



TRANSLATING FICTION: AN APPROACH IN PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

At present, translation has gained much importance in the transmission of culture and custom of one country to another country. The spread of colonization evoked an urge in the literary aspirants to explore the diversity in the literary exposition across the world. Generally a translator needs to be proficient in the source language and the target language. Apart from that the translator has to continue the work with a psychological approach. The linguistic and the formalistic features of the novel are to be analyzed prior to the translation. First of all; the crux of the story is to be understood. Apart from the settings, character and the language, the translator has to consider other features like the individual part of the text, the tone, the point of view and the diction. In the post-modern novel the language has been used both in a general and in an experimental form. Translation is not only a linguistic activity but it also maintains the linguistic unity among the different states. Apart from the translation of fiction, the other genres of literature also contribute much for the transmission of the historical, social, economical and political saga of a country to another country.

Keywords:- National Integration, multilingualism, cultural transmission, cultural ambassador, settings, characters, language

INTRODUCTION

Literature being the cornerstone of intellectual arena, it plays a decisive part in the transmission of knowledge. It encompasses different genres of literary expression. More than being a knowledge hub, it plays a vital role in the structuring and refinement of the mind. No other arena of knowledge makes the human mind so lively and teeming with energy. It kindles our tender feelings and gives a soothing flow to our thoughts. It enhances the power of our intellectual domain and thereby enhances the acceptability of our personality in the society. And it becomes fruitful when it is channelized properly and the common people become the beneficiaries. Apart from being a social agent, it plays a major part in academic activities. Its scope has been widened through seminars, symposiums, translations etc.

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At present, the translation has gained much importance in the transmission of the culture and of one country to another country. The spread of colonization brought in cultural diversity and has been explored at various levels in the literary exposition across the world. The diversity of the nations necessitates emphasis on essential unity which would overlook linguistic and religious differences.

The world has become a global village and so translation gets priority in every respect. It is relevant in terms of the linguistic and socio-cultural factors too. Some people have a contradicting notion that translation process is a secondary activity and it is a tedious effort. They are totally oblivious of its literary features. Generally a translator needs the primary knowledge about the source language and the target language. Apart from that the translator has to keep on his work with a psychological approach. Otherwise it would result in chaos. A glimpse into the world literature and translation may prove that the novelists are contributing much with regard to its literariness.

Presently, the various genres of literature such as poems, essays and novels have been translated from one language to another language. A translator should have literary and linguistic proficiency in order to translate poems. In the case of essays, rich vocabulary is predominant. While translating novels, factors like characterization, settings and language are to be considered. The post –modern novels are to be considered in a different way as it makes use of these factors in different ways.

Translating a novel into another language needs painstaking efforts. Primarily the novel is unique in its features and potentialities. So the translator needs to have a thorough idea about characterization; its development; whether linear or spiral; flat or round and the behavioral patterns as well. The characters are interrelated with the settings and the thematic structure of the novel. All these factors are more or less related to the whims and the fancies of the novelist. The characterization needs meticulous observation from the part of the novelist. While translating the novel, the translator has the responsibility to internalize the hardships made fruitful by the novelist for the purpose of making it more or less perfect. He has to consider the mood, state of mind of the character and the way of speaking. In this regard, translator should be very conscious of the choice of words which the characters reproduce. It should not be an impediment in the evolutionary stages of a character.

The settings of a novel play an important role in creating atmosphere, tone or mood to the novel. It changes according to the nation, language and character traits etc. It is indirectly related to the characters placed in it. The settings relate the characters to the atmosphere or it gives room for the existence of the character. So the translator should have the knowledge about the description provided in the novel. In some of the novels, even the minute



descriptions add beauty to the entire atmosphere. Normally, some translators negate the importance of settings and thereby do injustice in the process of translation.

Language is the medium which interconnects the characters and the settings provided in the novel. While translating the dialogues, the translator should internalize the mood of the character who delivers the dialogue. Importance should be given to the usage of the punctuation marks as well. Otherwise, it will affect the whole structure or some part of the novel would become unintelligible for the readers. The process of translation demands clarity in expression. It depends on the caliber and the general literary knowledge that a translator is in possession. Some of the novel contains colloquial dialogue exchanges. While translating it, he should have the knowledge of the colloquial usage of the language in that country and make sure of its meaning in that context. Sometimes, there are possibilities for the application of intertextuality in novels. So the translator should make use of a good dictionary. And the logical sequence of the novel should be maintained properly. Only then his attempt becomes fruitful.

All these factors are imperative in the translation process. Each translator has the emotional responsibility of sustaining the grandeur expressed in the novel by the author. And he should transfer the cultural milieu of one country to that of another country. And the translator should not have a biased view about a particular culture. That means he has to retain the standard of the cultural background in the target language.

The linguistic features of the novel are to be analyzed prior to the translation. At first; the crux of the story is to be understood. Apart from the settings, character and language, translator has to consider other formalistic features like the individual part of the text, tone, point of view and the diction. The translator should examine how these factors are interrelated in the novel. Only then he will have a comprehensive idea about what the novelist had in mind regarding novel.

Most of the post-modern novels are identified as using sophisticated narrative techniques. Unlike the realistic novel in the 20th century, novels of today stand apart in its theme, narration, characterization and the evolution of theme etc. When we think of the setting in the post-modern novels, one can understand that it is not linear and sometimes intertwined with the characters and the thematic structure of the novel. Whereas, some other novel do not give much importance to the settings or create a very fictitious background in which the characters are made possible. Instead, the novelist tries to convince the readers of it through the actions of the leading characters and thus, indirectly serves the purpose.

