



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF CURRENT RESEARCH

International Journal of Current Research

Vol. 16, Issue, 05, pp.28372-28375, May, 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24941/ijcr.47290.05.2024>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

CULTURAL EXCHANGE THROUGH TRANSLATION

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 20th February, 2024

Received in revised form

25th March, 2024

Accepted 14th April, 2024

Published online 30th May, 2024

Key words:

Cultural Translation, History, Differences in Languages, Cross- Cultural Communication.

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ABSTRACT

The discipline of translating while recognizing and displaying cultural distinctions is known as cultural translation. This type of translation addresses cultural elements such as languages, gastronomy, and history. The key challenges that cultural translation must address involved transforming a text while demonstrating the cultural distinctions of that text while additionally honouring the originating culture. Translation's involvement in cultural interchange includes the preservation and revival of endangered or minority languages. Translators work to preserve the life of lesser-known languages and cultures by translating books, songs, or stories into more generally spoken languages. India is a culturally very rich country, and it has a very diverse history. The researcher explored the trend of cultural translation in India in a chronological manner .

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Citation: Dr. Davinder Kour. 2024. "Cultural exchange through translation". *International Journal of Current Research*, 16, (05), 28372-28375.

INTRODUCTION

The discipline of translating while recognising and displaying cultural distinctions is known as cultural translation (Katan, D., & Taibi, M. (2021). This style of translation addresses cultural issues such as dialect, gastronomy, and architecture. The major difficulty that cultural translation should solve is translating a text in such a manner that it reflects the text's cultural differences while simultaneously honouring the original culture. Cultural anthropology, a branch of anthropology that focuses on cultural variables among individuals, is used to study cultural translation (Fischer, M. M. (2007). Through cultural disparities, this discipline calls translation into question. Translation studies, in fact, are focused not just on language concerns, but also on cultural circumstances among individuals. An ethnographic cultural translator must deal with difficulties between the source and target languages, that is, he must respect both the cultural source of the perspective and the target culture (Herdman, M., Fox-Rushby, J., & Badia, X. (1997). Some anthropologists are against cultural translation. Culture, according to these experts, seeks a certain consistency seen in human thinking and practice (Howard, G. S. (1991). In this scenario, a cultural translator needs have far more expertise than the text itself. Furthermore, cultural translation may be less effective than it should be since some cultures and civilizations are

more dominant than others, limiting the ability for cultural translation (Brumann, C. (1999). Indeed, in cross-cultural translation, the target language may overpower the source culture in order to ensure that readers comprehend the text in the context of the culture. Understanding the meaning of culture is difficult, therefore translation of culture is inherently restricted; also, there are cultural borders that need to be defined in this way. Translation's involvement in cultural interchange includes the preservation and revival of endangered or minority languages (Gorter, D. (2007). Translators work to preserve the life of lesser-known languages and cultures by translating books, songs, or stories into more generally spoken languages. An anthropological translator of cultures must deal with difficulties between the source and target languages, which means he must respect both the cultural source and the target culture. Cultural translation enables the production of information that all parties involved can comprehend while respecting both the target audience and the source language. As previously said, the significance of culture in translation may be demonstrated in a range of undertakings and vocations.

Background of the Study: This article is based on the premise that Indian translators have contributed to changing the terms of cultural transmission and defining the space occupied by various literatures, both foreign and Indian, on

the translation scene in India through their choice of texts and a well-defined translative project. Indian translators have typically not been bothered with the issue of accuracy in order to answer the urgencies of the period; alterations were and continue to be extremely prevalent. Unlike in the past, when such adaptations were warmly appreciated and embraced by readers as vital contributions to the evolution of language and literature, the modern-day translator and his bilingual critic frequently place an exaggerated emphasis on the issue of accuracy. Indeed, it was the different viewpoints on translation and tactics employed by Indian translators that gave rise to the construction and replication of great epics and masterpieces. In this article, I will argue that translations should be evaluated in terms of the mood of their periods and the translative efforts that gave them birth, rather than whether or not they are loyal to their originals.

