

CHAPTER I

**A Brief Review of  
Translation Theories**

## PART : I

### **A Brief Review of Translation Theories**

"Translation studies" covers a vast area of stylistics, literary history, linguistics, semiotics and aesthetics. It can be roughly divided into two areas of interest, which overlap each other : 1) Product oriented studies, 2) Process oriented studies. Product oriented studies emphasize the fundamental aspects of TL text in relation to the SL text and in Process oriented studies the stress is on analyzing, what actually takes place during translation.

Product oriented studies includes the history of translation which is a component part of literary history. The type of work involved in this area includes investigation of the theories of translation at different times, the critical response to translation, the practical process of commissioning and publishing translations, the role and functions of translations in a given period, the methodological development of translation and, by far the most common type of study, analysis of the work of individual translators.

The scope of this chapter's first part is limited only to the study of translation theories at different times.

Any discipline is incomplete without the consideration of an historical perspective. The various theoretical approaches make themselves an essential requirement of the study. They provide a framework of principles and, thus, enable the researcher to

understand and to determine appropriate method(s) for his study. To review all the work that has been going on in the field of translation studies will be too ambitious, so only the most important of these theories have been considered in this chapter.

There have been attempts by famous scholars to analyse translation theories between cut off dates or to divide them into periods. F. O. Matthiesson's<sup>1</sup> analysis of four major English translators of the sixteenth century (Hoby, North, Florio and Philemon Holland) in his book Translation, An Elizabethan Art, in 1931, was a less systematic approach, yet one that was still tied to a particular time frame.

George Steiner, in After Babel<sup>2</sup>, divides the literature on the theory, practice and history of translation into four periods. His first period extends from the statements of Cicero and Horace on translation to the publication of Alexander Fraser Tytler's Essay on the Principles of Translation in 1791, in which his emphasis is on 'immediate empirical focus' where the statements and theories about translation stem directly from the practical work of translation.

His second period starts from 1791 to 1946, the year of the publication of Larburd's Sous l' invocation de Saint Jérôme which is characterized as a period of theory and hermeneutic enquiry with the development of a vocabulary and methodology of approaching translation.

With the publication of the first paper on machine translation in 1940s, the third period begins. Introduction of structural

linguistics and communication theory into the study of translation is the distinctive feature of this period.

A vision of translation that sets the discipline in a wide frame which includes classical philology, comparative literature, ethnography, poetics, the study of grammar and many other disciplines, is the characteristic of the fourth period of Steiner, which co-exists with the third and which has its origins in the early 1960s.

Though interesting and perceptive, the divisions made by George Steiner, illustrate the difficulty of studying translation diachronically. Because his first period covers about 1700 years while a mere thirty years have been covered by the last two periods.

One can not deny that documentation of certain concepts of translation that prevail at different times, is possible. T. R. Steiner<sup>3</sup> analyses English translation theory between the cut off dates of 1650-1800, in English Translation Theory, 1650-1800 starting with Sir John Denham and ending with William Cowper, and examines the prevailing eighteenth century concept of the translator as painter or imitator.

A collection of statements and documents on translation compiled by André Lefever in Translating Literature : The German Tradition (1977) that traces the establishment of a German tradition of translation, extending from Luther to Rosenweig.

Timothy Webb in his book, The Violet in the Crucible<sup>5</sup> analyses Shelley as a translator in relation to the rest of his opus

and to contemporary concepts of the role and status of translation.

These kinds of studies are of great value because they seek to investigate the changing concepts of translation. An attempt has been made to put the important theories in a loosely chronological order.

### The Roman Era

Eric Jacobson's rather hyperbolic claim that 'translation is a Roman invention' serves as a starting point for us<sup>6</sup>. Cicero and Horace discuss translation within the wider context of two main functions of the poet : the universal human duty of acquiring and disseminating wisdom and the special art of making and shaping a poem.

