

THE SERIOUSNESS AND IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION (A CASE STUDY OF LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN BALOCHISTAN)

Languages and Literature

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ABSTRACT

An art of translation is our political demand we cannot oversight particularly in our modern time. Despite its native and original creative production, English Literature has been quite rich because of its translations from Russian and European languages into English, and English to other languages of the world. This errand can extremely be felt on provincial and national levels in Balochistan and Pakistan as a whole. Particularly, to decode from English into Brahvi, Balochi and Pashto is the requirement of the 21st century the scholars as well as the government have to concentrate on. There is a vital need of a national Academy to render the literature of the regional languages here in Pakistan into English, because this is the world of an International thoughtfulness to convey and identify cultural and traditional values in understanding the world as well as to let the world to recognize us. So far as Urdu language in Pakistan is concerned, a lot of work in translation has been done from English into Urdu, but a lot should need to be done from Urdu into English yet. This paper will certainly enhance the importance and seriousness of translation which is not only the demand but is one of the scientific skills of our present time we have to get rich in. It can be felt that right now, so far as translation in the province of Balochistan is concerned, there are individual cases and personal literary figures who translated or going to put their precious time into the act of translation that must be systematized and should be protected by a national mechanism to have a standard translation of an International level to communicate

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and be communicated with honor to let the other countries comprehend us.

IMAGE OF AN OBJECT

When I was translating Vincent Van Gogh's biography written by Irving Stone's *Lust for Life* in Pashto, I had to face difficulty in decoding different words that was just because of the cultural gap/chasm/distance or the deficiency of the Pashto dictionary, or the shortage that the specific objects were not part of Pashtoon culture and tradition. It gives me pleasure to record here that how the rules of linguistics helped me. For instance, no word was available for an easel: the frame that supports a canvas or a board, because an easel does not exist and is not a social, cultural, or traditional part of our native day to day life from tent to city life and history. This sign 'easel' is not even part of Pashto language that had ever been spoken, nor been part of 'myth' that had 'thought', nor been 'sign' of the horizontal or a vertical environment that would have had 'signified', as Mr. Culler writes and suggests. Therefore, language is a traditional and cultural gift and our culture did not possess this kind of specific objects, so I had to consider and use one of the two axis: the first one was to find an image of the object that had the exact similarity of 'easel' in the nativity and its inhabitants, to cover either vertical or horizontal poles, to find out an object of having 'three legs', or three-legs-object in the social and cultural atmosphere of the local life. Secondly, and eventually I had to excavate a word either from the roots of a 'picture', a 'drawing', or 'painting', or 'painter', either from a noun-or-verb-compounds. But I was quite lucky that I found a three-legged object in local culture that is used to skim milk to get curd, butter, and sour-milk, from moving and shaking a skin-goat regularly for hours and hours on a 'three legged stand' that is called '*derbalai*' in Pashto. This '*derbalai*' conveyed my message well and it did not have any ambiguity, nor any problem for resident readers.

Secondly, in *Lust for Life*, I was stuck up with the translation of a palette: a board with a hole for the thumb, on which an artist mixes his or her colors. In this word for a typical object my first choice did not help me and

I went for the second choice to explore or make a word according to linguistic rules and tools. This fine arts 'object' (palette) did not have a specific word again in our native life, its history (cultural and traditional atmosphere) and language that might be called a cultural-space. For this problem I had to use a scientific tool. I had to dig out the existing vocabulary to explore another word and the first objects or nouns I thought about were: 'color' (rang in Pashto) and 'face' (ban'ra in Pashto) I wanted to have a compound noun for a palette and I touched 'leaf' (paan'ra in Pashto) with it because the 'palette has the image of a leaf too. So I made and used a word 'ban'rpaan'ra' and for the same object I used 'rangpaan'ra' for palette. In this manner, '*rangpaan'ra and banrpaanra*' gave the exact meaning with a cognitive pencil to translate English into Pashto, with a newly introduced word in Pashto, but giving an image or a picture that was nearer to the nativity or its cultural and traditional values. This is why I say and suggest* either

to use the same word of English or any language translated into your own language (if some one does not have a word for it), or if you really want to translated it into a language which does not possess that vocabulary, then the translator must have a linguistic skill to explore according to the rules of a precise approach.

