

A Balanced Approach in the Art of Translation

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Abstract

The concept of translation and the process of translating has been always under interrogation. It is more so in the structuralist and post-structuralist literary context. Consequently, there is no dearth of theories. Yet, the issues and problems related to translation pose a challenge. In the modern literary context, translation has become inevitable. Translation, is nothing new. It exists from the very early days of literary civilization. This paper explores 'A Balanced Approach in the Art of Translation.'

Key Words: Appraisals, conceive, constraint, discipline, encountered, flexibility, hermeneutic, invention, metaphysical, Renaissance,

Introduction

Translation has become an important discipline and very much in use in every sphere of activity. Scholars all over the world have taken an increased interest in the subject of translation after World War II. Scholars from different areas as linguists, literary studies, information theory and logic converge, bringing with them models and methodologies to the study the subject. Through the century's terms like art, craft, principles and philosophy have been used with reference to translation. Translation studies encompass a wide range of ideas. Therefore, translation can be classified under two main headings namely pure studies and impure studies. There are more than 4,000 languages in the world and they are not at the same cultural level, no one is confined to his native language only. When he turns his thoughts to the words and phrases used in another gauge only. When he turns his thoughts to

the words and phrases used in other countries, he is faced with the problems of translation. The story of Babel in Old Testament relates, in the form of a legend, the origin of a constraint imposed upon the human race from the early days of its evolution. Translation is blasphemous the sense that God pronounced punishment on those who mumbled their different ways down the Babel's tower and went on their separate ways with different languages. The punishment of Babel is rather patent as it still obtains and continues to confuse.

Translations are many but appraisals of the art of the translator are fewer in proportion. Translation studies is exploring grounds, bridging, as it does, the gap between the vast area of stylistics, literary history, linguistics, semiotics and aesthetics. It is also a discipline firmly rooted in practical application. The need for systematic study of translation arises directly from the problems encountered during the actual translation process and it is essential for those working in the field to ring their practical experience to theoretical discussion. Translation is a subject in which the linguists deservedly discuss the impossibilities of a language transfer, the literary critics engage in metaphysical speculation about 'taste' and 'fidelity' and the philosophers construe the problem more than any one in his normal mind could ever conceive.

Translation develops three essential qualities such as Accuracy, clarify, flexibility. It trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to covey what is meant (clarity)

Translating is not pouring wine from one bottle into another. Substance and form cannot be separated easily. Translating is more than a triple matching of onwards, grammatical structures and cultural contexts-a complex process. Translation has always been an adjunct of creative writing itself. Since translation depends on the two activities of reading and writing, each a variable, the relations will always vary with translators. The reading of the source text provides the translator with the content which includes a knowledge of the original devices. The writing of the target text requires the translator to make up a new form into which to pour the context. Translation is 'neither a creative art nor an imitative art' The translator must be creative, a maker, at the same time, he must submit to the reality of the writer whom he is translating. Translating is a matter of continuous sub-conscious association with the original,

a matter of mediation/meditation. It is an art and it should be in like manner timeless, persistently reappearing as an inevitable response to stimuli felt by succeeding generations.

History of Translation:

Translation is almost as old as language, certainly as old as the contact of a language, with alien speakers. In spite of the fact that it is an ancient craft, it's always been still rather mysterious, and most analyses have fallen short of the mark in defining what translation is, or, at least what it should be. Translation is the essential part of the literary and cultural history of a country. To trace its

beginning or to periodize its development in any absolute sense would be a futile task. The first extending time of Cicero and Horace to the time of Alexander Fraser Tytler i.e., from 46 BC to 1792. The second extending from the time of Friedrich Schleiermacher to the time of Valery Larbaud i.e., 1769 to 1946. The third extending from the invention of machine translation to a reversion to hermeneutic approach i.e., from 1940 to 1960. The fourth extending from the reversion to metaphysical approach to the present time i.e., from 1960 onwards.

Translation, according to Eric Jacobson, is a Roman invention. The Romans, unlike the Greeks, were unable to create imaginative literature in their own capacity. The Romans were more practical minded and lacked imagination and originality. Therefore, to enrich their language the Romans sought to translate Greek classics. For this purpose, they formulated certain pragmatic and realistic views on Translation. The first important translation in the classical world was that of the Septuagint, for the dispersed Jews and forgotten their ancestral language and required Greek version of the scripture. The Bible translation is a great thing in the western world. The Romans imposed their Latin on the whole learned world, because they were political powers. Most important literature and texts of knowledge was written in Latin until the Renaissance. The Arabs had a contact with the Greek world, and they began translating the Greek texts into Arabic and vice versa. Similarly, Indians believed in translation. They translated or adapted, or at times, transcreated the Sanskrit works into Prakrit, Pali and other Indian languages. This is how, the great Indian epics the Ramayana

and the Mahabharata have found a place in pride in the other Indian languages. Secular works like the Sanskrit of Kalidasa, Bhasa and Sudraka got translated into other languages. Medieval translation took place from classical languages to vernacular languages. Chaucer was the first English writer to take translation from Italian and French into English. Chaucer founded a tradition of translation and adaptation. The popular literature began to develop in the vernaculars. The first great English Translation was the Wyclif Bible in 1382. The next was Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D' Arthur*, a free adaptation of Arthurian romance. The first Tudor translations were the Tyndale's *New Testament* and Lord Berner's rendering of Jean Froissart's *Chronicles*.

