. Language and mind are interrelated. Reciprocally, they create a world of representation which has a role in society. In India, people who are physically handicapped are given a new name, *divyanga*, which means having divine organs.

The target user is another determiner of a translation. It is the target user who distributes and popularizes the meaning, words, and the texts. A translation becomes alive when it gets into the hands of a user. Now comes the factor of the sustainability of a translation. A translation does not sustain, unless it is used again and again with dynamic readership.

The selection of words in translation differs according to the space it occupies in a translated text. Translating the title of a book in a target language differs from translating the content in the same. Some people prefer to translate the title; some people go for retaining it in the target text.

In an act of communication, there are three elements which can be subject to mistranslation: the speaker, the channel, and the hearer. The speaker and

the hearer are subjective and are essential to determine the meaning. The hearer is the deciding factor in a successful communication. The hearer is prone to mistranslation. The hearer may misinterpret the speaker's meaning.

When we think about translating words, we think about an already established world. Translation does not occur in a vacuum. It happens provided that there is an established source. An established source is a necessary condition which is a part of what we define as translation. An established source means an established language with an established writing system; a society with its various institutions.

The form and function of a translation could be determined, not by one factor but by several factors. Translation is a heterogeneous entity, and its determination is not attentive to any one of the factors of its becoming, although sometimes there may be one dominant factor which determines the form of a translation. This is why the focus of the scholars of translation has been shifting from the word as the deciding element of a translation, to the target user, and so on.

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ATTITUDE, LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION

Scholars tend to misconceive many aspects of translation. One of them is the impossibility of translating cultural terms into a language. One of the reasons behind such a misconception is due to the lack of knowledge of the nature of language. Language does not always behave in a prescriptive way, and translation is not merely a task of searching for equivalents in a target language. Translation also imports items from a source language. This is not to say that all the items have to be imported. In the context of translating cultural terms in a language, if there is no target equivalent available, one should opt for importing those terms with a note. The problem of translating cultural terms in a language seems to be subjective rather than linguistic. Language attitude is one of the subjective factors which influence the choices a translator takes in a translation.

Keywords: Language speakers, Attitude, Translation.

The notion of translation is determined by the kind of behavior or attitude one has towards a language. If we think that the import of SL items will suppress the growth of the target language, we will not import them; we will translate all the terms in whatever way we can do it. If we think otherwise, we will go on importing and accepting many SL terms in the target language. Neither of these is wrong. There are languages in the world where such import is less, and there are languages where such import is more. Language does not develop on its own. It is the language speaker, the agency, or the patron, who is responsible for the growth of a language. In this context, a language is subjective, as it is always spoken by a subject or used by a patron or agency. The subject may not be an individual speaker only, but also a group of speakers or a society or an institution or an agency. This is why the decision of the nature of translation of cultural terms is a subjective one, and it may differ from one translator to another. So, whether to domesticate a text or foreignize it is subject to who is translating, and for whom. Attitude towards a language

determines the form of a translation, or the decision to domesticate the source's cultural terms in a target language or to foreignize them. When it becomes an either/or situation, translation becomes a selection. To me, a selection includes something and excludes something else. The very act of selection takes language attitude into account.

Jung defines attitude as "readiness of the psyche to act or react in a certain way". 'Psyche' means the totality of the human mind. *The Oxford Dictionary of English* defines it as a settled way of thinking or feeling about something. From these definitions, one could think of attitude as an aspect of mind and behavior. As an aspect of mind, it motivates an individual to behave in a certain way. The two words in the above definitions, 'readiness' and 'settled', construe a situation that is already in place. A translator always has a settled behavior; she/he is an agent for translation as a process, and for translation as a text, with an attitude that is developed by his/her society and upbringing. There are institutions which determine the attitude of a translator which is reflected in the translation. However, the attitude differs from the translator of a major language to a minor. The institutions of a major language are established agents, under whom translation operates with a limitation of choice and procedure. A translator of a minor language has more than one choice, because he/she does not have an established institution to support his/her choice. An established language has a standard variety in which the writing system operates. The existence of this standard variety and its practices give its user the phenomenon of 'this is right and that is wrong'. Broadly, there is nothing right or wrong in a language. It is the prescribed norm of a language user that creates such binary opposites. Attitudes towards a language are developed and governed by the prescribed norms. As Milroy rightly stated,

"Language attitudes are dominated by powerful ideological positions that are largely based on the supposed existence of this standard form, and these taken together, can be said to constitute the standard language ideology or ideology of the standard language" (Milroy 1998).

