

Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service. Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might. Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.

from Gitanjali - Rabindranath Tagore

UNIT

4

An Introduction to Translation Studies

Lesson 1 Translation and Translator

Bottom thou art translated
- Shakespeare - A Mid-Summer Nights' Dream

Translation and the Translator : Concept of translation

What is translation? Let us begin answering this question by reading the following passages. One of the two passages is a translation.

पढ़ता-लिखता हूँ। यही पेशा है। सो दुनिया के बारे में पोथियों के सहारे ही थोड़ा-बहुत जानता हूँ। पढ़ा हूँ, हिन्दुस्तान के जवानों में कोई उमंग नहीं है, इत्यादि इत्यादि। इधर देखता हूँ कि पेड़-पौधे और भी बुरे हैं। सारी दुनिया में हल्ला हो गया कि वसंत आ गया। पर इन कम्बख्तों को खबर ही नहीं। कभी-कभी सोचता हूँ, इनके पास तक संदेश पहुँचाने का कोई साधन नहीं हो सकता! महुआ बदनाम है कि उसे सबके बाद वसंत का अनुभव होता है।

"I read and write. This is my profession. So, what I know more or less about the world is only through books. I have read there is no enthusiasm in the youth of Hindustan and so on and so forth. Here I see the trees and the plants are even worse. There is a clamour throughout the world that the spring has come. But these idiots do not know. Sometimes I wonder if there can be no means to take the message to them! Mahuwa is infamous that it experiences the spring later than all others."

What is the passage about:

- (a) Mahuwa?
 - (b) The writer's knowledge about the world?
 - (c) The writer's reading habit?
 - (d) The advent of the spring season?
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- Which of the two passages is original, the *one* in Hindi or the *one* in English?
 - Which one might have been the first to be written, and therefore, original?
 - Which *one* might have been a transformation of the original in a different language, and therefore, a translation?
 - Which of the two passages is based on the original, and therefore a translation?

Translation is, etymologically, a *carrying across* or *bringing across*. The Latin translation derives from the past participle, *translatus*, of *transfere* (trans, across + *ferre*, to carry or to bring). The modern European languages, Romanic, Germanic and Slavic, have generally formed their own equivalent terms for this concept after the Latin model - after *transfere* (to bring across or to lead across). Additionally, the Greek term for translation, *metaphrasis* (a speaking across), has supplied English with *metaphrase*, meaning a literal,



or word-for-word, translation, as contrasted with *paraphrase* (a saying in other words, from the Greek *Paraphrasis*).

Now, let us read the passages again to find out which of them has carried across the content and meaning of the other passage, so as to become a translation.

If, instead of an English passage, we had a French or Spanish Passage we could have easily said that the passage in Hindi was original and the one in French or Spanish a translation. This is so because it is very apparent that the passage is about an Indian experience, and contains words, expressions and thoughts that suggest an Indian context.

However, since English is an also an Indian language, we may find it a little difficult to distinguish between the original and the translation. However, if we read closely, we may clearly see that the passage in Hindi is original, while the passage in English is a translation.

Consider the very first sentence, 'पढ़ता लिखता हूँ' (*I read and write*). The sentence in Hindi does not have a subject, while the English sentence would be grammatically incorrect without the subject *I*. If the English passage was original, the translator could have been tempted to put the subject मैं with the Hindi sentence 'Are there other contextual and cultural clues that help you to decide which passage is original or which is the translation? What about 'Mahuwa' or 'Hindustan'?

Therefore, the passage in Hindi is the original one. It is an extract from Hazariprasad Dwivedi's essay, "वसंत आ गया है" While the passage in English is a translation, as it has *carried across* the meaning from the Hindi text and rendered it in English. In the language of translation theory, the passage in Hindi is a *source text* and the passage in English a *target text*.

Let us read the following extract from the *ghazal*, हजारों ख़्वाहिशें ऐसी, by Asadulla Khan Mirza Ghalib.

हजारों ख़्वाहिशें ऐसी, कि हर ख़्वाहिश पे दम निकले
बहुत निकले मेरे अरमान, लेकिन फिर भी कम निकले

डरे क्यों मेरा कातिल, क्या रहेगा उसकी गर्दन पर
वो खूं जो चश्मे-तर-से उम्र-भर यूं दम-ब-दम निकले

निकलना खुल्द से आदम का सुनते आये थे लेकिन
बहुत बेआबरू होकर तेरे कूचे से हम निकले

Now, let us read an extract from the *translation of this ghazal* by Robert Bly and Sunil Dutta, which has been titled *Desires Come by the Thousands*.

Desires Come by the Thousands

*Each desire eats up a whole life; desires come by the thousands.
I've received what I wanted many times, but still it was not enough.*

*The one who killed me should not accept blame for my death.
My life has been pouring out through my eyes for years.*

*In paradise, as we know, God showed Adam the door.
When I have been shown your door, I feel a shame deeper than his.*

Robert Bly & Sunil Dutta

- Will you consider the translated text as another creative work?
- Does the translated text have an autonomy of its own?

Read the English translation of the *ghazal* independently, forgetting for a while the original text. Does the translated text have a beauty of its own?

Yes, translation, a good translation, is a creative activity as well. Professor Awadesh K. Singh very insightfully observes this relationship between creative writing and translation:

"Translation is an extension of the creative exercise in the same sense as critical act is an extension of the creative exercise characterized by almost the same process. The translator is a creative reader-critic (and not a failed writer or a disappointed author). He reads, interprets, evaluates and creates, for translation is a way of reading, interpreting, evaluating and in the same process creating a new text for those who have no access to literature in an alien language system. It is 'carrying over' into a new reader's realm."

(Translation, its Nature and Strategies in Translation, its Theory and Practice, P. 7-8)

Translation has been defined as an activity involving the interpretation of the meaning of a text in one language *the source text* and its reproduction, in another language, a new and, equivalent text *the target text* or translation.

Thus, there are four steps involved in translation

- Reading** of the source text.
- Interpretation** of the meaning of the source text (Ghalib's 'हजारों खाहिशें ऐसी').
- Evaluation** of the content and language of the source text
- Reproduction**, of an equivalent text or the target text, in another language ('*Desires Come By The Thousands*', translated from the Urdu by *Robert Bly and Sunil Dutta*).



Translation, thus, is a complex activity. Awadhesh Singh enumerates the elements of this complexity. The translator, he says, reads, interprets, evaluates and creates, for translation is a way of reading, interpreting, critiquing and in the same process creating a new text for those who have no access to literature in an alien language system. It is *carrying over* into a new reader's realm.

Translation has traditionally been a human activity, although attempts have been made now to automate and computerize the translation of natural-language texts in machine translation or to use computers as an aid to translation in computer-assisted translation. Its *goal* is generally to establish an *equivalence of intent* between the source and target texts (that is to say, to ensure that both texts communicate the same meaning), while taking into account a number of constraints. These constraints include the cultural specificity, the context, the grammar, the idioms, diction, and the sentence patterns and types.

Activity 1

Reading a text for understanding Translation

Read the extract from the ghazal again in the original as well as translation.

- (a) Is the ghazal in the source text located in a specific context and culture?
- (b) Is it necessary for the target text to replace the diction of the source text with an equivalent diction or expression in the target language?
- (c) Is it necessary for the target text to create its own syntax and metre?

While we may call these constraints of translation, it is these constraints that account for its creativity? What do you think?

Let us read the first line again

हजारों ख्वाहिशें ऐसी, कि हर ख्वाहिश पे दम निकले

We not only see that the structure of the line has been inverted but also that the diction has been reproduced

Therefore, on the basis of the translation of the line, *Each desire eats up a whole life; desires come by the thousands* a translation amounts almost to a transformation, it does not, cannot remain close to the original. Reuben A. Brown reverentially recalls a great teacher of Greek, Prof. Harry de Forest Smith of Amherst College (1901-1938), who, he says, was fond of repeating to his classes - *A translation, he would say, is like a stewed strawberry*. Everyone familiar with translations and stewed strawberries, he says, will appreciate the perfect justice of this criticism. Certainly everyone who has read a Greek play and a translation of a Greek play realizes bitterly what a transformation has taken place in the *stewing*. Prof. Reuben A. Brown goes on to observe that there is of course no escaping such transformations; every time we read a foreign or an English text, we remake what we read. A translator reads and re-makes what he reads and goes on to translate. Translations therefore simply prove that when we read, we read from a particular point in space and time. (*Seven Agamemnons* in *On Translation* ed, Reuben A. Brown, 173)



Let us recapitulate our discussion and list certain facts about translation as,

- (a) Translation is a creative activity
- (b) Translation is a transformation
- (c) Translation involves a source text and a target text
- (d) Translation comprises
 - (i) the interpretation of the meaning of the source text
 - (ii) the reproduction of the meaning of the source text in the target text
- (e) Translation involves an *equivalence of intent* between the source text and target text
- (f) The source text poses constraints for the translator in terms of,
 - (i) cultural specificity and context
 - (ii) the grammar, the idioms, diction, the sentence pattern and types of metre

Now reflect upon the following :

- (a) Translation of a leaflet
- (b) Translation of a brochure
- (c) Translation of a scientific experiment
- (d) Translation of a poem
- (e) Translation of a business proposal

There are different types of texts. So, it is obvious that translation is not a homogeneous activity. There are different kinds, nature and degrees of the complexity of translation. Look at the following report of a recent scientific discovery:

Gene mutation that turns girls into boys discovered

LONDON: Researchers at the University of Pavia, Italy, have discovered a gene, the mutation of which can turn girls into boys. They explain that almost all men carry two different sex chromosomes XY, while women normally have XX, but there are some very rare exceptions to this rule like having XX men. The researchers say that female-to-male sex reversal happens when a certain gene called SRY, usually carried on the Y chromosome, ends up on the X chromosome inherited from the father. Reporting in *Nature Genetics*, the researchers said they studied a family in which four brothers were each XX, who did not carry the male SRY gene. They said that all of them had a mutation in a gene called RSPO1-ANI

This text is an example of technical writing, and its translation would involve specific problems relating to the translation of technical texts. Technical writing has a different language, a distinct technical vocabulary.