The characters in the post-modern novels are diverse in their expression. Most of the characters are made possible through the application of psychological principles and theories. The novelists give much importance to the behavioral patterns and the facial expressions of



the characters .And they make the characters speak colloquial language too. The translator takes much effort to transfer the meaning to another language. Moreover, he has to become a spokesman of the social social situations. For this purpose, the translator should have a basic idea about the pulse of the social system upon which the theme of the novel has been expanded. He should be aware of the mindset of the characters. That means the translator has more responsibility unlike the translators in the 20th century.

In the post-modern novel, the language has been used both in a general and in an experimental form. Today's characters speak language with multi-dimensions. So the translator is should understand the scope of the language used in the novel and the extent to which it has been made use of through the characters. The translator needs to have deep knowledge while translating novels especially from the cultural background that the readers are not familiar with. Especially, the French and the German novels demand shrewd knowledge of the translator about the pattern of speech prevalent in those novels. That means he needs to know much about the history of each language and its cultural background. The post -modern novelists are keen in the careful usage of the language in the novels. They keep on experimenting with multi-languages in a single novel in order to make an overall impact in the mind of the readers. The ignorance on the part of the translator regarding the language may affect the entire structure of the novel negatively. So he should check the meaning of the words using an advanced dictionary. And the translator should try to know oft-quoted phrases and the idioms used in various languages. The translator needs to have much patience in doing it. He must understand the fact that translation is an interdisciplinary activity. So, great effort is expected from the translator.

While choosing the corresponding words for translation, he should select simple words which would communicate the meaning of the words in the source language. Extra care should be given in leaving out high sounding words while using the target language. Otherwise, it would in turn affect the comprehension on the part of the readers. The novelists are also experimenting with the tone of the language. It has been used meticulously for the purpose of expressing the different emotions of the characters. Here, the translator's efficiency in tackling the language nuances should be evident at deeper level. It is inevitable especially in the translation of post-modern novels. He should have a thorough knowledge about the semantic and the grammatical principles inherent in the target language. Otherwise, he cannot do justice to the source text. The translator transfers the cultural milieu of a country, and obviously they can be named as the language ambassadors. The process of translation is a link which maintains the emotional bondage of two different countries which stand distinct in relation to culture, custom and the literary background. Considering the translations being done in the regional languages, we can say that the translators do much in the sustainment of interrelations of different states. More than that, they give a chance for the reader, a multilingual reading experience. Translation is not only a linguistic activity but it also which maintains the linguistic unity among the different states. It is a process which rejuvenates the



linguistic background of a translator and it kindles interest among the readers towards literature.

Some translators have a tendency to cut short the content of the novel, taken for translation. If the source text is voluminous, they cut short some of the contents which seem to be irrelevant or standing apart from the main thread of the novel. It cannot be considered as a good strategy and by doing so; the translator is doing injustice to the novelist concerned. It is the responsibility of the concerned publisher to check it and direct the translator in the proper way. The translator should understand the fact that translation is something more than an intellectual activity. As Andre Lefebvre said “the process of translation has to be studied in terms of the language and text that are being translated besides the questions of why, how and who translates”.

The process of translation helps the translator in enhancing the vocabulary and in contributing new expressions, whenever he finds difficulty in the target language. It renders imaginative capacity throughout his career. Moreover, he should use a dictionary and avoid translation software available in plenty. The translation process is not a tedious activity. It is an activity which refreshes the mind and the translator actually can experience an intellectual journey what the novelist has already gone through. Sometimes the translator can make improvement in the choice of words and at times he can excel the novelist by his knowledge in language.

Here, we can say that the process of translation caters a possibility for multilingualism and cultural integration. It provides unity in the literary field also. Literature affects the affective domain of the readers and makes sure the sustainability of cross-cultural transmission across the world.

Apart from the translation of fiction, the other genres of literature also contribute much for the transmission of the historical, social, economical and political saga of a country to another country. It contributes much more than the foreign visits, foreign policies for international unity, the summits, and the work being done by the ambassadors. Of course, those factors can keep in touch with the international arena of translation. But, it is a fact that translators often fail to feel the pulse of the public. Literature excels in that area. That is why literature is considered as a refined medium to sublimate the human feeling and the readers get an aesthetic enjoyment out of reading it. Likewise, translation also has ample scope to transfer the ethos of the people by the activity. Moreover, the translator can have self-identification with the characters and the situations portrayed in different literary genres. The fiction, being a wide canvas to portray human feelings, it has tremendous possibilities in exploring the human mind and expressing it vividly.

CONCLUSION



While selecting an approach for translation, the translator has to consider all the factors related to a novel. Different approaches are in practice for the purpose of translation in every language. And each one may be unique in its methods and implementation. All these methods are solely depended on the translator's perspective and competence. The changes being occurred to the intellectual domain of novelist in terms of language and characterization may culminate in diverse expressions. So the translator needs to formulate more methods in tune with it. And each approach renders clarity and precision and eventually it helps the translator for the comprehensive understanding of the source language. A translator should have a receptive mind to accept different approaches being used in different languages. Thus the entire translation process becomes a challenging one. And it also helps the translator to seek for more avenues in the arena of translation field.

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