Language in political discourse, in nation-state debate, in ideological discourses, is being talked about more in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Language that we speak has become focused in the argument of identity formation by creating a boundary. Creating a geographical area for a language, and assigning a political administration by giving a line of limitation to it, are the issues concerning the politicizing of language and language speakers throughout the world. In this context, language attitude is created by a power. Standardizing a language means prioritizing a language. Prioritizing a language entails prioritizing the attitude associated with it.

Language purism plays a major role in providing equivalents in Indian languages. There are languages like Tamil which seem to provide equivalents for each and every English term; they don't go for accepting English terms in Tamil. There are other modern Indian languages like Hindi, Bangla, Odia, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, etc., which tend to accept English terms (in transliteration) as they are in English. Whether to accept English terms or to coin new equivalents depends on the attitude of the language speakers. In most of the Indian languages, language purism is witnessed covertly. When the government of India started compiling scientific and technical terms in Hindi in the 60s, scholars were divided because of language purism and language liberalism. A group of scholars wanted to coin Hindi terms for every English term, and another group opted for retaining many English terms in Hindi. One approach was to develop Hindi homogeneously, and the other was to import English words as much as possible. One was driven by language purism and the other was driven by language liberalism. Both had their own logic. Fortunately, the authority took a middle path and solved the conflict. Such groups do exist in most of the Indian languages.

The disagreement in translation has been more at the level of words or terms than at the level of sentences. Words or terms have been at the center of debate and discussion more in the field of translation. One of the reasons for this is the degree of synonymy at the level of words and sentences. The selection of equivalents does not happen in vacuum; a translator or a terminographer, or a writer, or group of speakers, does it in a planned deliberate way, in a time and space which may be practiced again and again by their followers. Decisions on equivalence can be challenged at any time, as perfect equivalence is impossible. The language

user/speaker is transitory, and language is infinite (infinite means one cannot master everything of a language in a lifetime).

Language attitude is not the attitude of a language, but it is the attitude of its speakers. It is the language-user who decides what to use and what not to use. Such a decision is a complex phenomenon. Decision seems to be an individual attempt, but is actually driven by the community to which that individual belongs. When a community agrees with a decision, it moves it towards establishment. The community's decision may be logical, or it may be arbitrary. Language, above all, is an arbitrary system. Language is neutral; it has nothing to do with emotion, or with feelings. A human being may use language emotionally but this does not mean that the language is emotional. Use of language shows the speaker's attitude towards that language. Attitude-implied language is found in oral or written communication. Translation, which is a field of language-use, reflects the attitude of the translator as an individual, or as a member of a society or a community.

The 20th century has brought many critical attitudes to us which have been used as translation strategies, either for doing a translation or for evaluating it. One such attitude is the feminist attitude to translation. Laleh Bakhtiar, an Iranian-American, translated the *Quran* with an attitude that critically evaluates the discrimination found in the already-available translation. Bakhtiar's translation gives a great deal to the feminists who witness the male-dominated attitudes towards women in Muslim society. Bakhtiar's translation of the *Quran* exemplifies the transient nature of the decision on equivalence. An Arabic word has twenty-five synonyms in English. The choice of synonym determines who translates, and the *skopos* of translation. Bakhtiar is the first American woman translator of the *Quran*; the translations of the *Quran* which are available are by male translators. An Arabic word *daraba*, in Chapter 4, Verse 34 has more than one English equivalent. Already-available translations of the *Quran* have the equivalent, 'beat' or 'hit' for this Arabic word. 'To go away' is another English equivalent for the same, and Bakhtiar preferred using 'to go away' instead of 'beat' or 'hit'. Her deliberately feminist reading of it, questioned the selection of synonyms. This can be witnessed with the translation of other holy texts also. "Studies of the Bible as a translated text have shown

that translations generally hardened Christian attitudes against women over the centuries, interpreting these ancient texts to define women as the root of evil” (Korsak 1992). Translation of the *Holy Bible* in Indian languages reveals the rigidity that the authority of the Church wanted to have on Indian languages. Language was treated as a means to serve the religious agenda of the church.

Everything we speak, counts, everything we write, counts. Use of language and the ways of using it, show who the speakers are and where they are from. An utterance of a simple word is more than what it means linguistically. Our use of a language does not merely mean something, it signifies more than what it means.

