

## Cognitive Curves of Translation

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### Abstract

Translation is now a part of technology, working for communication, social activities, economical, philosophical, psychological, political, and economic development for our global system on the very edge of an important make-up in form of books and in websites' activities. The art of translation needs to be equipped with a scientific safeguard to keep sustaining its multi-layered dynamics in our present existing situation, that connect one civilization with the other. An act of translator is imbedding culture and tradition with other remote realities of another part of the Planet Earth. This present paper digs out the field of translations from two angles: the 'sharing experiences of a translator on the one side and on other an importance of scientific curves and densities as demands of our main current, to enhance the magnitude of translation with modern scientific studies of linguistics and postmodernism to project and promote the values of transformation, introducing 'main points' to the present translators in Asian languages to follow an imperialistic approach in the art of text-conversion, to well equip themselves. The translator has to become aware of the nuances, shades of difficulties, doubts and limitations as a catalyst agent. This paper will draw a line of scientific understanding to have sustained, modern, and confident improvement in the art of translations we need in our present time while having a shower of different kinds of channels with translations from books to websites.

**Keywords:** Translation, cognitive curves, Synchronic system, cultural and traditional, shift to an imperialistic approach, cognitive poetics

### Introduction

There are many difficulties in various kinds of situations and events the art of translation possesses. Now and then it seems so difficult for a translating-mind to maintain the mood of translation, particularly to uphold a long and hectic project of transformation: rendering a thick book, or, now and then, there occurs another kind of psychological obstacle, to restart the project of translation, to begin it again from a left-over task. A resume in the act of translation is a big question, and mostly happens too difficult to re-continue, or redo a portion. There is another channel or type of rendering to translate in a spoken form, on the spot with an implicit skill, without writing that is one of the most sensitive and critical field and situations of a translator that needs a lot of experience and confidence in translator's inner developed capabilities that becomes a fragile

zone the translator has to be careful about in disseminations, or on the stage of international gatherings.

Once in 70s and 80s, we heard as well as read that language is a natural gift in our Asian academic scenario, but later on it was ironically changed into the idea that it is not natural but is a cultural and traditional gift. Though it is understood that ‘nature’ was one of the ingredients of this ‘selection’ and ‘combination’ we call language. We have to synchronize that the same ‘selection and combination’ from linguistics, to language, or language to linguistics occurs, while promoting and helping literature which can be used as an expertise in the field of ‘translations’ as well as in the learning and teaching of language, that not only the translator, but an anthropologist might learn more from linguistics. Translation is historical, technical, and creative task from Aristotle to Derrida. A translator in the process of translation is a ‘choice-maker’ arbitrator that survives and breathes in his or her day-to-day life’s hectic activities as well.

### **The Poetics of Translation**

An act of translation in its background is a structural ‘balance’ and in its foreground a ‘relevance’ (paradigmatic) and an ‘equivalence’ (syntagmatic) process that makes the vividness of understanding and communication in fictional and non-fictional texts as ‘closure’, from ‘continuity’ to its ‘proximity’. Term ‘continuity’ again covers two juxtaposition aspects: unbreakable continuity during the process of that errand of translation and secondly the continuity of a translator’s own constant practices of bygone years. But common students or scholars will never follow these above-mentioned terms until and unless they been involved themselves in a regular practical translation process. An actual practical involvement with the art of rendering is acquired both for the scholars as well as the critics of translation. ‘. . . the translator’s own style will become part of the target text. And thirdly, the sense of what style is will affect not only what the translator does but how the critic of translation interprets what the translator has done’. (Boase-Beier, 2010).

No global communication and a successful interaction are never possible without an authentic systematic mechanism of translation all over the world, predominantly in the wonderful understanding of different cultures and traditional values of Africa, Middle East, and Asia, that is the demand of our political syntagmatic and paradigmatic axis we are all subject to. This traditional and cultural track, called ‘language’ in translation also carries different shades of values like, taboos, religious expressions, folk characters and ideas, myths, symbols, proverbs, abuses, prayers, body language, etc., but one of the most difficult portions of all these values is how to deal and translate a word or sentence of an ‘abuse’ of a specific language, or how to deal a sensitive name or sign of a human or animal body in a translation in a respective language that must be avoided, or the vastness, or honor of the audience/readers do not allow us using the same negative-shedding-meaning ethically. Therefore, we avoid using the same word with the same meanings and sound

in a transferring language, that is regularly occurring now a days in the translation of our modern movies in Arabic and in English, is an International question of discussion that demands an International seminar or workshop on translations, which can be observed these days in the translations of documentaries too.