Renaissance Activities:

Renaissance Activities began in Florence and Sicily. Petrarch and others have collected Greek manuscripts. But with the arrival of the Byzantine scholar Georgius Gemistus Pletho at the court of Cosimo de Medici shortly before the fall of the Constantinople to the Turks, 1453, a Latin translation of Plato's works were undertaken by Marsilio Finici. This and Erasmus's Latin edition of the *New Testament*, which he compared with the original Greek, were two great achievements of Renaissance scholarship and led to an entirely new attitude translation.

Translation is an art and science of rendering a work of one language into another. The craft of Translation is as old as Literature itself. Oral Translation is also there though temporary and often unrecordable. Pieces of the Sumerian epic *The Epic of Gilgemish* of the second millennium BC are found in many Asia countries. This was the case with older poems in Greece, India and China. The Greeks somehow did not have an interest in translation, nor comparative studies. The Romans did both. The first important translation in the classical world was that of Septuagint, for the dispersed Jews had forgotten their ancestral language and required Greek version of the scripture. The first important translation in the classic world was that of the *Septuagint* for the dispersed Jews had forgotten their ancestral language and required Greek version of the scripture. The Bible translation is a great thing in the western world. The Romans imposed their Latin on the whole learned world, because they were political powers. The Arabs had a connect with the Greek world, and they began translating the Greek texts into Arabic and vice versa. Indians believed in translation. The great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have found a place of pride in the other

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North's Plutarch *Lives* in 1579 and Fiorino's Montaigne's *Essays* in 1603 appeared in English. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History* in 1601, was highly useful. Holland used a slow-moving prose. So is the case with Thomas Shelton's version of *Don Quixote*. The last great Elizabeth translator was Sir Thomas Urquhart who translated the books of Robelais from 1653 to 1693. Shelton and Urquhart, infact, were alive to the problem of their author's styles as North, Florio and Holland were not. The sense of exactitude is lacking in George Chapman's translation of *Iliad* in 1611 and *Odyssey* in 1616 by Arthur Golding and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The Restoration writer Dryden's translation of Plutarch's *Lives* and Charles Cotton's Montaigne's *Essays* are better than North and Florio's respectively.

In England, a number of translators have found a permanent place and exerted their influence throughout the ages. Besides the authorized version of the *Bible*, Chapman's *Homeric poems*, Pope's *Iliad*, Dryden's *Virgil* and Edward Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat* might be mentioned. Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat* has brought an obscure Persian poet to the attention of the English-speaking world. Translation is made possible by an equivalence of thought which lies behind the different verbal expressions of a thought. When an English man is thinking of the woman whom he describes, as 'my mother', a Frenchman is thinking of 'ma mere' and a 'meine Mutter'. Among normal people the three thoughts will be very similar and will recall the same memories of tenderness, loving care, and maternal pride. In consequence 'my mother' can perfectly be translated by 'ma mere' or 'mein mutter'. A collection of sufficient examples of this kind of equivalence will raise a question, why then is translation so difficult as often to be described as impossible? 'The idea that for every word in any language there is another word accurately equivalent to it in every other language is essentially fallacious.

Translation and linguistics include studies which place the emphasis on the comparative arrangement of linguistic element the SL and TL text with regard to phonemics, morphemic, lexical syntagmatic and syntactic levels. It includes studies of the problems of linguistic equivalence, of language-bound meaning, of linguistic untranslatability, of machine-aided human aided-machine translations.

Translation have been long languished as a poor relation in the family of language teaching techniques. It has been denigrated as 'uncommunicative' boring, pointless, difficult, irrelevant and the like and has suffered from too close an association with its cousin, Grammar. Along with its other traditional cousins, literature dictation, vocabulary exercises, reading aloud etc. it has been pushed into the methodological lumber room. Only recently, as the communicative movement has begun to run short of ideas, there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional practices such as translation.

For the past two decades or more, translation has been generally out of favour with the language teaching community. It is almost ignored and has become fozziled. With the decline of the language requirement, departments have begun to offer courses now called 'Literature in Translations or Translated Literatures'-a form that still has to be defined precisely,

something easy, something tawdry, something second hand. Departments of Comparative Literature are gaining respectability and perhaps soon will they be called Departments of Literatures.

Conclusion:

The teaching of translation as an art or craft has also been attempted in many of the universities given our question as art of crafts has also been attempted of late by many universities. Given our questioning about the possibility of translation itself, it would seem that teaching someone how to do it is improbable at least. However, whether it is heaven-sent or hell-bent, according to the critics, translation is really something apart from other arts; but it is indisputably an art that demands some scientific temper to mould the essence of original translating.

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