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Literal and Literary Translation – Evaluation Mechanism
Ashok K. Chawla, Chief Scientist, CSIR-NISCAIR and Visiting Professor, APU

1. Abstract

As an offshoot of research on different topics related to translation, primarily of non-literary texts that has been accomplished so far in the On-going Translation Training Programme at CSIR-NISCAIR, it was considered that a contrastive study vis-à-vis the translation of literary texts should also be carried out. Accordingly, an attempt was made to translate and compare the translations of literary texts. Though certain evaluation mechanisms to evaluate literary texts could be located, prima facie, the objectivity in the evaluation process and parameters aspect could not be established. While it may be difficult to set-up one objective criteria to evaluate the translation of literary texts, it was strongly felt that taking an initiative in this direction to evolve an evaluation mechanism is inevitable. This paper discusses few examples of the translations and comparisons made on literary translations, introduces the parameters and the mechanism followed to carry out the evaluation and the outcome thereof.

2. Introduction

Attempts have been made by our team in the past few years to analyse and work towards streamlining and organizing the issues involved in translation – quantitative, qualitative and also from psycho-socio-commercial point of view. It was and is widely believed that accuracy and readability are not mutually complementary aspects, especially in the case of literal translation, which are primarily of scientific, socio-economic, political and industrial nature covering patents, standards, specifications, state-of-art papers, social / economic / political reports and white papers, etc. Even in literary translations that include prose, poems, lyrics and literary monographs, though it is a matter of debate, freedom to excel on readability is always fraught with the fear of deviation from the original resulting in unfaithful translation. Though the initial findings of a study carried out in 2013 to analyse the relationship between accuracy and readability vis-à-vis the overall quality of output translation strengthened the perception that readability improves at the cost of accuracy, a further detailed study using larger data showed contradictory results. Style was also included as a component in this study. In order to validate the findings, scientometric study was carried out with improved sampling, processing (translation and proof reading) and analysis to study the correlation among accuracy, readability and style vis-à-vis the quality of translation. Interestingly, the earlier assumption of better readability at the cost of lower accuracy and vice-versa did not hold ground and this study proved that translation quality improves with better readability and style without compromising on accuracy[1]. Parameters devised earlier in the above said training programme were used to check the individual differences[2].

While further study on literal translation remains the mainstream, it was considered right time to apply scientometric analysis on literary translation works to prioritize the issues aiming at higher productivity and quality of literary translation in view of the less number of direct translations between Japanese and Indian languages, which share similarities in syntax patterns and even the cultural aspects in this pair are relatively similar. A preliminary study with limited samples3 for Japanese Hindi pair showed that majority of deviations can be avoided through good writing skills and syntax knowledge of target language; and translating into a language other than the mother tongue may call for a review by a target language reviewer. The initial parameters devised by the author for this study are introduced in the later part of this study.

3. Feed for this Study

Few examples, as shown below, have been picked up from the works that have been undertaken by the author to showcase the issues involved in Hindi Japanese & Japanese Hindi translation.

The below given table lists original script, its google transcription, google or initial translation and finally a modified translation, wherein focus is laid on accuracy and minor attempt is made to add readability. Comments regarding the six examples are listed one by one under the next head - Observation.