Activity 2

Reading a text for understanding translation

Read the above paragraph again to pick out the technical words.

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In translating technical writing, all technical words such as '*chromosomes*' will remain the same. The non-technical words, words such as '*women*', '*male*', have concrete meanings, no emotional overtones - so equivalents for them will be easily found in the other target language.

Translating a poem

The translation of a literary text, a poem for example, accounts for a different complexity. Now read or listen to this snatch from a poem by Rudyard Kipling:

MANDALAY

BY THE old Moulemein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me ;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells
they say :
"Come you back, you British soldier ; come you back to
Mandalay ! "
Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you ear their paddles chunkin' from
Rangoon to Mandalay ?
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin' - fishes play',
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China'
crost the Bay !

Rudyard Kipling



Activity 3

Understanding the text

a) What is the subject of the poem-

- (i) Description of Mandalay?
- (ii) Praise of a lover?
- (iii) Road to Mandalay?
- (iv) A Burmese girl's loss of a soldier lover?

b) The mood of the poem is that of:

- (i) nostalgia and loss?
- (ii) indifference and stoicism?
- (iii) happiness and joy?
- (iv) anger and disgust?

- b) Pick out the images that the poet has used to express the emotions of loss and nostalgia. For example, 'flying fishes' (तैरती मछलियां) is a wonderful image. Translate the other images in the poem into English.

The poem, therefore, suggests an emotive experience. To re-create this experience, to communicate it in another language will be a daunting task for any translator. Why? Try translating the first two lines into Hindi.

BY THE old Moule mein Pagoda, lookin' castward to at the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I know she thinks o' me

Hindi Translation _____

As we have seen earlier in the case of the translation of *Ghalib's ghazal*, a poet consciously selects words and expressions to attain a certain emotive effect. Now, word-to-word translation in another language will hardly evoke the same emotions in the target language. Thus, the fact that a translation is a re-creation and a translated work much more than merely an image of the original text is particularly true of poetry. As *Jackson Mathew* notes:

ONE THING seems clear: to translate a poem as a whole is to compose another poem. A whole translation will be faithful to the matter, and it will approximate the form, of the original; and it will have a life of its own, which is the voice of the translator. The difference from original work lies mainly in the restriction of working upon matter that is already composed.



Prof. R.S. Pathak brings together different perspectives on the act of translation:

...translation is mainly a process of communication between different languages. Modifying Dr. Johnson's definition of translation, A.H. Smith maintained that *to translate is to change into another language, retaining as much of the sense as one can*. Each act of translation, it is felt, involves some loss of the original meaning and this “*basic loss of meaning is on a continuum between - over translation and under-translation*”. Cultural anthropologists like Malinowski emphasized the socio-cultural significance of translation. To scholars like Roman Jakobson, however, all translation is nothing less than an act of critical interpretation *an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs in some other language*. To linguists, translation presupposes replacement of textual material at the various levels of language. J.C. Catford, for example, regards translation as *the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)*. Central to Catford's approach is the notion of 'equivalence' from SL (Source Language) to TL (Target Language). *The central problem of translation practice*, says Catford, is that of *finding translation equivalents*.

Translation is also an interdisciplinary activity. The translator has to be a linguist, a semanticist, a sociologist, an exegete and a cultural critic.

Interrogating the Goals of Translation

What is the goal of translation? In the globalized community of the world today, how does translation help?

Reflect on these questions:

- (a) Does translation enable people to understand each other and appreciate each others' culture?
- (b) Is translation a major instrument of world communication?
- (c) For India with its linguistic richness, is translation all the more important?

Activity 4

For the Portfolio

Read this extract from a report by Arvind Jain, and translate it into English.

अंतरराष्ट्रीय श्रम संगठन (संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ) की एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, 'पुरुषों के बराबर आर्थिक और राजनीतिक सत्ता पाने में औरतों को अभी हजार वर्ष लगेंगे, क्योंकि 'दुनिया की 98 प्रतिशत 'पूँजी' पर पुरुषों का कब्जा है।' अब तक यह पूँजी पीढ़ी-दर-पीढ़ी पुरुषों को पुत्राधिकार में मिलती रही है, आगे भी मिलती रहेगी। उत्तराधिकारी नहीं होगा, तो सारी संपत्ति सरकार जब्त कर लेगी।

English Translation _____

You may have observed that this source text that you are going to translate is based on another report, which has been translated into Hindi. So, before you begin contemplate on these questions.

- (a) What is that original report about?
- (b) In which language was that report possibly written?
- (c) What does this suggest about the goals of translation?

Answering the last question, you might say that knowledge and information being produced and written in any part of the world, in whatever language, may be equally important for everybody. Hence, the goals of translation would be very important. The goals would be *to make possible the sharing of knowledge and information across different places overcoming the barriers of language.*

Great literature is produced in different language-literatures of India but their readership is restricted to a particular language group. To enable Indians to read literature produced in diverse Indian languages, there is the need for a major translation exercise. For example the following lines serve an inspiration to commit ourselves against any oppression and for the equality of every Indian. This stanza is from the poem, 'The Palla Song' originally written in Tamil by Subramania Bharati.

The Palla Song

*"This land we live in is ours:
We have learnt this now,
It belongs to us by right:
We know it now.
We shall be slaves to none on this earth,
Our servitude is but to the Almighty.*

Subramania Bharti

It is an example of great poetry written in an Indian language. Do you think its translation in English or in other Indian languages has served a great deal in inspiring other Indians, especially those who do not know Tamil?

Activity 5

Writing a paragraph

Write a paragraph about the goal of translation on the basis of your reading. Collect material from other sources. Add it to your Portfolio.

Literary translation makes specific demands on the translators. The primary challenge for a translator in all cases is to transcend the language barrier and carry over the meaning and the message into the another language.



What do you think is the language barrier in the poetic passage by Subramania Bharati?

This language barrier, and the difficulty of transcending it, differs from one kind of writing (discourse) to another. Each kind of discourse has its own specific *goal*. Thus very broadly prose informs and poetry evokes.

Activity 6

Comparing Translations

Compare the report on the social and economic backwardness of women by *Arvind Jain* and the extract from the poem, '*The Palla Song*' by *Subramania Bharati*. Answer the following in your own words.

- (a) What functions do the two pieces serve?

- (b) Do the pieces express social subjects, or are they about personal sentiments?

- (c) How differently do the prose and the poetic passages communicate their respective messages?

- (d) If the prose and the poetic words communicate differently, what does it imply for a translator?



Poetry is of course an altogether different proposition as far as translation is concerned. Let us again read the couplet from Galib's ghazal that we were discussing earlier and its translation.

हजारों ख़्वाहिशें ऐसी, कि हर ख़्वाहिश पे दम निकले
बहुत निकले मेरे अरमान, लेकिन फिर भी कम निकले

*Each desire eats up a whole life; desires come by the thousands.
I've received what I wanted many times, but still it was not enough.*

Even more than in literary prose, the translator in the case of poetry, will have to wrestle with the vexing problem of vocabulary to find just the right word, *le mot juste* in order to transcend what we have called above the *language barrier*. Moreover, metre and prosody, present in most poetry, are specific to a literary tradition and cannot be carried over from one tradition to the other. It is not possible to render quantitative verse into qualitative verse or transfer metrical patterns of one language-literature into another.

In the above couplet and its translation:

- (a) What problems of vocabulary (or diction) does the translator confront?

- (b) What are the other elements of poetry, such as rhyme or metre, that come as a barrier in the process of translation?

Within prose too, scientific prose uses *concrete* that is, words with unambiguous, definite meaning, while literary prose has higher percentage of mood and emotive words that often do not have a corresponding word in the other language.