In many Indian English writings these days, we witness the use of words from Indian languages. Arundhati Roy used *naale* in the end of *The God of Small Things* for example. Indian writing in English has become accommodative, and has been using many words from Tanglish, Hinglish and other varieties. It is not only happening in this direction, it has been a practice in the other direction too. Interestingly, *The Oxford Dictionary of English* has accepted more than 200 words from Indian languages as English words. The English language is more accommodating in nature. *The Oxford Dictionary of English* has already accepted *dharma*, *dhoti* and other Indian terms into English. English continues to be a dominant language as far as its use is concerned. It has been treated as a prestige-language since the establishment of English colonies in India. It has become one of the Indian languages, in such a way that many English words have been nativized in Indian languages. The presence of English and its development in India has caused the rise of Hinglish, Tanglish and other varieties. Unfortunately, our scholars still struggle to find equivalents for these accepted terms. We could look at the dynamic attitude the English lexicographers are having towards the English. Scholars don't understand the heterogeneous make-up of our Indian languages. Language has a nature to an extent that cannot be categorized as one language, such as English, Tamil or French, etc.

Language attitude is a prescriptive norm that categorizes a language as something but not something else. It is a set of behavioral features of

language users towards the language they use. Such behavioral features distinguish a language from other languages. Language attitude is not natural, but acquired in a specific period of time. The function and structure of a translation is determined by the language attitude of the language users. Language users establish language attitudes through language policy, education, and other media. A translator, as a language user has four choices: 1) Adhering to the source language attitude, 2) Adhering to the target language attitude, 3) Adhering to both (source and target), 4) Having a new attitude of his/her own.

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CATEGORIZING TRANSLATION IN THE TRADITION OF INTERPRETIVE COMMUNITY

Translation is a category (as a product and as a process) that is recognized more in the 20th and 21st centuries, though it has existed for centuries in various forms amidst interpretive communities in India. It is not that a translation is completely unknown to the readers, outside the phenomena of ‘translation’ technically; a reader knows about it as a text or as a book. Indian communities have long been reading translations of Sanskrit classics in their languages (mother-tongues) in the form of adaptation/transcreation/retelling. A community reads texts, but does not read translation, though translation exists. In the tradition of Indian interpretive communities, translation as a category is not recognized. This chapter will explore what is known to the interpretive community as translation, and how to categorize translation in the tradition of the Indian interpretive community.

Keywords: Translation, Categorization, Classical texts, Interpretive Community.

Translation is a category that exists as a process for ontological purposes, and as an object in the form of a book. This category was thought about and discussed from the 19th century onwards in India. The elements which make up this category are all those writings which: i) have source writing (source text) in a language, ii) have their counterpart (target text) in another language, iii) may vary in forms, iv) may have new elements added (and some source elements might have been deleted). This is why retelling/transcreations/adaptations came to be categorized as activities within translation. Translation also became a pedagogical tool in India. In the 1980s, the discipline of Translation Studies emerged, which tried to demarcate boundaries within each of these elements and gave a space to explore the nature and function of translation. One of the most studied elements in this field recently is readership. Readership generates an interpretive community. As far as the translated classical Sanskrit texts are

concerned, there has been a tradition of readers in the Indian interpretive community. Readers of these classic texts are varied in nature. As Stanley Fish rightly mentioned, a reader is a part of his/her own interpretive community, he/she is not an isolated individual. Fish writes, “it is interpretive communities, rather than either the text or reader, that produce meanings” (Fish 1980).¹ The phenomenon of understanding meaning is not only sought in the source texts, target texts, or in the language, but also in the reader. A reader plays a vital role in deciding the meaning in translation.

Translation is one of the possible acts after a text or a book is published. It is a visible act in the afterlife of a text. A reader may become a critic or a translator. Before translating any text, a translator reads or listens to it first. Therefore, a translator is one of the readers who translate it to a language. In the context of classical Sanskrit texts (here the reference is to the translation of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*), a reader is an informed one. He/she may know something about the text, about its stories, about its characters. When a reader knows something, it is his inclination towards the text; he/she may learn something that he wanted to know. In other words, a reader reads on his own and takes his own knowledge or understanding to suit him/her. In his/her translation or interpretation, he/she may emphasize the points that he/she wants to convey. A reader becomes selective, someone who shares such knowledge or understanding with his/her interpretive community.

An interpretive community has some preconditions of being interpretive. Human beings are interpretive creatures. They listen to, or read, something that is voiced or written, and then they understand it with their culture of acquired understanding. Such acquisition of understanding takes place historically, traditionally, and socio-culturally. A reader always has an understanding. He/she has the linguistic ability and the sociocultural experience through which he/she lives, and which helps him/her in understanding the texts.

¹ Fish, Stanley Eugene, 1980 *Is there a text in this class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Harvard University Press.