What Exactly Is Translation?: The many methodologies used by Indian translators to render major epics and masterpieces have resulted in a voluminous nomenclature. The process has been described using terms such as "translation," "transcreation," "transference," "tarzuman," "anukaran," "bhashantar," "roopantar," "code-switching" or "recodification," "reproduction" or "reconstruction," "sweekaran" or "sahsrajan (co-creation)," "domestication of the 'other' or 'foreign,'" "rewriting." In some circumstances, the phrase refers to the external reality (bhashantar) or the form chosen (roopantar); in others, it refers to how the most complicated thoughts and sentiments are conveyed (bhavanuvad) or the production of a new text (transcreation). In fact, the history of translation and writing in India is littered with "adaptations." Sanskrit epics and puranas have been narrated, retold, altered, subverted, appropriated, and translated without regard for authenticity to the source text over the millennia. Indeed, the countless translations of Sanskrit classics into Indian languages have had a unifying effect on the Indian mind. As translations of the Saratchandra into Telugu, Tamil, and other languages show, this pattern persisted far into the twentieth century: each translation is an alteration of the original to better suit the mood of the period and locality. Velluri Swarna Sastri, for example, has inserted Telugu names and picturesque descriptions of the Andhra countryside in his translation of the Saratchandra, making it pass for a work in its own right. In the sake of creative freedom, deviations were permitted, even welcomed, rather than literal obedience.

This practise led to the definition of translation as "appropriation through linguistic manipulation" since the many modifications in local or regional languages were embraced by readers as contributions to the development of their own language and literature. During the colonial period, translations of plays, particularly from European languages, were commonly referred to as "translations," despite the fact that the majority of them were, at best, modifications. However, it may be claimed that in the colonial era, Indian translators had to choose between native and foreign allegiance, especially because they worked under the control of the colonial master. Mahadev Shastri Kolhatkar's Marathi version of Shakespeare's *Othello* (*Othello Natak*, 1867), G.B. Deval's adaptation of the same play as ZunZarrao (1890), and V.V. Shirwadkar's (1965) translation all show that perspectives and strategies are heavily influenced by the cultural pressures that

the translator is subjected to at the time. Shastri Kolhatkar's Marathi translation of *Othello*, an institutionalised translation carried out under colonial supervision, exposes the translator's problem in terms of strategy: to foreignize or to domesticate? Should I Anglicise or Sanskritize? It is worth mentioning that Shastri Kolhatkar belonged to the aristocratic class during a period when colonial readership was restricted to the upper classes or castes. As such, he was undoubtedly impacted by the colonizer's beliefs and tastes, as well as the hegemonic force of "images" already transmitted by certain types of translations. On the one hand, his translation of *Othello* carries the mark of his own cultural values, and on the other, those of the coloniser. Shirwadkar's translation was termed a "return to Shakespeare's poetry in the postcolonial-neocolonial era" by playwright G.B. Deval's ZunZarrao version of *Othello*, which was mainly successful and warmly accepted by its audience.

What should be noted here is that, while it may have been easier for a Shastri to translate from Sanskrit into his own local or regional language under alien patronage, translating from English into a vernacular under the same patronage was a very difficult task, given the politics and the tug of war between loyalties influencing the translator's decisions. When it came to translating Indian writings into English, the issue of integrity took on more importance. Even A.K. Ramanujam's Sangam literature translations, which have made many old Tamil masterpieces accessible to modern European and American audiences, have been chastised for distorting the originals.