Activity 7

Comprehension

Compare the report on Gene Mutation you read earlier in the chapter and your translation of the report on social and economic backwardness of women by Arvind Jain.

Answer these questions:

- (a) In what way is the report on 'Gene Mutation' a specimen of scientific prose?
(b) Do the reports read similarly?
(c) If not, in what way are they different?
(d) What does it imply for a translator?

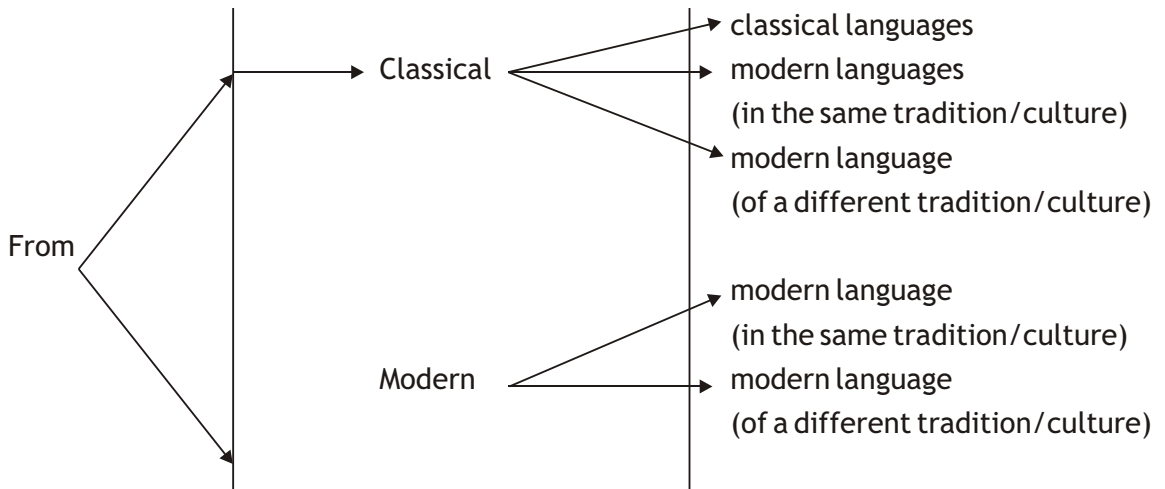


There are discourse specific languages each with its own demands on the translators. In fact, each kind of discourse has its specific *goal* and the fulfillment of that goal in the target language becomes the goal of the translator. If exactness of information is the primary concern of a technical writing, then the transfer of this *exactness* of information is the goal of the translator and he/she shall not be concerned with the beauty of words or the rhythmic quality of the prose. The language of information, the language of thought, the language of emotion, the language of persuasion, each has its pre-determined goal or function - to inform, to transfer ideas, to evoke a mood or emotion, to persuade, etc. This is the rhetoric of composition and rhetorical transfer is a very challenging task for the translator. If the rhetorical purpose of a composition is not achieved in the translated version, the translation then is not successful.

Types of Translation

As the nature and problems of translation differ depending on different languages involved and different cultural contexts, it is possible to talk of translation-types.

1. On the basis of the Source and Target Languages, we can think of the following sub-types of translation:



The first case is rare, only a theoretical possibility. There are instances of some Buddhist texts retranslated into Sanskrit in modern times. These are cases of translations within the same overall intellectual tradition, a kind of special case of *renewal*, one of the three functional parameters of translations, *diffusion* and *borrowing* being the other two. Similarly, when a text is translated into a modern language in the same tradition, it is also to be considered as a case of *renewal*, the text becomes accessible once again in a widely spoken and used language. The code is re-coded and in the process is unfolded and reinterpreted to make it intelligible to a much larger readership. Translations of classical texts of literary theory, philosophy and grammar such as *Natyasastra*, *Mimamsasutra* and *Astadhyayi*, among others, into modern Indian languages are some recent examples of

renewal. When a text is translated into a modern language of another tradition / culture, it is a case of *diffusion*. Diffusion as a horizontal concept is a special case of *renewal*, a code not only gets activated, it also spreads beyond its earlier boundaries. The most recent example is the translation of *Panini's, Astadhyayi* (a seventh century B.C. linguistic grammar of Sanskrit) into German, French and English in the last quarter of the 19th century which made this proto-grammar available to a whole new world of European and Anglo-Saxon scholarship. In such intercultural transfers, the parameter of *borrowing* is also present. Translation of a modern language text into another modern language in the same tradition/culture is also a case of *diffusion* while that into a modern language of another tradition is a case of *diffusion* and *borrowing*.

2. *On the basis of distance between the two languages, we can set up these sub-types of translation. Here is a translation-grid:*

a. Change of script alone; for example a Gurumukhi text rendered into Devanagari.

b. Change of language with lexis unchanged or just adapted to the phonology of the target language; for example a Sanskrit text rendered into a modern Indian language or a text of one Indian language rendered into another with *tatsama* words (with form unchanged) or *tadbhava* words (with form adapted):

o da beta (Punjabi) => *us ka beta* (Hindi)

or pustak (Bangla) => *us ki pustak* (Hindi)

avnnudiya pustakam (Tamil) => *us ki pustak* (Hindi)

Are these 'translations' or 'adaptations'?

c. Change of language involving lexical and grammatical replacements in a larger or smaller degree. greater the degree of replacement, the greater the distance between languages; and distance is far greater if the languages belong to different language families.

d. Translation of different registers and discourses involves register-specific problems. Politics, history, philosophy, religion, science and literature each have their own lexis, preferred sentence patterns and one of the possible document modes, argumentative, descriptive, reflective, imaginative. The structure of the discourse is an integral part of the writing and this structure say, argument has to be carried over into the translation. Translating the discourse of religion, the sacred texts for example, puts enormous responsibility on the translator because there is the great risk of misrepresenting key concepts.



As Prof. Eugene A. Nida observes with reference to Bible translation:

For the Bible translator the most serious problem relating to word classes is created by the fact that in Greek, and for that matter in most Indo-European languages, there is a marked tendency to use event words without reference to the objects or persons that may participate in such events. For example, in Mark 1:4 there is the clause "*John preached the baptism of repentance unto the forgiveness of sins*". All the nouns except *John* are essentially event words, but the participants in the events are not made explicit, and the relationships between the events are very ambiguously indicated. When, as in many languages, this type of expression must be translated not by a series of nouns but by verbs, the problem is difficult; for not only must the participants be explicitly indicated (as required by verb constructions in question), but the relationships between the events must be more explicitly stated. This means that such an expression in many languages must be rendered as *John preached that the people should repent and be baptized so that God would forgive the evil which they had done*. Similarly, it is quite impossible to say in many languages, *God is love*. The word indicating *love* is essentially an event word, and it cannot be combined as a kind of predicate complement to a subject by means of a copulative verb. In other words, *love* cannot exist apart from participants. One cannot say, therefore, *God is love* but simply that *God loves*. This is, of course, essentially what the Biblical passage means, not that God is to be equated with love, for the expression God is love can not be inverted into *Love is God*.

The translation of religious works has played an important role in world history. For instance the Buddhist monks who translated the Indian *sutras* into the Chinese language would often skew the translation to better adapt to China's very different culture. Thus notions such as filial piety came to be stressed in their translations in keeping with the Chinese culture of respect for the ancestors and forefathers. Translation of religious texts is an onerous task and very often it is said that the sacred texts exist only in the original language and that in translation they become different books and no longer have the same sanctity. The history of translations of the *Bible*, the *Koran* and the *Gita* makes interesting and educative reading and at least have the value of highlighting the fact that translation is a very responsible and important activity.

Any type of written text can be a candidate for translation. But translations are often categorized by a number of areas of specialization. Each specialization has its own challenges and difficulties. We may note the following *major types*:

- i. **General translation** - the translation of *general* texts. In practice, few texts are really general; most fall into a specialization but are not seen as such.
- ii. **Commercial translation** - the translation of commercial (business) texts. This category may include marketing and promotional materials directed to consumers, or the translation of administrative texts.
- iii. **Computer translation** - the translation of computer programs and related documents (manuals, help files, blogs, web sites). The notion of localization, that is the adaptation of the translation to the target language and culture, is gaining prevalence in this area of specialization. (Note that the term *computer translation* is sometimes used to refer to the practice of machine translation or using computers to automatically translate texts).
- iv. **Legal translation** - the translation of legal documents (laws, contracts, etc.). A skilled legal translator has to be as adept at the law as with translation since inaccuracies in legal translations can have serious results. Sometimes, to prevent such problems, a document in one language is declared authoritative and the translations are not considered legally acceptable. Thus in the case of the Indian Constitution, only the English version is authoritative.