Table 1: Six examples of literary translation

Original	Transcription (Google)	Google / Initial Translation	Accuracy+ Translation
अब के सजन सावन में आग लगेली बदन में घटा बरसेगी नज़र तरसेगी मगर मिल न सकेंगे दो मन एक ही आँगन में	Aba kē sajana sāvana mē āga lagēlī badana mē gha ā barasēgī nazara tarasēgī magara mila na sakē gē dō mana ēka hī ām gana mē	今 Sajan ナコンサワンで Lgeli 体内での火災 しかし Trsegi は、減少の目を注ぐ 2 心の中に、同じ庭を得ることはありません	
दो दिलों के बीच खड़ी कितनी दीवारें कैसे सुनूँगी मैं पिया प्रेम की पुकारें चोरी चुपके से तुम लाख करो जतन, सजन मिल न सकेंगे दो मन एक ही आँगन में	Dō dilō kē bīca kha ī kitanī dīvārē kaisē sunūm gī mai piyā prēma kī pukārē cōrī cupakē sē tuma lākha karō jatana, sajana mila na sakē gē dō mana ēka hī ām gana mē	2 心の間に立っどのように多くの壁 私はどのように酔ってコールを愛する聞く あなたが密かに数百万人が保存盗まない、Sajan 2 心の中に、同じ庭を得ることはありません	
इशारों इशारों में दिल लेने वाले बता ये हुनर तूने सीखा कहाँ से निगाहों निगाहों में जादू चलाना मेरी जान सीखा है तुमने जहाँ से	Iśārō iśārō mē dila lēnē vālē batā yē hunara tūnē sīkhā kahām sē nigāhō nigāhō mē jādū calānā mērī jāna sīkhā hai tumanē jahām sē	言わぬうちに心を引かれ、この巧妙さをどこから得た、 知らぬうちに目を奪え、 君が魅了する技を得た所。	身振り手振りで心を奪うあなた 教えて、このコツどこで身につけたの 目魅了で魅惑をおこす術 私の愛が身につけたところから
"कम, मेक इन इंडिया" । ताकत है हमारे देश में! आइए, मैं निमंत्रण देता हूं।	"Kama, mēka ina i iyā". Tākata hai hamārē dēśa mē ! Ā'i'ē, mai nimantra a dētā hū .	来い、インドで作ろう。インドは強い国です。インドへようこそ。	「カム、メークインインディア。」強みあり、我が国に。是非いらっしゃい。ご招待申し上げます。
失われた理想の大地は このまま失われたままな のだろうか この地上は誰のものでも ないというのに	Ushinawareta risō no daichi wa kono mama ushinawa reta mamana nodarou ka kono chijō wa dare no monode mo nai to iu no ni	खो आदर्श की जमीन आश्चर्य इस अवशेष खो गए थे कि रहता है हालांकि इस धरती पर यह भी उन लोगों में से किसी में नहीं है	खोया हुआ उसका आदर्श सँसार क्या हमेशा के लिए खो दिया तब जब कि ये सँसार तो किसी का भी नहीं
希望は道なき道を進み 絶望は作られた道を振り返る 時間をかけた絶望は 人が生きる意味を問いかける 深い苦しみは、やがて温かく 優しい出来事を作るため	Kibō wa michinakimichi o susumi zetsubō wa tsukura reta michi o furikaeru jikan o kaketa zetsubō wa hito ga ikiruimi o toikakeru fukai kurushimi wa, yagate atatakaku yasashī dekigoto o tsukuru tame	लापता सड़क ले आशा निराशा बना सड़क पर वापस देखो समय से गुणा किया जाता है कि निराशा मैं लोग रहते हैं कि अर्थ पूछना दीप पीड़ा, अंत में गर्म एक दोस्ताना घटना बनाने के लिए	उम्मीद तो नारास्ते रास्ते पर चले मायूसी बने रास्ते पर पीछे मुड़ देखे थोड़ी पुरानी हुई मायूसी पूछे ज़िंदा रहने का मतलब गहरे दर्द का एहसास, आखिर गर्मजोश होए कोई उदार कर्म करने को

4. Observations on the examples of Table 1

4.1. Being a non-native Japanese speaker, attempting Hindi to Japanese lyrics translation was found an unfathomable challenge. Japanese translation is google translation.

4.2. Same as 4.1. Semantics, syntax and in-between-lines meaning could be comprehended well in original. However, rendering equivalence in Japanese was a major uphill task.

4.3. Attempt was made to modify the initial translation to retain accuracy with certain degree of readability. Quality-wise, reader may understand the meaning but the flow is not satisfactory.

4.4. This is part of a commerce appeal speech by a politician. Though it could be translated with relative ease, lyrical part in the phrase again lacks in flow.

4.5. Japanese to Hindi translation was relatively less stressful, though the right mood is important in delivery.

4.6. This Japanese to Hindi transposition probably could be called the best attempt, though not so satisfactory. This was probably because of warming up and the feel gained from the author of the original.

5. **Issues**

5.1. Who should Attempt: It has been observed on several platforms that a non-native speaker may attract the attention and appreciation of the native speakers, but the delivery always has a scope of obvious improvements. Therefore, a native speaker of the target language does better justice, provided the speaker has sufficient knowledge of the source text language to be able to comprehend the semantics, syntax and in-between-lines meaning.