The 'word for word' and the 'sense for sense' translations are distinguished in a very nice manner by Horace and Cicero. The principle underlying it is of enrichment of their native language and literature through translation which leads to an emphasis on the aesthetic criteria of the TL product and not on the rigid notions of fidelity.

According to Horace and Cicero, a judicious interpretation of the SL text to produce a TL version was important for the translator, which should be based on the principle 'non verbum de verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu' (of expressing not word for word but sense for sense), and his responsibility was to the TL readers. Another important dimension to the Roman concept of translation was enrichment of the TL with help of SL.

### The Fourteenth Century

With the spread of Christianity, emphasis on the dissemination of wisdom shifted to dissemination of the word of God. Translations of Bible were the outcome of it. The first translation of complete Bible into English was the Wycliffite Bible, produced between 1380 and 1384. John Wycliff (1330-84) the eminent Oxford theologian stated that the Bible was applicable to all human life and, therefore, the common mass should have access to the text in their own language, the vernacular.

The second Wycliffite Bible composed between 1395-6 described the four stages of translation in the prologue :

1. Collection of Old Bibles to establish the authentic Latin source text;
2. Comparison of the versions;
3. Counselling with 'old grammarians and old divines' about hard words and complex meanings;
4. To translate as clearly as possible the 'sentence' (i.e. meaning), with the translation corrected by a group of collaborators<sup>7</sup>.

### The Sixteenth Century

With the advent of printing, the translation process acquired new dimensions. William Tyndale's (1494-1536) New Testament printed in 1525, shows the tendency to offer a clear version to the layman.

In both Catholic and Protestant versions, a large number of translations of the Bible into many European languages were done.

The aims of sixteenth century Bible translators may be summarized in three categories :

1. To clarify errors from inadequate previous versions or SL manuscripts.
2. To produce an accessible and aesthetically satisfying vernacular style.
3. To clarify points of dogma and reducing the interpreted scripture, representing a meta text to the layman.

In Renaissance the Bible translators put great emphasis on fluidity and intelligibility in translation. At the same time accuracy in the transmission of the subject matter was given high premium.

The emergence of vernacular literature from the tenth century onwards led to another shift in the role of translation. To increase the status of their own vernacular many writers translated, adapted and absorbed the other cultural contexts on a large scale.

Chaucer (c 1340-1400) too acknowledge translations, free adaptations, conscious borrowings, reworking and close correspondence in his range of works<sup>8</sup>.

### Early Theorists

The advent and development of printing process encouraged more and more translators. The great voyages of discovery, establishment of new theories in science affected concepts of culture and society and radically altered the perceptives and the first attempt of theorizing translation were undertaken.

One of the first theorists of translation was the French humanist Etienne Dolet (1509-46). In 1540 he published a short outline of translation principles entitled How to Translate Well from One Language into Another and stressed understanding of SL and transforming the spirit of SL into TL culture.

Dolet's views were repeated by George Chapman (1559-1634), the great translator of Homer. Chapman repeated his theory more fully in the Epistle to the 'Reader' of his translation of the Iliad. Chapman states,

A translator must :

1. avoid word for word rendering;
2. attempt to reach the 'spirit' of the original;
3. avoid overloose translations, by basing the translation on a sound scholarly investigation of other versions and glosses<sup>9</sup>.

### The Renaissance

In this era of Renaissance, 'translation became an affair of state and a matter of religion'<sup>10</sup>. One major characteristic of this period is an affirmation of the present through the use of cotemporary idiom and style.

In Renaissance Europe, translation came to play a role of central importance. As George Steiner puts it :

"..... amid the threat of surfeit and disorder, translation absorbed, shaped and oriented the necessary raw material. It was ..... the matiere premiere of the imagination. It established a logic of relation between past and present and between different tongues and traditions which were splitting apart under the stress of nationalism and religious conflict"<sup>11</sup>.



Thus, in this century, translation acquired the status of primary activity and subservience of TL to SL was challenged.

### The Seventeenth Century

With Reformation came radical changes in the theory of literature as well as in the role of translation. The reason behind it was the conflict between absolute monarchy and the developing parliamentary system.