- v. **Medical translation** - the translation of works of a medical nature is also a very responsible exercise. As in the case of legal documents, mistranslation in medical texts can have serious results.
- vi. **Scientific translation** - the translation of scientific research papers, abstracts, conference proceedings, and other publications from one language into another. The specialized technical vocabulary demands that the translator of scientific texts have technical knowledge as well as linguistic expertise.
- vii. **Technical translation** - the translation of technical texts such as descriptive manuals (for gadgets, electronic goods etc.) operating instructions (for say a digicam). More specifically, texts that contain a high amount of terminology, that is, words or expressions that are used only in that specific field. Again the translator needs the knowledge of the field besides his linguistic expertise.
- viii. **Translation for dubbing and film subtitles** - dialogues and narrations of feature movies and foreign TV programmes need to be translated for the local viewers. The translator needs to understand how expressions and words are received by the people and the auditory dimension of the speech sounds.
- ix. **Cultural translation** - This is a new area of interest in the field of translation studies. Cultural translation is a concept used in cultural studies to denote the process of transformation, linguistic or otherwise, in a given culture. The concept uses linguistic translation as a tool or metaphor in analyzing the nature of transformation in cultures. For example, ethnography is considered a translated narrative of an abstract living culture.



End of the Lesson- Review Questions

I Comprehension

- What is Translation? Explain with the help of suitable examples.
- Specify the goals of translation, with the help of illustrative examples.
- What are the different types of translation? Explain with the help of suitable examples.
- What is the difference between a *translation* and an *adaptation*. Explain with the help of suitable examples.
- Read the texts given below and answer the questions.

सचिन तेंदुलकर के बल्ले से निकली रनों की फुहार ने कल वेस्टइंडीज को कसरी शिकस्त दी। तेंदुलकर ने आईपीसीएल मैदान पर फिर अपना जलवा दिखाकर नाबाद शतक बनाए। उनके अलावा द्रविड और धोनी ने भी अर्धशतक लगाए।

The incessant flow of runs from Sachin Tendulkar's bat yesterday gave West Indies a humiliating defeat. At the IPL ground, Tendulkar yet again showed his class and scored an unbeaten century. Apart from him, Dravid and Dhoni also scored a half-century each.

- (i) Using the examples given bring out the problems of translation related to word and sentence level?

- (ii) How many texts does any act of translation, primarily, involve?

- (iii) What are the technical names for the languages and texts involved in translation?

- (iv) Is translation a transfer of meanings of the text or only its words and sentences?



f. Read the following texts and answer the questions that follow:

खुदा के वास्ते पर्दा न काबे का उठा ज़ालिम
कहीं ऐसा न हो यहाँ भी वही काफ़िर सनम निकले

*For the love of God, please don't lift the curtain over the Kaaba
Perhaps in that spot we may find an ordinary stone*

(i) Are the *source text* and the *target text* of equal importance in translation?

(ii) Is translation also a creative activity? Explain with examples from the above lines.

(iii) In the translation process, does the *target text* have its own significance independent of the *source text*?

(iv) In translation, to what extent does the *target text* depend upon the *source text*?

g. Read the following texts and answer the questions that

(a) “पिछले सौ वर्षों की अवधि में विज्ञान ने सभ्यता पर जितना प्रभाव एवं परिवर्तन प्रस्तुत किया है उतना रोम के हजार वर्षों में तो क्या, पुराने शिला-युग के लाखों वर्षों में भी नहीं हो पाया है। इलैक्ट्रॉनिकी बीसवीं शताब्दी की देन है।

(b) टाटा ने एंग्लो डच स्टील निर्माता कंपनी कोरस ग्रुप को 11 अरब में खरीद लिया है। रातभर चली बोली के बाद भारतीय कारपोरेट जगत की महत्वपूर्ण स्टील कंपनी टाटा ने कोरस को खरीद लिया।



(c) मुझे बुखार आ रहा है। यह भी नियति का मजाक ही है। सारी दुनिया में हल्ला हो गया है कि
वर्सव आ रहा है, और पास आया बुखार! अपने कंचनार की ओर देखता हूँ और सोचता हूँ, मेरी
वजह से तो यह नहीं रुका है?

(d) डरे क्यों मेरा क्रांतिल, क्या रहेगा उसकी गर्दन पर

(e) वो खूँ जो चश्मे-तर-से उम्र-भर यूँ दम-पे-दम निकले

(i) Classify the above texts as *literary* and *technical texts*.

Literary texts : _____

Technical texts : _____

(ii) How would you distinguish between a *literary* and a *technical text* Enumerate
the features of both.

(iii) How is the translation of a *technical text* different from the translation of a
literary text?



- (iv) How is the translation of poem different from the translation of all other texts, including literary prose?

- h. What are the different types of translation? Define each of these, giving an illustrative example.
- i. How relevant is translation of classical texts? Discuss with examples to support your views.

II Vocabulary

Define the following:

- (i) Target language _____
- (ii) Source Language _____
- (iii) Medical Translation _____
- (iv) General Translation _____
- (v) Commercial Translation _____
- (vi) Computer Translation _____
- (vii) Legal Translation _____
- (viii) Scientific Translation _____
- (ix) Technical Translation _____
- (x) Translation for dubbing and film subtitles _____



II Application - Writing for the Portfolio

- a. In groups of four, collect three samples each of the following from various sources. (50-80 words)
 - i) Medical Script
 - ii) Commercial Script
 - iii) Legal Script
 - iv) Scientific Script
 - v) Technical Script
 - vi) Literary Script
- b. Now attempt to translate each one in pairs. Exchange your translations, modify, edit, revise and keep it in your Portfolio.



Lesson 2 Process of Translation

Activity 1

Understanding and Interpreting

Read the paragraph

कवियों की दुनिया में जिसकी कभी चर्चा नहीं हुई, ऐसी एक घास है- विष्णुकांता । हिंदी भवन के आँगन में बहुत है। कैसा मनोहर नाम है। फूल और भी मनोहर होते हैं। ज़रा-सा तो आकार होता है, पर बलिहारी है उस नील मंदिर रूप की। बादल की बात छोड़िए, ज़रा-सी पुरवैया बह गई तो इसका उल्लास देखिए। बरसात के समय तो इतनी खिलती है कि मत पूछिए।

Answer the Questions given below :

a) What is the paragraph about?

b) Does the paragraph describe a particular locale?

c) Does the language and the expressions used by the writer indicate a specific place and culture?

d) Now translate the paragraph into English

In the previous chapter, *Translation and Translator*, we discussed the four steps involved in any translation activity. They were,

(a) **Reading** of the source text.

(b) **Interpretation of meaning** of the source text.

(Ghalib's 'हज़ारों ख्वाहिशें ऐसी').

(c) **Evaluation** of the content and language of the source text, and

(d) **Reproduction** in another language of an equivalent text (the target text, 'Desires Come By The Thousands', translated from the Urdu by Robert Bly and Sunil Dutta).



All these steps involve what we understand by the process of translation. In other words, every text of translation has to go through this process. If you take a close look at what we are saying, out of the four steps we have enumerated, three are *not* about writing. These three steps could be broadly characterized as processes of understanding the target text and interpreting it.

Activity 2

Translating a paragraph

Now, translate the paragraph given at the beginning of the lesson.

- i) How would you go about doing it? In other words, through what process or processes would you take yourself as a translator?

- ii) Wouldn't you spend fair amount of time in reading and understanding the paragraph first, and then interpreting its meanings?

- iii) Will the translation of the paragraph require you to wait, to reflect upon and interpret the exact meanings, and then start rewriting paragraph in the target language (English, in our case)? Let us look at the first sentence itself.

कवियों की दुनिया में जिसकी कभी चर्चा नहीं हुई, ऐसी एक घास है-विष्णुकांता

- How would you begin its translation into English? Does its syntax make you stop to think it over?
- Will you, then, make an attempt to grasp its meaning in totality?
- And, then, will you attempt at an equivalent English expression of the meaning you have just grasped?

Indeed, the translation process can be described as:

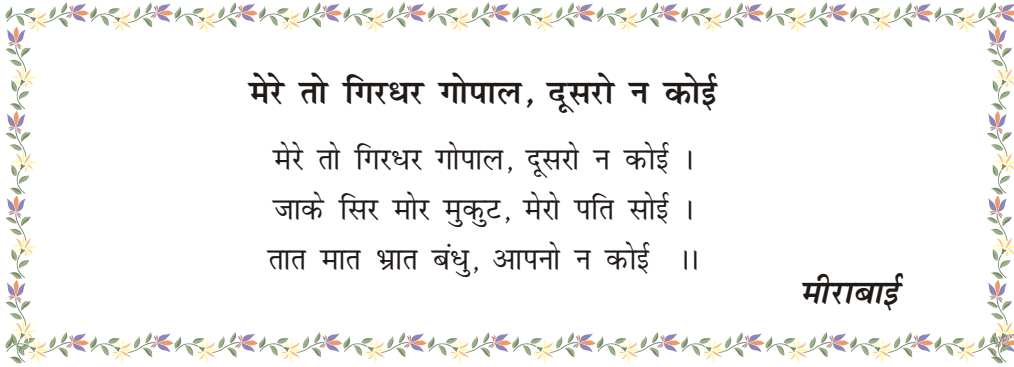
- Decoding** the meaning of the source text; and
- Re-encoding** this meaning in the target language.