Self-sufficiency and Translation: In independent India, the translator's social obligation and translation tasks have grown in prominence. Individual translators and translation sponsors must now carefully consider their reasons for picking documents to be translated, the translation approach to be used, and the target language to be used. Satpal is an excellent example of an individual translator who took on the monumental task of translating Sri Aurobindo's foundational book *Savitri* into Urdu with full awareness of his responsibilities. Satpal, an officer in the Armed Forces working on an AI project based on Aurobindo's notion of the mind, explains why he opted to translate *Savitri*. The target language was chosen to satisfy two fundamental desires: a) "the desire to be able to effectively participate—on the side of tolerance—in the Mandir-Masjid disputes of the late 1980s"; and b) "to make *Savitri* accessible to a very large section of our society that understands Urdu, and is likely to be called upon, as a major social segment in India, to smoothen the sharp edges of Islam, when... its revival in its resplendent glory. Because *Savitri* is a modern epic with timeless, global dimensions, the translator ruled out both "transcreation," a tactic commonly employed by Indian poets, and "adaptation," a strategy commonly used by epic translators. Satpal preferred to adhere to the notion of integrity rather than risk diluting what he called the esoteric truth inherent in each line through a transcreational approach or modification. He did not mean mechanical translation word for word, as a body without a soul, but rather adherence to Sri Aurobindo's message and fidelity to the subtleties of the target language. He attempted to respect the target language's psychology, its genetic memory, and its traditions in terms of idioms, adages, and recitability, one of the most difficult tasks.

Suman Venkatesh, who has translated into English 2,009 French papers ranging from 1781 to 1796 and linked to the

history of Mysore, is another example of *auchitya* in the choosing of materials to translate in modern India. These records are part of the communication between the rulers of Mysore at the time and Louis XVI, King of France, as well as between French troops stationed in Mysore and their hierarchical superiors in France. The translator argues her choice of text as follows:

It became clear that these records are especially interesting since they are not "deliberately designed for historians" and may thus be regarded as objective remnants of the past. These translations aim to reframe history, to strike a balance between Eurocentric and Indocentric accounts of the period's history, between the observer and the observed. Again, it appears that the translator's choice was based mostly on the amount to which the translation addressed the urgencies of the period, as well as how it would affect and satisfy the experiences and expectations of its readers. A translation sponsor's choice of text, translation strategy, and target language, on the other hand, is frequently determined by the extent to which the translation project is considered representative of a region, because translation facilitates the discovery of cultural elements that contribute to the formation of a language, literature, and culture. According to Anjana Desai, a funded translation effort that seeks to cover only the classics of a specific area or language is essentially a "covert endorsement of the hegemonic establishmentarian process of centralising and marginalising cultural expression." Rabindranath Tagore did himself a grave injustice by translating his *Geetanjali* from Bengali to English, after winning the Nobel Prize in literature. The author-translator may or may not be as inspired as he was when he wrote it. The new text will undoubtedly differ from the original, but the bilingual human brain will compare the two and hunt for, and regret, loss in translation. The author should better leave his work to find [a] translation for itself in various times and ages, as well as adapt to its emotional and social demands. According to Sri Aurobindo, "a translator is not necessarily bound to the original he chooses; he can make his own poem out of it, if he likes, and that is generally done." Sri Aurobindo describes two approaches to translating poetry: "one was to keep it strictly to the manner and turn of the original, [and] the other is to take its spirit, sense, and imagery and freely produce them so as to suit the new language." These observations apply not just to translators who are translating other people's work, but also to authors who are translating themselves. Tagore's biggest criticism, especially now, is that he took too many liberties in translating his lines into English, depriving his poems of their original depth in order to make them palatable to European sensibilities. In essence, the criticism is directed at his "rewriting" of his Bengali originals in English rather than translation. Tagore wanted to emphasise the devotional aspects of his poetry in order to appeal to the English public. According to Mahasweta Sengupta, this was because the devotional was perhaps "the domain that was familiar to the English as truly 'Oriental' or 'Eastern'; poets from Asia were, to the English, more like prophets who dealt with transcendental rather than material issues which were part of their everyday struggle in the colony." Thus, by emphasising devotion above other moods in his translations of *Gitanjali* and other anthologies, Tagore is deemed a mystic in accordance with the colonizer's accepted picture of the Oriental. Sengupta (1996) provides insight into Tagore's translation strategies, the whys and wherefores of his choices, and shows that Tagore's poetics were indeed

"adjusted to the demands of the colonising power," that he attempted to present in English the essential meaning of his poems. Through his observations and comments, Tagore's evaluation of the intended reader, the discursive boundaries of the target language, and his own translative effort become clear.