Descartes' (1596-1650) method of inductive reasoning helped literary critics to formulate rules of aesthetic production. Sir John Denham (1615-69) argued that the translator and original writer should be regarded as equals, operating in differentiated contexts.

The manifesto of the 'libertine translations' of the latter seventeenth century is mirrored in Abraham Cowley's (1618-67) Preface to his Pindarique Odes (1656). He boldly asserts that he has 'taken, left out and added what I please' in his translation<sup>12</sup>.

John Dryden (1631-1700) in his Preface to Ovid's Epistles (1680) classified translations under three basic categories :

1. Metaphrase : word by word translation.
2. Paraphrase : sense by sense translation.
3. Imitation : where the translator can abandon the text of the origin as he sees fit.

Dryden also uses the metaphor of the translator as portrait painter.

Dryden's views on translation were followed by Alexander Pope (1688-1744). He stresses on close reading of the original to note the details of style and manner to keep the 'fire alive.'

### The Eighteenth Century

The question of the moral duty of the translator to his contemporary reader and the changing concepts of originality were important topics discussed in this century.

By the end of the century, in 1791, Alexander Fraser Tytler published a volume of the first systematic study in English of the translation process entitled The Principles of Translation.

According to him translation should ;

1. explore the idea of the original
2. re create the style and manner of the original
3. possess the ease of the original composition.<sup>13</sup>

Translation theory from Dryden to Tytler is seen occupied with the problem of recreating an essential spirit, soul or nature of the work of art.

### The Nineteenth Century

In the early nineteenth century the influence of French Revolution of 1789 affirmed the notion of individualism and that changed the attitude to translation too. Imagination became supreme creative and organic power.

One can determine two conflicting tendencies in this era. Translator as a creative genius and translation as a mechanical activity of making a text known. August Wilhem Schlegel (1767-1845) viewed translation as a mechanical enterprise where as Friedrich Schlegel viewed translation as a category of thought.

Post Romantist scholar Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1854) proposed the creation of a separate sub-language for translation. This view was shared by Carlyle, William Morris and F.W. Newman. Newman insisted on bringing in all the peculiarities of original.

J. M. Cohen observes that;

' The theory of Victorian translation appears to have been founded on a fundamental error that of conveying remoteness of time and place through the use of a mock antique language'.<sup>14</sup>

This era also presented paradoxical views on translation. Mathew Arnold, Longfellow insist on the total commitment to SL whereas Edward Fitzgerald seeks to bring in a version of SL text into TL culture as a living entity.

Thus, the main currents in the traditional thinking on translation process can be summarized as followed:

1. Translation as a scholar's activity where the pre-eminence of the SL text is assumed de facto over any TL version.
2. Translation as a means of encouraging the intelligent reader to return to the SL original.
3. Translation as a means of helping TL reader become the equal of the better reader of original through a deliberate continued Foreignness in TT.
4. Translation as a means to offer the translator's own pragmatic choice to the TL reader.
5. Translation as a means through which the translator upgrades the status of the SL text because it is perceived as being on a lower cultural level.<sup>15</sup>

## The Twentieth Century

In the first half of the twentieth century, the discussion in English, on the theory and practice of translation was a continuation of many of the Victorian concepts of translation literalness, archaizing, pedantry etc. The non availability of a solid theoretical base for the problem of evaluation, was also a point of discussion.

The most important advances in Translation studies in the twentieth century come from the groundwork done by groups in Russia in the 1920s and subsequently by the Prague linguistic circle and its disciples. Vološinov's work on Marxism and Philosophy, Mukařovsky's on the semiotics of art and Jacobson, Prochazka and Levý's on translation established new criteria for the founding of a theory of translation and showed that, far from being a dally venture accessible to anyone with a minimal knowledge of another language, translation is as Randolph Quirk puts it, 'one of the most difficult tasks that a writer can take upon himself.'<sup>16</sup>

The stress on linguistics and the early experiments with machine translation in the 1950s led to the rapid development of Translation studies in Eastern Europe. In 1965, J C Catford tackled the problem of linguistic untranslatibility by suggesting that the substitution of TL meaning for the SL meaning and transference of them are clerly differentiated processes. The work of scholars in the Netherlands, Israel, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and the United States indicated the emergence of clearly defined schools of Translation Studies which emphasize on different aspects of the whole field.