The *source text* above is the paragraph in *Hindi* for translation and the *target text* is your translation of this *source text*.

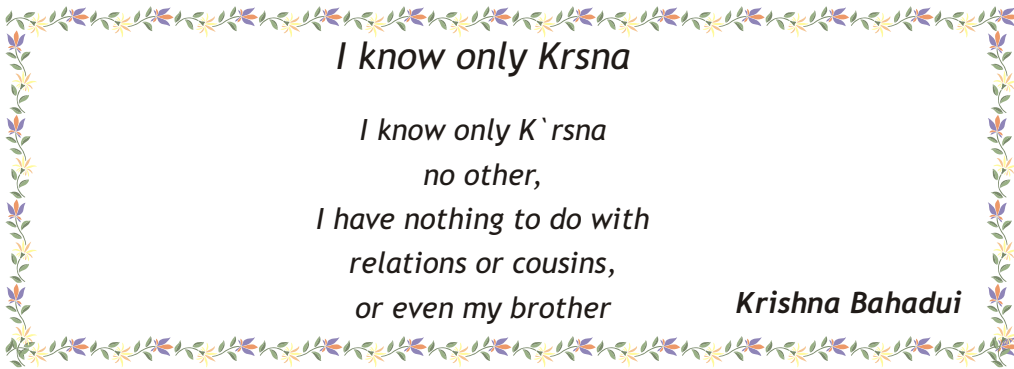
Translation, it has been noted is *a disturbing craft because there is precious little certainty about what we are doing...* (Biguenet and Schulte, *Introduction. The Craft of Translation*). The translators always have some questions on their minds.



Take a look at the following translation, and see if there are questions that you might like to ask.



This extract is from Mira Bai's 'मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल' which has been translated by *Krishna Bahadur* as 'I know only Krsna'.



As a translator, you might experience certain basic questions brewing in your mind time and again.

- (a) How to read or interpret a given text and grasp its meaning before it is translated in translation can take place?
- (b) How can equivalences be established between the semantic and cultural differences of the two languages involved in a translation?
- (c) What is a successful translation?

All acts of translation begin with a close reading or readings of the given text to understand the theme, the ideas and the attitudes expressed in the writing. The reading process of a translator is somewhat different from that of the ordinary readers. *Translators by necessity read each word and sentence at least as carefully as the critic or the scholar. Even the smallest detail in the text cannot be neglected.... They explore each word first as word and then as a reflection of a larger cultural and historical context.*" (Biguenet and Schulte, *Introduction. The Craft of Translation*)



Activity 3

Understanding Translation

Read both, your translations of the prose passage given at the beginning of the lesson and the extract from Mira Bai's poem, and reflect upon understanding and interpreting being an important process of translation.

Pick out *words and expressions* which have cultural and historical associations and which require deeper understanding and meticulous interpretation. Write them in the space provided.

The Source and Target Culture

Translation in Hindi of a Tamil narrative poem

मादरी ने स्वयं कुछ नहीं कहा और
कुछ कहे बिना खड़ी रही।
तब कण्णही ने उससे कहा,
'बोलो तो, क्या बात है
'अरी सखी।
प्रियतम को मैं देख नहीं पा रही हूँ।
मेरी व्याकुलता बहुत बढ़ गयी है।

English Translation of the Hindi text

*She spoke to none, but stood there
Without speaking to Kannaki who begged of her:
'Speak to me! Listen everyone! I don't see
My husband. My mind is confused.*

The above extract is from *Cilappatikaram* (from the book of *Maturai*), a narrative poem in Tamil by *Ilanko Atikal*. So you can see that the English text, in the above case, is thrice removed from the original Tamil text. The English text being a translation of the Hindi text which itself is a translation of the Tamil text. The foremost challenge for any act of translation is to preserve the cultural contexts of the source text in the process of translation.

As said before, any act of translation begins with reading. *Reading* is infact already the first translation in the mind of the translator and the actual translation is a modified reproduction of this first mental draft so to say. This process is a process of understanding the world and the modes of communicating our understanding of this world. The famous reception theorist *Gadamer* has said that *all acts of communication are acts of*



translation. We have an idea in our mind and find words to express this idea in words such that the other person, the hearer, gets the idea. That is we *translate* our cognition into the hearer's cognition, a process of thought transfer. Reading for a translator is the process of *making* a meaning and not the description of a fixed meaning.

Now, let us read again the extract from Mira Bai's 'मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल' and its translation.

मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल, दूसरों न कोई ।
जाके सिर मोर मुकुट, मेरो पति सोई ।
तात मात भ्रात बंधु, आपनो न कोई ॥

*I know only Krsna
no other,
I have nothing to do with
relations or cousins,
or even my brother*

To **decode** the complete meaning of the source text, the translator must consciously and methodically, interpret and analyze all the features of a text. This process requires thorough knowledge of the

- (a) grammar,
- (b) semantics,
- (c) syntax,
- (d) figures of speech,
- (e) idioms,
- (f) cultural contexts, and
- (g) the genre/register of the source text, as well as the *culture* of its speakers. And the translator needs the same in-depth knowledge to *re-encode* the meaning in the target language. In fact, in general, the translators' *knowledge* of the target language is more important, and needs to be deeper, than the knowledge of the source language. For this reason, most translators translate into a language of which they are the native speakers.

Lets study the examples given

- (a) Grammar / Poetic grammar :

हो जाए न पथ में रात कहीं
मीजिल भी तो है दूर नहीं

It is important to decipher the poetic grammar (the word, phrase and sound sequence) of the source.



For example the word sequence हो जाए न in the first line necessitates मंजिल भी तो in the second line. A translator has to pay attention to the poetic grammar of the source text to decode the intended meaning of the poem.

(b) Semantics हो जाए न पथ में रात कहीं

A translator should not be misled by the surface meaning and fail to interpret the intended meaning of the line.

There is an ambiguity in the meaning of 'पथ' and 'रात' which the translator must be alive to.

(c) Syntax

दिन जल्दी-जल्दी ढलता है!

One may translate this line as-

- 1.) The day fades away quickly.
- 2.) The day fades away swiftly and swiftly.
- 3.) The day swiftly fades away .

Thus it is important to see the syntactic sequence between the adverb (जल्दी-जल्दी) and the verb in interpretation of the line.

(d) Figures of speech

The translator has to be conscious of the metaphorical meaning of such words like 'पथ', 'रात', मंजिल etc. For example, the word 'मंजिल' here has the same metaphorical meaning as *miles* in *Robert Frost's* immortal lines *miles to go before I sleep*.

(e) Cultural context

The image of a rural Indian traveller makes the literal interpretation of the extract possible.

Also, the line, दिन जल्दी-जल्दी ढलता है lends importance to the cultural context in the interpretation of the line . An English poet might instead have said the sun sets swifly as you can see the word 'ढलता' cannot be interpreted as *sets* because of the different cultural context.

(f) Genre/ register of the source text

The genre of the source text, lyric , in this case further influences its translation. The end-rhyme कहीं-नहीं the double rhyme चलता है - ढलता है, adverbial repetition जल्दी-जल्दी translation of the source text.

In addition, knowledge of the subject matter under discussion is essential. But many newcomers to translation believe it is an exact science and think that there is a one-to-one correlation between the words and phrases in different languages. In that vein, many assume all one needs to translate a given passage is to decipher between the languages using a translation dictionary. On the contrary, no such fixed relationship exists and the translator has to struggle to find equivalents, which most often are not there, create expressions to communicate the ideas. Suffice it to say, while equivalence is sought by the translator, less rigid and more analytical methods are required to arrive at a true translation.



There is also a debate as to whether translation is an art or a craft. Literary translators argue that translation is an art, though it is acknowledged at the same time that it can be taught. Other translators, mostly professionals working on technical business, or legal documents, approach their task as a craft, one that cannot only be taught but is subject to linguistic analysis and benefits from academic study. Most translators will agree that the truth lies somewhere between and depends on the text. A simple document, for instance a product brochure, can be quickly translated in many cases using simple techniques familiar to advanced language students or even by some machine translation software if it is available. By contrast, a newspaper editorial, text of a speech by a politician, or book on almost any subject will require not only the craft of good language skills and research techniques but also the art of good writing, cultural sensitivity and communication.

Evaluating Translation and Problems of Translation

Translation can be evaluated on the basis of two criteria:

1. *Faithfulness*, also called *fidelity*, which is the extent to which the translation accurately renders the meaning of the source text, without adding to it or subtracting from it, and without intensifying or weakening any part of the meaning; and
2. *Transparency*, which is the extent to which the translation appears to a native speaker of the target language to have originally been written in that language, and conforms to the language's grammatical, syntactic and idiomatic conventions.