Translation and Criticism: The widely disparate reviews of subsequent translations of Tagore's poems by Western critics on the one hand and Indian critics on the other—for example, Richard Casely's review of William Radice's translation of Tagore poems versus Khushwant Singh's review of the same translation—show that an English translation of Hindi, Tamil, or Bengali writing is likely to elicit a more critical response from an Indian reader unfamiliar with the original language than the original language. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that readers' choices and literary sensitivities evolve with time. Indian bilingual translation reviewers should keep in mind that applying clear and fast rules to poetry translation is challenging. A poet's translator generally obtains the finest results by "transcreating," that is, keeping the magical web of meaning and imagery of the original but still following the requirements of the target language. Bilingual critics should also be mindful that translating popular literature into prose is not the same as translating poetry writings such as

Gitanjali or the *Bhagavad Gita*. Translation criticism has existed in different forms in India since the eighteenth century, with contrastive analysis being the most common approach of review. However, attempting to demonstrate a formal correlation between a source and a destination text is insufficient to legitimise translation. As Antoine Berman says, a more feasible relationship should connect a translation to the original, akin to the link between a base and its derivative, a plant and its cutting. As a result, the following questions must be addressed: 1) Is there an ethic for translation criticism?

What are the translation critic's responsibilities? 3) Do critics understand the history and act of translation well enough to properly recognise the obligations held by the translations they criticise? Literary translators, as evidenced by Vidyarthi, Premchand, Satpal, and Tagore, whose work I have included here, tend to explain and justify their translation processes in a preface, introduction, or correspondence. This shows that they are conscious of their obligations to the original text and author, as well as to their intended audience, and that they have considered their choices before making a decision. In India, a more constructive attitude to translation criticism is required. Instead of focusing solely on the linguistic aspects or the lack thereof, bilingual critics may wish to consider the following aspects of the translation: the effect of the translation on its readers; how it contributes to broadening its readers' knowledge and experience of the world; whether it achieves the objectives of the translative project; how it demonstrates the translator's skill; and how it enriches the literary culture of the target language. Some of these problems have already been expressed by scholars interested with releasing translation from the clutches of contrastive analysis and emphasizing. The expanding globalisation of culture, as well as the accompanying surge in literary publishing, have aided many postcolonial writers—whether writing directly in English or translating into English—in successfully marketing their works. However, not all translations done in India make it to the market of the former coloniser. The fact that the Empire translates back but finds

few takers for its translations must be viewed in the context of the changing global context: some writers do not travel well, despite critical acclaim and impressive sales at home; what the Empire wants to give the Metropole is not what the Metropole wants to receive from the Empire; and there is already an excess crisis on the British, American, and European literary markets. In the Indian setting, there exist cultural transmission imbalances characterised by a lack of proper contact across regional languages notwithstanding their common traditions. However, these imbalances should be perceived not in terms of a conscious discriminatory policy favouring one language over another, but in terms of the lack of competent multilingual translators and multilingual translators' willingness to translate certain types of texts, misguided criticism practises, and, above all, the play of market forces. The English language is already overburdened with translations of Indian works; Indian literature may find a more profitable market in other European languages—for example, German, French, or Spanish—or in other Indian languages here on the subcontinent.

CONCLUSION

Cultural translation enables the production of information that all parties involved can comprehend while respecting both the target audience and the source language. As previously said, the significance of culture in translation may be demonstrated in a range of undertakings and vocations.

Translation and culture are inextricably linked since culture gives life to language. Cultural context has a significant impact on meaning in both the source and destination languages, particularly in commercial translation. The above mentioned fact confirms that both way Indian culture got benefitted through cultural translation.

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