### **Cultural Set up and its Typicality**

‘What is wanted and possible in a translation of Sophocles is not a reproduction of his art but the sense that the art is there. Admirable as certain poetic versions of Sophocles are their excellence is not (and should not be) identical with the excellence of their originals. A reader who stands to Sophocles as a monument in the history of the human spirit may find transparent prose a truer reflection than verse . . . the choral portions have been left untouched or very slightly edited; their differences from the “spoken” portions should be perceptible, and the use of italic type as well as the retention of archaism is intended to make them so.’ (Sir Richard Claverhouse Jebb, Moses Hadas, 1982).

In many traditional and cultural atmospheres, many prohibited words do not suit the given situation to protect the rights and honor of the audience/readers of a specific society that observes a literary ethical protocol. A translator cannot that much be frank or direct to translate each and everything in translation that occurs naturally in its native tone and character. Now and then the value of cosmic human conduct cognitively does not allow us to translate an ‘object’ as a noun or a quality, as it is. Sometimes the cultural set up and its typicality does not give permission to a translator to use the exact code of that respective language with its exact sound and meanings that becomes ‘slippery’ or unethical. These kinds of many examples in a translator’s life occur and can be recorded.

In translating Noor Muhammad Tarakai’s (former assassinated president of Afghanistan) five novels and two short stories (Tarakai, 2018) from Pashto into English, was a big cultural and social gap of Pashtun-nation and native British or American or European English speakers and readers, where as a translator, I had to face many problems and two of them are, to transfer the sense or sign as it is, though that translation is or seems to be as strange and new for the English readers was necessary, to inform them (English readers) about the typicality of that translated version of the language (Pashto language and culture) that would sound strange.

Sometimes a translator goes directly to the meaning or shade of that specific language which certainly seems or strikes eccentric but the translator deliberately chooses it as it is merely to convey a message as a piece of information in the next translating language – that is a kind of new information and the translator, intentionally and directly tries to translate it, giving the flavor of the language as it can be observed mostly in Russian translations of Russian lives and traditions.

One of the biggest problems of translation in Afghanistan and 40% in Pakistan (in regional language of Pakistan: Urdu, Pashto, Sirayiki, Sindhi, Punjabi, and Hazaragi, and in Afghanistan: Dari, Tajiki, Uzbaki and in Iran Persian languages) is that translators present and create their own words and terms what they think is best if they never find the same word or expressions, or even a term or a name in their respective dictionaries that do not have any scientific or linguistic values. It means that, they are giving or translating words from their own self imagined guess-like capability that does not possess any scientific skill or scientific roots of scientific worth. These kinds of translations can be improved, if they get skilled in scientific approach and its rules, they will certainly find that words are already available, if scientifically explored or excavated in that specific language as a field of neologism.

There are various translations of the same text in different times. 'I am all too aware of the considerable debt I owe to the legion of earlier translators of Rimbaud. They are too numerous to list or to comment on in any detail. Not surprisingly, given the difficulties of a lot of Rimbaud's visionary, mysterious writing, the quality of translation has been uneven. Too faithful a rendering, down to exact line length, in the French syllabic tradition can be pedestrian, especially if accompanied by insistent end-stopping and rhyme.' (Sorrell, 2009). And Sorrell is quite genuine in mentioning about the previously done translations which is again one of the demands of translations to be done again and to remain faithful to one's translation act - each forthcoming translation must possess the improvement and quality of its main current to walk with counting steps of its own existing time.