A translation meeting the first criterion is said to be a *faithful translation*; a translation meeting the second criterion is said to be an *idiomatic translation*. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

The criteria used to judge the faithfulness of a translation vary according to the subject, the precision of the original content, the type, function and use of the text, its literary qualities, its social or historical context, and so forth.

The criteria for judging the *transparency* of a translation would appear more straightforward: an unidiomatic translation *sounds* absurd, and in the extreme case of word-for-word translations generated by many machine translation systems, often result in patent nonsense with only a humorous value (for e.g. round-trip translation).

Nevertheless, in certain contexts a translator may knowingly strive to produce a literal translation. For example, literary translators and translators of religious works often adhere to the *source text* as much as possible. To do this they deliberately *stretch* the boundaries of the target language to produce an unidiomatic text. Likewise, a literary translator may wish to adopt words or expressions from the source language to provide *local colour* in the translation.

The concepts of *fidelity* and *transparency* are looked at differently in recent translation theories. The idea that acceptable translations can be as creative and original as their source text is gaining momentum in some quarters.



In recent decades, the most prominent advocates of *non-transparent* translation modes include the Franco-Canadian translation scholar *Antoine Berman* who identified twelve deforming tendencies inherent in most prose translations and the American theorist *Lawrence Venuti* who called upon translators to apply *foreignizing* translation strategies instead of domesticating ones.

Many *non-transparent* translation theories draw on concepts of German Romanticism, with the most obvious influence on latter-day theories of *foreignization* being the German theologian and philosopher *Friedrich Schleiermacher*. In his seminal lecture *On the Different Methods of Translation* (1813) he distinguished between translation methods that move *the writer toward [the reader]*, i.e. transparency, and those that move the reader toward *[the author]*, i.e. respecting the foreignness of the source text. *Schleiermacher* clearly favoured the latter. It is worth pointing out, however, that his preference was motivated not so much by a desire to embrace the foreign but was rather intended as a nationalist practice to oppose France's cultural domination and to promote German literature.

The concepts of *fidelity* and *transparency* remain strong in Western traditions. They are not necessarily as prevalent in non-Western traditions. For example, the Indian epic *Ramayana* has numerous versions in many Indian languages and the stories in each are different from one another. If one looks into the words used for translation in Indian (either Aryan or Dravidian) languages, the freedom given to the translators is evident.

Issues of Concern

1. General Problems

Translation is inherently a difficult activity. Translators can face additional problems which make the process even more difficult, such as:

a) Problems with the source text:

- Changes made to the text during the translation process
- Illegible or difficult-to-read text
- Misspelt or misprinted text
- Incomplete text
- Poorly written text (ambiguity or incomprehensibility)
- Missing references in the text (for example the translator is to translate captions to missing photos)
- The source text contains a translation of a quotation that was originally made in the target language, and the original text is unavailable, making word-for-word quoting nearly impossible
- Obvious inaccuracies in the source text (for example *prehistoric Buddhist* ruins, when Buddhism was not founded during prehistoric times)



b) *Language problems*

- Dialect terms and neologisms viz. *ladi* for 'girl' in *Rajasthani*
- Unexplained acronyms and abbreviations
- Proper names of people, organizations, places, etc. Often there are already official target-language translations for such, but if not supplied by the client they can be difficult to find out
- Obscure jargon
- Obscure idioms
- Slang
- Stylistic differences, such as redundant phrases in a source language, when redundancy is frowned upon in the target language
- Differences between languages with respect to punctuation conventions

Other

- Rhymes, puns and poetic metre
- Highly specific cultural references
- Humour
- Insider information (insider references not accessible to a third party or outsider)
- Words that are commonly known in one culture but generally unknown by the layperson in another culture, such as Chinese (*fen1 duo1 jing1*) meaning 'phytoncide': these generally require the addition of an explanation
- Subtle but important properties of language such as *pleasure* or *dissonance*

c) *Untranslatability*

The question of whether particular words are untranslatable is often debated, with lists of *untranslatable* words being produced from time to time. These lists often include words such as *उबटन*, a Portuguese word as an example of an *untranslatable*. It translates quite neatly however as *special body pastes for ladies*. But the word does have some nuances that are hard to include in translation: for instance, it has cultural connotation, a subtlety which is not clear in this basic translation.

Some words are hard to translate only if one wishes to remain in the same grammatical category. For example, it is hard to find a noun corresponding to the Hindi *कलश*. We might translate it as the *sacred pot*. But again this two-word translation does not approximate to the actual meaning of *कलश*.



So unless, the word or term is specific also to the target language, it is very difficult to successfully translate. For example how would one translate नमक खाना

- (i) to eat your salt
- (ii) to be loyal to
- (ii) devoted slaves

Activity 4

Translating Words

Try to translate these words from the Hindi to the English:-

1. गोधूलि _____
2. खड़खड़ाहट _____
3. चपलता _____
4. रसिक मियाँ _____
5. राम -राज्य _____
6. तपस्या _____
7. प्रणाम _____
8. चुगली _____

2. Which ones are difficult to translate?

Common words

The words that are truly difficult to translate are often the small common words (for example, in all its various uses the word जी, दिल, नाम and so forth).

Cultural aspects can complicate translation as Hindi speaking people in India call रोटी as their culturally, common bread, which is not the same as denoted by the English words bread.

Differing levels of precision inherent in a language also play a role. For example if one is referring to a person one would say तुम or आप depending upon the age or esteem of the person addressed. Conversely in English we have only you to refer to a person irrespective of age or esteem.



A language may contain expressions which refer to concepts that do not exist in another language. For example the Hindi expression आरती उतारना is an important cultural concept, which does not exist in the English language. If it is translated as *to welcome* the cultural concept inherent in the Hindi word is entirely lost. This kind of simplistic translation must be avoided.

The problem often lies in failure to distinguish between translation and glossing. Glossing gives a short (usually one-word) equivalent for each term. Translation decodes the meaning and intent of the text level (not the word level or even the sentence level). Words like उबटन are hard to *gloss* into a single other word but by giving two or more words they can be perfectly and adequately *translated* रोटी has perhaps a better claim to being untranslatable, since even if we resort to saying *Indian bread* we are relying on our audience knowing what this is like.



End of the Lesson - Review Questions

1. Read the following extract from the short story *Raag Darbari* by Shrilal Shukla and translate it into English

वैद्यजी की बैठक के बाहर चबूतरे पर जो आदमी इस समय बैठा था, उसने लगभग सात साल पहले दीवानी का एक मुकदमा दायर किया था, इसलिए स्वाभाविक था कि वह अपनी बात में पूर्वजन्म के पाप, भाग्य, भगवान्, अगले जन्म के कार्यक्रम आदि का नियमित रूप से हवाला देता।

- (a) Would the translation of the above text require you to read it more than a few times?

- (b) Is translation an instant activity?

- (c) What are the different processes that you as a translator would go through in translating the above text?

- (d) Enumerate the different processes of translation in the context of your translation of the above text.

- (e) Is culture an important aspect in the process of translation in the above case?

2. Read the following extract from the short story *शतरंज के खिलाड़ी*, by Premchand and translate it into English.

- (i) वाजिदअली शाह का समय था। लखनऊ विलासिता के रंग में डूबा हुआ था। छोटे-बड़े, गरीब-अमीर सभी विलासिता में डूबे हुए थे। कोई नृत्य और गान की मञ्चलिस सजाता था, तो कोई अफीम की पीनक ही में मग्न होता था। जीवन के प्रत्येक विभाग में आनन्द-प्रमोद का प्राधान्य था।



- (ii) In the context of your translation of the above text, would you describe translation as a spontaneous activity? If not, what are the preliminary steps you would involve yourself in before you reproduce the text in the target language?

- (iii) Does the translation of the above text include interpretation of meaning of the source text? Explain with examples.

- (iv) Does the interpretation of the meaning of the source text, as a process of translation, enable the equivalence in the meanings of the source text and the target text?

- (v) Explain, with examples from your translation of the above text, the process of translation as

- (a) the decoding of the source text, and

- (b) the - encoding of the meaning of the source text in the target language



- (vi) Would you call the above text an example of a culture-text? What importance would you give to the cultural contexts while translating the above text?

3. i) Read the following extract from the poem, दिन जल्दी-जल्दी ढलता है! by Hariwanshrai Bacchan.

हो जाय न पथ में रात कहीं,
माँझल भी तो है दूर नहीं-
यह सोच थका दिन का पंथी भी जल्दी-जल्दी चलता है!
दिन जल्दी-जल्दी ढलता है!