CULTURAL AND TRADITIONAL GAPS

A methodological approach (linguistic) equips us to over come cultural and traditional gaps and distances, to decipher foreign objects (nouns NP)

* When I was translating from Pashto classics Kazim Khan Shaida into English in 2004, I felt that "The canvas of creation is remarkably ahead of its time. Whatever human mind does or did that exist-on-record until now, remains merely in a few drops of some words, strokes of chisel or angles of a very few brushes yet. A lot of materials, themes and objects, still need to be used. Many regions of million objects are found often. Many studies are still waiting to be explored. It requires an effort for human mind to express itself in art and literature. It is a task to express someone else's ideas, feelings and emotions in the art of poetry. . . During translation I was feeling that whatever the time, events, stories, diseases and unrecorded episodes in between two verses of Shaida had ironically been passed, were part of mystery. The world did not know about them. The critics were far away from those unregistered realities, which might have worn the mask or dress of a metaphor. That had been preserved in the record room of past." (*Selection from Shaida, The Arrow of an Endless Space*, pp. v, vi)

and actions (verbs VP) of a foreign culture and tradition in, either Pashto, Brahvi, Balochi, Urdu, Persian, etc. To tell the truth that an act of translation is really a difficult task, because on the one hand an original writing by itself is a kind of translation of human thoughts, and an 'act' (a translator is an actant, he or she is not a being) of translation from a language to another language is actually the translation of translation that is critical, if a translator is not fully equipped. A translator can use mental space theory, or mind images faculties, or simply can use the rules of cognitive poetics, guided by 'structuralism' to come nearer to the readers' minds. A translator has to either use a cultural and traditional signs and pictures, that should synchronize readers' mind-image, or should use horizontal or vertical values to transfer the meaning of a foreign object or action, because if myth thinks, signs signify then it is true that language speaks and can really speak well, even in a translation . . . 'that we come to think of our social and cultural world as a series of sign systems, comparable with languages. What we live among and relate to are not physical objects and events; they are objects and events with meanings: not just complicated wooden constructions but chairs and tables; not just physical gestures but acts of courtesy or hostility. As Peirce says, it is not that we have objects on the one hand and thoughts or meanings on the other; it is, rather, that we have signs everywhere.' * A translator tries to convey the image of the sign in his/her native language.

TIME AND TRANSLATION

Present, modern and scientific approach does not allow us to use of making or giving words from someone's own self, particularly those sounds and their patterns that do not exist culturally and traditionally in that specific language. These kinds of irrelevant and rootless words won't exist longer in languages, nor will it improve the vocabulary of that respective language, because a 'skill of translation'[†] is not a matter of

* Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs*, p. 28

† “. . . Mysticism is not magic but a scientific and logical approach towards life. I hope that the coming generation of Pashto Literature will add more in this translation. They

literary creative task only, but is a cultural history. Even English translators accept that 'the pioneering work done by Edwin and Willa Muir in translating *The Trial* (1930, revised 1953) is a matter of literary and cultural history. Their great service to English-speaking readers is in no way diminished by the suggestion that there is now need for a new translation. Two factors above all have created this need. Where as for the Muirs Kafka's work had a fairly-tale quality, which is reflected in their translation, we are able to see the work in the light of recent history and thus to appreciate more fully its seriousness and importance.'

In the above introductory passage (J. P. Stern in the Introduction of Kafka's *The Trial*) the master opinion of J. P. Stern reflects that this present available translation of *The Trial*, which has superimposed the previous translations of Edwin and Willa Muir's bygone task of *The Trial* is more valuable and is scientifically authentic that this new translation was done by Douglas Scott and Chris Waller. He justifies that this retranslation of Kafka's *The Trial* is the demand of our time that should have been improved and is scientifically proved that the translation should be redone if it becomes the demand of time, as Stern calls it 'the light of recent history' and he for the sense of appreciation uses two nouns in the form of a value: 'seriousness' and 'importance' and these both nouns can be dissected on the ground of horizontal as well as vertical axis – though seriousness and importance contain tow different scales

of values, either we select Kafka's fist translation of its time as a figure on the ground of literature and then we abruptly shift its ground from literature to a social history the mechanism of linguistics values, then the figure of the first translation will be changed, because the figure will always automatically be altered with the alteration of ground. A ground can also be changed with the alteration of a figure. And during each translation for the translator the significance of 'space and time become

will certainly put more concreteness and corrections to keep and maintain it up to date. As far as I am concerned I accomplished my own choice and enjoyed it." (*Selection from Shaida, The Arrow of an Endless Space*, P. viii)

* *The Trial: Introduction*, p.15

one . . . I feel myself to be steeped in a more dense intelligibility, within which centuries and

distances answer each other and speak with one and the same voice.”