In *Lust for Life*, I was stuck up with the translation (from English into Pashto) 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. These fine arts 'object' (palette) did not have a specific word again in Pashtun life (cultural and traditional atmosphere) and language that might be called a cultural-space. For this problem I had to use a scientific tool and I had to dig out the existing vocabulary to explore another word and the first objects or nouns I thought about 'color' (rang in Pashto) and 'face' (banra in Pashto) I wanted to have a compound noun for a palette, and I touched 'leaf' (paanra in Pashto) with it because the 'palette has the image of a leaf too. So, I made and used a word 'banrpaanra' and for the same object I used 'rangpaanra' for palette. In this manner, 'rangpaanra and banrpaanra' gave the exact meaning with a cognitive pencil to translate English into Pashto, with a newly introduced word in Pashto language, giving an image or a picture that was nearer to Pashtun 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 someone does not have a word for it), or if you really want to translate 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. A methodical approach (linguistics) equips us to overcome our cultural and traditional gaps and distances, to decipher foreign objects of a foreign culture and tradition in, either Pashto, Urdu, Persian, etc.

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. He or she either uses 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. Culler points out, ‘. . . 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.’ (Culler, 2001). Therefore, there is no 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.

### **Translation in the Mirror of its Time**

An up-to-date translation is another alarming task for each coming forth academic projects. Maintaining the timeless charm ‘The Little Prince -- a story which has been delighted in for its timeless charm and transparency, whose appeal so transcends age and nationality as to have made it the most translated book in the French language’ (Saint-Exupery, 2000), though it is through the mechanism of translation that human communication and understanding travels and transcends age and nationality within the curves and densities of dissimilar languages of different social atmosphere.

In the introductory passage of an Introduction to Kafka’s *The Trial* J. P. Stern 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 syntagmatic as well as paradigmatic axis – though seriousness and importance contain two different scales of values. If we select Kafka’s first translation of its time as a figure on the ground of literature 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 changes of ground. A ground can also be changed with the alteration of a figure. And during each translation for the translator, space and

time become 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.’ (Culler, 2001).

Now we get an impression that its first translation’s paradigmatic axis as a value was rather of ‘fairy-tale’. But Stern wants to appreciate Kafka’s *The Trial* to give it the touch of appreciation of his time in the form of a scientific approach and its quality of a translation in our main current as a new dimension. 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 way, even in Pashto, giving the Pashtun readers the style in which Kafka is really Kafka, and in this kind of structure sentences, no other writer can ever be called Kafka in Pashto writing language to keep the readers close to the syntax and the dull familiarity 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 as a style and his narrative style, will certainly be new and be appreciated by Pashtun readers I wanted to maintain.

## Conclusion

Well, finally, looking at the panning shot of my last forty years involvement in translation superimposes as though it was on the one hand an official, and economics 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 I could not quit it in any condition. Now I feel that the poetics 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 are the order of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will help us to overcome our social, political and psychological barriers in between developed and non-or-underdeveloped countries. In this respect, a well-equipped mechanism of cognitive poetics (similarity, proximity, continuity, and closure) can endow us a ‘translator’ to bring the poetics of translation onto the level and standard of our main current’s requirements.

Though the art of translation is a critical and crucial now days that need 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 or most of the international mechanism all over the world.

Many great official gatherings will always remain helpless without an authentic translation and that is our political demand we cannot oversight. 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 value of translation. No war, nor friendship can ever be won without a nice and decent valuable translation that is not only the reproduction of a piece of art but the sense that 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, following the dignity to appropriate one's ethical values to be nearer to someone's 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.

But this mechanism, we call translation should be protected by our scientific looms to facilitate our modern translators as well as readers with more accuracy, to award them translation that is not puzzled, and grips the readers without distorting their image of a language or a nation with the quality of transformation that should be considered as well as accepted as a great virtue of the present time it dares to do accordingly – to keep close to the syntax and authenticity of the original, enveloping the piece of translation in a style in which the strange and compelling logic of another nation's tale is conveyed.

The translators must have the courage not to break scientifically, the authenticity of the original piece of written script maintaining all meanings with their up coded sentence structures with all their credentials, admittance and premises, and yet at the same time to manage not to lose stroke of an ordinary narrative language, either 'into' or 'from' the respective language.

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