The bases from which recent work in translation theory has been able to proceed and develop can be divided into linguistic theories of translation and literary theories of translation. We find many great individual translators approaching different issues from different points of view.

To name a few scholars, we have the work of Ezra Pound, Hillarie Belloc's systematic and intelligent approach to the practical problems of translating and the status of translated text. James Mc Farlane wrote an article 'Modes of Translation' (1953) and dealt with translation and translations from a modern and interdisciplinary view.

But works of modern theorists like J C Calford, Eugene Nida and Roman Jakobson stand out in the linguistic approach to translation theory. Whereas the attempts to explore the process of translation from a cultural point of view are primarily done by literary translators like Andre Lefevere, Anton Popovic and Effim Etkind.

Here's an attempt to summarise the important theories;

#### Catford's Theory of Translation

Catford's theory is a taxonomic approach based on the scale and category grammar proposed by Halliday (1961,67-68,1970) and the contextual view of language proposed by Firth (1970).

He proposes three levels in languages:

1. Grammatical and lexical form
2. Medium form {
  - Phonological
  - Graphological

3. Medium substance  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Phonological} \\ \text{Situational substance} \end{array} \right.$

He gives the definition of translation as

'the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL).'<sup>17</sup>

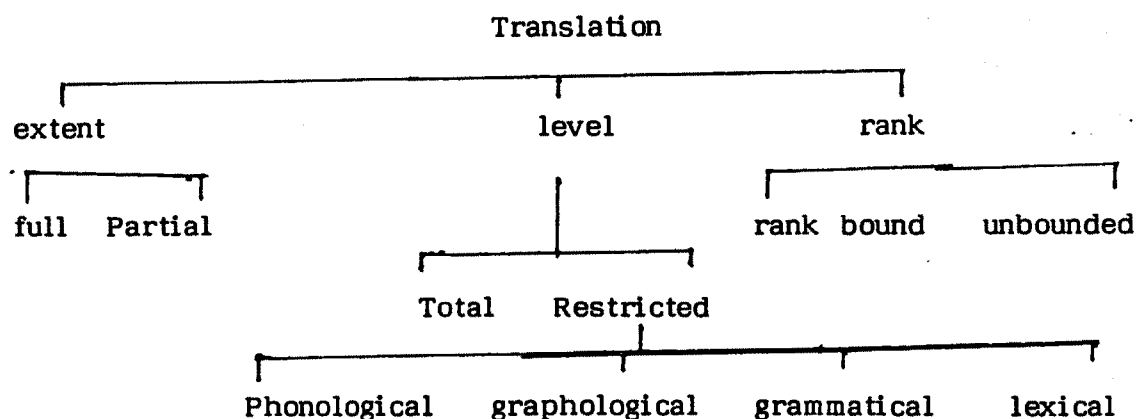
He classifies textual equivalence and formal correspondence as translation equivalence. He insists that the translator must match the situational features of the SL and TL.

'The greater the number of situational features common to the contextual meaning of both the SL and TL text, the better the translation.'<sup>18</sup>

By formal correspondence he means 'any TL category that occupies the same place in the economy of TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL.'<sup>19</sup> He forms it as an essential basis for the discussion of problems important to translation theory and its application.

Catford has attempted to classify translation types into three aspects :

1. extent to which the SL text is submitted to process of translation.
2. formal levels involved in translation
3. the rank in grammatical or phonological hierarchy at which translation equivalence is established.



This classification is confined merely to formal aspects and there is no consideration of the translator's aim, intended relationship and the function of the text.

Catford's theory focuses more on the product than the process of translation. His position is sentence based. There is no exploration of what happens while translating and so it does not go beyond the sentential level.