5.2. Accuracy: Faithfulness in translation is the prime requisite and thus it goes without saying that accuracy just cannot be compromised. But, the temptation to convey in a flawless flow what author of the original text has said is a mystic trap and the translator more often compromises on accuracy.

5.3. Readability: There is no doubt that readability is important even in the literal translation, but, no one will make even an attempt to read beyond the first line if readability is not good.

5.4. Style: Just as the fashion style makes a difference, style in translation also makes a big difference in terms of reader's satisfaction index, which obviously raises translator's satisfaction level. However, style would fall next to readability in priority.

6. **Way-Forward**

6.1. Basic Requisite Fulfillment: Acquiring good level of ability to understand the semantics, syntax and comprehension is the prime condition. A model called CPCE (Core-Peripheral-Contextual-Essential) has been developed for a translator to reach the core meaning of a word and capture the suitable equivalent from among its core/peripheral/contextual/essential equivalents based on the context and the target requirements. It is based on a hypothesis that a word represents a concept and a concept can have only one equivalent in absolute terms, which is the core meaning. Core meaning of two different concepts will never overlap completely, while the peripheral, contextual and essential meanings will show increasing overlapping with the counterpart equivalents of other concepts in that order. CPCE can be defined as follows.

   i. **Core meaning**: is derived from the concept that the word represents and can be used freely for accurate translation.

   ii. **Peripheral meaning**: close to the original concept but not exactly the same; can be used with some caution.

   iii. **Contextual meaning**: could be even quite different from core or even peripheral meaning but is used in the given context

   iv. **Essential meaning (Implicit Meaning)**: is the implicit meaning; once the core concept has been understood, the idea is adapted and rewritten in the target language in the relevant context, culture and nuance.

Figure 1. Representation of CPCE[1] Concept
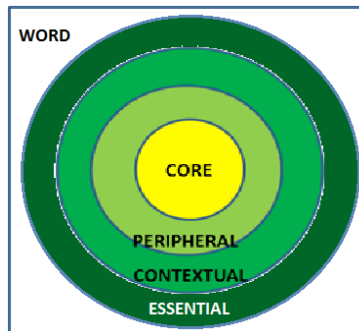
6.2. Accuracy-Readability-Style: As discussed above, accuracy remains the prime condition and with certain degree of efforts that include extensive reading of similar material in the domain, a translator can add good degree of readability. However, for style, intervention of a reviewer, who has good knowledge of domain and target language and certain degree knowledge of source language, is necessary. In the case of literature, intervention of the author of the original is desirable.

6.3. Middle Path: It may not be easily possible to provide for 6.1 and 6.2 due to various reasons. Therefore, the usual time-tested channel of *quantity to quality* may suffice well. Increase the number, create sustainability and healthy competition and impose quality through evaluation mechanism. An attempt was made to create a simple evaluation criterion, which is introduced here below.

Table 2: Translation Deviation Evaluation Criterion (TDEC)

Deviation		Degree of Deviation	
Meaning	Meaning is wrong partly or fully	Better	When output is better than the original
Components	One or more components have not been translated properly, though the meaning is correct	Appropriate	Level remains same as that of original by deleting/adding
Addition/deletion	A clause or word has been added or deleted while translating	Deviation towards negative	Minor for small deviation and major for big deviation

Possible causes can be assessed after identifying the deviations as follows.

Possible Causes:
A) *Source Language Gap: deviations of comprehension in Japanese.*
B) *Target Language Gap: deviations of semantic or syntax in target language.*
C) *Typo Error: errors of typing in target language.*
D) *Dictionary Unavailable: lack of bilingual dictionary that may contain equivalent of a word.*

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[1] *The model has been redefined as CPCI (Core-Peripheral-Contextual-Implicit) concept for use hereafter, as "implicit" is considered a better expression in place of "essential" that fits in instances of translation of literature.*

7. Conclusion

It would be ideal if the author of the original script translates into the target language. However, his may be possible only in rare conditions. Therefore, intervention of the author of the original is desirable in literary translations or else a reviewer from the domain can be extremely useful. In any case, evaluation mechanisms need to be evolved to create right environment in the translation domain. The criterion described in the above text did serve the purpose to some extent, but more objectivity and sufficiency have to be added through use and kaizen.

8. References

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3 Gambhir, Brijesh, Common Errors While Translating Japanese Into Hindi, CSIR-NISCAIR On-going Translation Training Course, 2014.