- ii) Translate it into english:

- iii) How would you decode the meaning of the above text in the process of translation? Explain in terms of

- a) grammar, _____
- b) semantics, _____
- c) syntax, _____
- d) figures of speech _____
- e) idioms, _____
- f) cultural contexts, and _____
- g) the genre/register of the source text _____

4. On the basis of your reading of the chapter and in the context of all the three texts given above, discuss in groups of 5-6 the various problems of translation. Make notes and write an essay in 200-250 words on Translation and its Problems.

5. Define the following and give relevant examples

- a) Process of Translation
- b) Glossing
- c) Untranslatibility
- d) Source Text
- e) Target Text



Lesson 3 Tools of Translation

The Tools of Translation

By now it is clear that translation is a complex activity involving basically more than one language and culture, and the processes of translation move from a grasp of a primary meaning of words to an understanding of the culture and the contexts of the discourse. Does the translator make use of certain tools to perfect his skill of translation? What are these tools? Think for a moment.

Read these lines from *Kabir's* संतो देखत जग बौराना translated into English by Vinay Dharwadker as *The Simple State*.

संतो देखत जग बौराना

संतो देखत जग बौराना।
सांच कहों तो मारन धावै। झूठे जग पतियाना ॥
नेमी देखा धरमी देखा। प्रात करै असनाना ॥
आतम मारि पखानहि पूजै। उनमें कछु नहिं ज्ञाना ॥
बहुतक देखा पीर औलिया। पढ़ै किताब कुराना ॥

The Simple State

*Listen,
You saints
I see that the world
Is crazy.*

*When I tell the truth,
People run
To beat me up—
When I tell lies, they believe me.*

*I've seen
The pious ones,
The ritual mongers
They bathe at dawn.*

*They kill the true Self
And worship rocks
They know nothing
I've seen*

*Many masters and teachers
They read their Book,
Their Qur'an.*

Vinay Dharwadker



Here is another translation of the extract.

*Hark
You Saints!
This world is insane indeed.
People
They dislike the truth
And belabor me
But willingly accept my lie.*

*I have seen the pious ones
and the slaves of ritual both bathe at dawn.*

*Killing the true self
They worship mere rocks.
They are indeed ignorant.*

*I have seen
many a master and a teacher
Read their Book
Their Holy Qura'n.*

Now, would a translator need certain tools to help her/him in the process of translating the above extract from Kabir's poem?

He/She certainly would. You would agree if you read the lines carefully again.

What kind of tools would he need? To answer this, let's look at the following words from the poem.

बौराना, धावै, नेमी, धरमी, प्रात

Activity 1

1. Write the meanings of the above words after reading both the source text and the target text.

Mark the line length and pattern of the source text and the target text. Do you observe a difference in the line structure? What could be the possible reason for that? Is it because the translator has to adapt the meanings of the poem (in the source language) to the English syntax? In order to do that, he would also need to know the syntax of the source text.



So we know, as of now, that the translator has to make use of reference materials to be able to understand and interpret the source text. Some of the tools of referencing are :

- (a) Dictionaries, and
- (b) Grammar

Activity 2

But what other tools would the translation of the above poem, require? Reflect upon the following statements.

- (a) संतो देखत जग बौराना
- (b) नेमी देखा धरमी देखा।'
- (c) पीर औलिया

Find out the meanings of the above statements after reading both the source and the target texts

- (a) Does Kabir make cultural statements, in the above instance?
- (b) Does the translation of the above statements require a tool that would give more elaborate meanings than dictionaries do?

Certainly, these statements require knowledge about the cultural contexts as well as an understanding about the register of the source text. For instance, *doha*, is the register of the above poem. Hence, the other reference materials that the translator has to make use of, as tools of translation, would be

- Culture-histories
- Glossaries of specific registers

Familiarization with the software available for various kinds of machine translation is also required. Those who wish to become reasonably good translators have to master the art of using these tools. They must know, for example, how to use a dictionary and what information a dictionary can give.

Dictionaries

There are different kinds of dictionaries that serve different purposes, for example, monolingual dictionary and bilingual dictionary. A monolingual dictionary enables you to access the basic grammatical information and lexical equivalence of the words of a language. Such monolingual dictionaries range in size from a concise 2500 word dictionary to the *Great Oxford Dictionary of English*, which has more than half a million words. The monolingual dictionary may restrict them to giving all the meanings of a word, while those that are prepared on historical principles will also give the history of the development of meanings and the usage of words.



Then there are monolingual dictionaries of particular registers or domains. So, we have dictionary of biology, geology, politics, religion etc. Such dictionaries are of great use when we are doing registeral translation that is the translation of writing belonging to a particular register. Such dictionaries will help in choosing equivalence from a target language by looking at various synonyms that are noted in a monolingual domain dictionary.

However, most useful for a translator is a bilingual dictionary, such as English to Hindi dictionary. Bilateral-bilingual dictionaries are available and are the most important equipment for a translator. Then some translation from Hindi to English will require both a Hindi to English dictionary as well as English to Hindi dictionary.

Thesaurus, if available, is also very useful. A thesaurus gives synonyms for a word and helps to capture the nuance for a word given in a particular context. The translation will benefit from thesauruses of both the source and the target language. However, not all languages are equally rich in their dictionaries and less so in thesauruses. While English has the famous *Roget's Thesaurus* not many Indian languages have thesauruses.

Glossaries are also useful as these are structural lists of vocabulary of a particular register and not much effort is required to refer to them. Such glossaries are available particularly in the technical domain. But the most important skill is the ability to process a dictionary for its information.

Under each entry it gives the pronunciation, grammatical category, its meanings as a noun in a given order, its meanings as a verb (if it's also a verb) in a given order and examples of the use of the word in those meanings.

A bilingual dictionary, say Hindi to English, also gives information in a certain order. We reproduce a page from Hindi-English dictionary:

Activity 3

1. Refer to the dictionary extract and find equivalent words for the following:

1. चित्रकला _____
2. चितचोर _____
3. चित्ति _____
4. चित्र _____
5. चित्तार्कषक _____
6. चित्रशाला _____

3. Refer to a dictionary and pick out words from the following which do not have equivalents in English.

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| (a) चपाती _____ | (d) दीवानखाना _____ |
| (b) चिलम _____ | (e) वाणिज्य _____ |
| (c) लुंगी _____ | (f) साड़ी _____ |

Reference books include histories, books on mythologies, geography etc. particularly when there are allusions to some events of history or cultural practice, we need to refer to the reference books to understand what they stand for before we try to find an equivalent in a target language.

Computer as a tool of translation becomes particularly relevant in a situation where the speaker knows one language or a book is written in one language, whereas the listeners or the readers are speakers of different languages. Think of such situations.

What about the United Nations? The United Nation has, in its constitution has given English, French, German, Russian and Spanish the status of its official languages. All important documents of the UN are translated in all these languages.

Similarly, all the speeches given at the UN also need to be translated in these languages. There are different channels running in different languages of translation. The desk of each member is connected with the channels of different languages. Each language is indicated by a button. All that a member has to do is to press a particular button to listen to the speech in whichever language s/he wishes to. You must be wondering how it is possible.

The translation is monitored from the Audio-cell, which is behind the hall. Translators of different languages sit in their respective cells with ear phones and a microphone in their hands. Because of their great skill in the *source* and the *target* language, they can translate the speech at the very moment. What they speak on their microphone it immediately reaches the desk of the members in the hall.

Computer-Assisted Translation

Computer-assisted translation is successful particularly in the field of administration, and science and technology. In these fields, the meanings of the words or sentences are fixed and certain. They are often repetitive. It is possible to take help of computers in the translation of such texts.

Machine translation (MT) is a form of translation where a computer program analyses the *source text* and produces a *target text* without human intervention. In recent years *machine translation*, a major goal of natural language processing, has met with limited success. Most machine translation involves some sort of human intervention, as they require a pre-editing and a post-editing phase. Note that in machine translation, the translator supports the machine. Tools available on the Internet, such as AltaVista's Babel Fish, and low-cost translation programs like Babylon, have brought machine translation technologies to a large public. These tools produce what is called a *gisting translation* a rough translation that gives the *gist* of the source text, but is not otherwise useful.



However, in fields with highly limited ranges of vocabulary and simple sentence structure, for example weather reports, machine translation can deliver useful results. Alternatively, the use of a controlled language in combination with a machine translation tool typically results in largely comprehensible translations.

Engineer and futurist *Raymond Kurzweil* has predicted that by 2012, machine translation will be powerful enough to dominate the translation field. MIT's *Technology Review* also listed universal translation and interpretation as likely *within a decade* in its 2004 list. Such claims, however, have been made since the first serious forays into machine translation in the 1950s.

The other field is *Computer-assisted translation* (CAT), which is also called computer-aided translation. It is a form of translation where a human translator creates a target text with the assistance of a computer program. Note that in computer-assisted translation, the machine supports an actual, human translator. Computer-assisted translation can include standard dictionary and grammar software; however, the term is normally used to refer to a range of specialized programs available for the translator, including translation memory, terminology management and alignment programs.