Now we get an impression that its first translation’s paradigmatic axis as value was rather of ‘fairy-tale’. But Stern wants to appreciate Kafka’s *The Trial* to give it the touch of appreciation of his time¹ in form of a scientific approach and its quality of a translation in our main current as a new dimension.

‘The great virtue of the present translation is that it dares to do what the Muirs were apparently not prepared to do – to keep close to the syntax and the lusterless informality of the original. The new translators are not afraid to retain the paratactic, hesitant style in which the strange and compelling logic of Kafka’s tale – the logic of an endless ‘on the one hand, and on the other’ – is conveyed. They have avoided the formal and occasionally solemn diction of the previous version. They have had the courage not to break up Kafka’s long and exhaustive sentence structures with all their qualifications, admissions and hypotheses, and yet at the same time they have managed not to lose touch with ordinary narrative English. While their predecessors seemed to be, as if were, apologizing for the fitness of Kafka’s prose by sometimes arbitrarily varying its structures, the present translations are content to let the text create effects in its own way.’² The effects of the text are codes that need to be justified with the picture that creates traditional and cultural communication.

MAINTAINING THE EFFECTS OF THE TEXT

This was the reason that when I was rendering Kafka’s *The Trial* in Pashto, I tried my level best to allow the text to create effects in its own

* Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs*, p. 29

¹ “It was the happiest, sensational and creative time of my life when I started translating Noor Mohammad Tarakai.” (*Stoned To Death and The Single: Introduction*, p. i)

² *The Trial*: Introduction, p.15

way, even in our native language to give our local readers the style in which Kafka is really Kafka. In this kind of structure sentences, no other writer can ever be called Kafka in our native writing or language. In his second paragraph Stern talks about the demand of the second translation his time acquired: to 'keep readers close to the syntax and the lusterless informality of the original', that is the demand of our present social, cultural and global values. It also happened with me, though Kafka's style of sentence-construction is tremendously strange and is an ironical way of writing, that seemed more bizarre and satirical in Pashto language – but I am quite sure that to be nearer to the figure of Kafka's syntax, is to follow Kafka's original rhythm of sentences and his narrative style, will certainly be new and be appreciated by our native readers I wanted to maintain.

CONCLUSION

Well, finally, looking at the panning shot of my last thirty years involvement in translation, superimposes as though it was on the one hand an official and economical bound in the beginning that was a very low paid errand, but on the other and in the end it became a kind of addiction and madness I could not quit it in any condition or situation. Now I feel that the art of translation will certainly play a vital role in maintaining the idea of present globalization all over the world to bring variously designed cultural images nearer to one another with their different shades of poles apart nations. A best translation is one of the preeminent historical and social exchanges of values that the order of the 21st century demands that will help us to overcome our social, political and psychological barriers in between developed and non-or-under developed countries. In this respect, a well-equipped mechanism of cognitive poetics (similarity, proximity, continuity and closure) can endow us a 'translator' to bring the art of translation onto the level and standard of our main current's requirements – though the art of translation is a critical and crucial act now a days that needs a complete life of a translator to be tamed, but now presently, this art is one of the requirements on UN as well as on all important official stages that are inside the most powerful Governments, NGOs like ICRC or most of the International mechanism all over the world, that they will always remain helpless without an authentic translation. On the other

hand, no culture will ever be introduced, nor be saved without the stream of an authentic translation-mechanism, but supported by an Internationally realized values, and no war, nor friendship can ever be won without a nice and decent valuable translations that is not only the reproduction of a piece of art but the sense that the art is there with a friendly nation which has the merit not only of extreme accuracy but also of maintaining a high human friendly profile of understanding. An art of translation demands a behavior of following the dignity to appropriate one's ethical values to be nearer to someone else's culture in form of the readers brought up nearer to the extremes of the life of other nations through an understandable mode of communication.

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