End of the Lesson - Review Questions

1. Comprehension

1. What are the tools of translations? How can these enhance the quality of translation. Explain with the help of suitable examples.
2. What do you understand by Computer Assisted Translation? How can these be used?

2. Vocabulary

Define the following and give an example of each:

- Tools of Translation
- reference materials
- culture - histories
- Software for machine translation
- bilingual dictionary
- Thesaurus
- "gisting translation"
- Syntax of the source text
- registrar of the source text
- Machine translation.
- monolingual dictionary
- lexical equivalence
- Glossary
- computer-assisted translation.

3. Writing Tasks

- a) Read the following extract of pay-in slip of a bank

बचत बैंक जमा पर्चा

खाता नं. खाता बही पृष्ठ

नीचे दिये विवरण के अनुसार भुगतान पाने पर के बचत खाते में रुपया जमा किया जाए।

- (i) What tools of translation would you use to translate the above pay-in slip used in a bank?

- (ii) Translate the pay-in slip

- (b) Read the following words.

प्रत्याशी, भुगतान, प्रबंधक, उष्णता, दबाव, महकमा, फौरन, कफ्यू, गाड़ीवान



- (i) Which of the above words can be translated using the software for machine translate?

- (ii) Translate the above words

- (iii) Mention the tools of translation you have used.

Project Work

- (i) Work in groups of 5-6 students.
- (ii) Pick up a dictionary and/or glossary of technical terms of subjects like Economics or Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Accountancy etc.
- (iii) Take a page in Hindi related to the above subjects.
- (iv) Discuss in groups and attempt a translation
- (v) Write an essay on the use you made of the tools of translation (dictionary, glossary etc.) in translating the page.



End of the Unit - Review Questions

1. Comprehension

- a. What is translation? Is it a *transference of language* or a *recreation of thought and emotions from one language to another*. Give your opinion.
- b. What is meant by *carrying across* in translation?
- c. Is it possible to identify a *source text* and a *target text*? What would you use?
- d. In what way is translation a complex activity? State the various steps of the process of translation?
- e. What are the different challenges of translation?
- f. Is translation a homogenous activity? Do different kinds of texts pose a unique set of problems to the translators? Explain with illustrative examples.
- g. Translation can help in bringing together different cultures, their commonalities and uniqueness, Discuss.
- h. How does the grasp of the culture of the *source text* and *target text* improve a translation?
- i. How does a translation overcome untranslability of words and expressions of the source language?
- j. What is computer translation? What are its limitations?

2. Read the following extracts and translate them in the space given below

- (a) आज वारिस शाह से कहती हूँ-
अपनी कब्र में से बोलो!
और इश्क़ की किताब का
कोई नया वर्क खोलो!

(From Waaris Shah by Amrita Pritam)



- (b) मुद्रास्फोति बढ़ने से चिंतित भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक ने बुधवार को अल्पावधि रेपो दर को 0.24 फीसदी बढ़कर 7.40 फीसदी कर दिया।

3. On the basis of your translation, answer the following:

- (a) Define a tool of translation?

- (b) Will you, as a translator of the above, require tools of translation?

- (c) What are the different tools of translation?

- (d) Will you need different tools of translation for the two different source texts above? Why?

- (e) Can this text be translated using a Machine Translation tool?

- (f) What kind of texts would require a Machine Translation (MT) tool? Why?

4. Read the following text and answer the questions that follow.

- (a) इस समय भारत विज्ञान के क्षेत्र में नई ऊँचाइयों को छू रहा है।



(b) मेरा मन
सुध-बुध खो रहा है।
कोई वंचना अवश्य हुई है
मेरा मन
सुध-बुध खो रहा है।

(c) कॉलेज के क्लर्क ने कहा, “छट्ठहर-जैसे आये थे, गैण्डा बनकर जायेंगे। देख लेना चाचा।”

(d) प्रथम सार्वजनिक कम्प्यूटर ENIAC (एलेक्ट्रॉनिक न्यूमेडिकल इंटिग्रेटर एंड कैलकुलेटर) अमरीका के पेन्सिलवेनिया विश्वविद्यालय में सन् 1946 में प्रस्तुत किया गया था।

(i) *Classify the above texts as:*

- (a) literary text _____
(b) technical text _____
(c) cultural text _____
(d) texts of specific register _____

(ii) *Translate the above texts:*

- (a) _____
(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

(iii) *Now answer the questions given below.*

- (i) What different tools of translation did you use for translating the above texts?
Be specific



(ii) In the context of the above texts, how would you explain the importance of the following as tools of translations?

- (a) Dictionary _____
- (b) Grammar _____
- (c) Culture-history _____
- (d) Glossary of register _____
- (e) Computer Software _____

5. Give the meaning of the following words:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| a) Etymology | h) Rhetorical translation |
| b) Metaphrase | i) Diffusion (in translation) |
| c) Paraphrase | j) Adaptation |
| d) Equivalents of intent | k) Semantics |
| e) Equivalent-text | l) Fidelity (in translation) |
| f) Language barrier | m) Transference |
| g) Concrete words | n) Cultural Connotation (in translation) |

6. Writing Tasks - For the Portfolio

a) Given below is a short poem in Hindi. Read it and complete its translation by using the words and expressions, given in the box below.

ममत्व

न दुर्लभ हैं
न है। अनमोल
मिलते ही नहीं
इहलोक में, परलोक में
आँसू... अनूठे प्यार के,
आत्मा के
अपर -अगाध अति-विस्तार के!

हृदय के घन-गहनतम तीर्थ से
इनकी उमड़ती है घटा,
और फिर ...
जिस क्षण
उभरती चेहरे पर
सत्त्व भावों की छटा -
हो उठते सजल
दोनों नयन के कोर,
पोछ लेता अंचरा का छोर!

Translation



Complete the translation by using words given in the box below.

Affection

They are neither rare

Nor a) _____

Not at all available

On earth or in heaven

Tears....of b) _____

Of the soul

Of c) _____ unfathomable!

A dark cloud of tears surges

Form the d) _____

Pilgrimage of the e) _____

And then.....

At that movement when

The _____ of holy feelings

Spreads on the face _____

Both eyes filled with tears,

The edge of the *sari* wipes them away!

Deep undiscovered

Unique love

heart

Splendour

Expanse

Precious

- b) Read this excerpt from a short biography of Amrita Pritam in Hindi. Translate it into English.

You may use the words and expressions given in the box below.

अमृता प्रीतम का जन्म गुजरांवाला में सन् 1919 में हुआ। उन्होंने छोटी उम्र से ही लिखना शुरू कर दिया। उनकी कविताओं के दो शुरुआती संग्रह 'ठंडियां किरणा' (1935) और 'अमरित लहरा' (1930) पारंपरिक अभिप्रायों और विषयों से निर्मित भावुकतापूर्ण उपदेश हैं। मार्क्सवादी विचार और प्रगतिशील लेखक आंदोलन के सम्पर्क में

आने के बाद ही उन्होंने सामाजिक और राजनीतिक कविताएँ लिखनी शुरू कीं। इस दौर की उनकी महत्वपूर्ण मुद्राएँ मिलती हैं। 1940 में देश-विभाजन के समय वे नई दिल्ली आ गईं। यहाँ पर उन्होंने अपनी मातृभाषा छोड़कर हिन्दी में लिखना शुरू किया। विभाजन और उसके परिणामस्वरूप बड़े पैमाने पर औरतों की बेइज्जती, अपमान और बलात्कार ने उनके लेखन पर जबरदस्त असर डाला। उनकी रचना 'पिंजर' (1970) इस अवधि का एक मर्मस्पर्शी लेखा-जोखा है, जिसमें धार्मिक और राजनीतिक संघर्ष उनके स्त्रियोचित सरोकारों के नजरिए से देखे गए हैं। अमृता प्रीतम 1956 में साहित्य अकादमी पुरस्कार जीतने वाली पहली कवयित्री थीं। यह पुरस्कार उनकी रचना 'सुनहरे' को मिला। इसमें भाग्य और सामाजिक कुप्रथाओं के खिलाफ एक स्त्री की चीख दर्ज हुई है।

Verse, sentimental, homiles, motives and themes,
conventional, under the influence of, progressive writers'
movement, important works, protest and self-pity, gravel
stones' indignation and humiliation,
Traumatic violation of womankind, conflict, feminine
concerns.

7. Project Work

Work in groups of four or five and do the following :

- (a) Collect *two* short poems and *two short* stories in Hindi and translate them into English.
- (b) Discuss in groups the various aspects of translation process such as
 - language, including idiomatic expressions
 - Cultural contexts
 - Intention of the speaker, character or writer
- (c) Choose a literary text and a technical text of your choice. Read the texts in groups of 5-6 and the translate them making use of the different tools of translation.
- (d) On the basis of your translation of the two texts, make a presentation on the importance of the tools of translation in the translation of the texts of different registers.