Catford has discussed the problem of untranslatibility in his Linguistic Aspects of Translation. He distinguishes two types of untranslatibility which he terms as linguistic and cultural. He explains linguistic untranslatibility;

'If the TL has no formally corresponding feature with the SL the text, or the item is (relatively) untranslatable.'<sup>20</sup>

and cultural untranslatibility,

'when a situational feature, functionally relevant for the SL text is completely absent from the culture of which the TL is a part.'<sup>21</sup>

But a deep study of his views on untranslatibility reveal his narrow approach to the problem of untranslatibility.<sup>22</sup>

Explaining the translation of the term 'democracy' he says that the term is present in the lexis of many languages and the context will guide the reader to select the appropriate situational feature. But he doesn't note that the reader will have a concept of the term based on his cultural context and the meaning will differ as per the context.

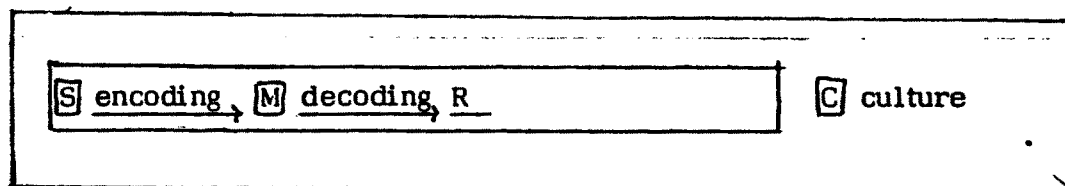
Catford's theory has a limited use to problem of translation evaluation. Though the concept of textual equivalence is theoretically useful, it does not define what a text is.

#### Nida's Theory of Translation (1969, 1975)

Nida presents a comprehensive theory in terms of procedures of translation. His eclectic approach to translation encompasses a great number of insights from linguistics, semantics, communication theory and anthropology.

He sets translation in the communicative frame of reference. His model of translation process is set in an ethno linguistic view.

Normally communication is monolingual. M (message) is transported from S (source) to R (receiver of the message). Both partners, S and R, operate within one and the same speech community in their decoding and encoding of M. Both interlocutors use the same lexico - semantic inventory of expressions and the same system of syntactico - syntagmatic rules<sup>23</sup>. This may be diagrammatically presented as :



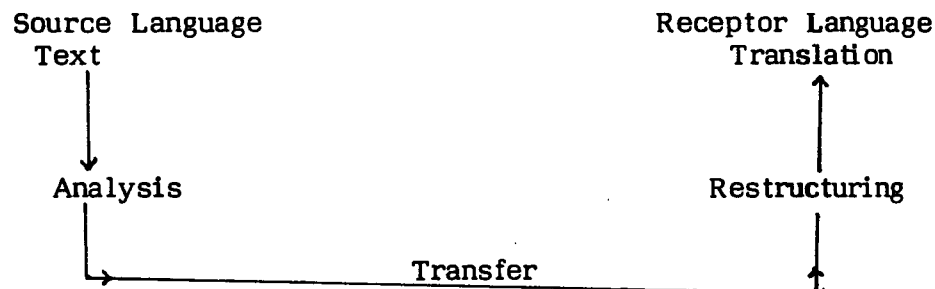


But translation, which is essentially an interlingual act, is a much more complex communicative process calling for alternating processes of encoding and decoding. The [M] formulated in the SL code by the original [S] is decoded by the translator who is the original [R]. Then he analyses and segments [M] on the basis of his interlingual competence, his knowledge of the two cultures involved, and re-encodes the [M] for (R<sub>2</sub>) who are receivers of the re-encoded (M) in the TL.

Nida defines translating as :

"... reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the message of the source language, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style<sup>24</sup>."

He explains the procedure employing in the ethnolinguistic operations as<sup>25</sup>,



Though Nida's theory presents an ethnolinguistic view, we find that he does not try to explore the relationship when two languages and two cultures come into contact in the process of translation.

#### Roman Jakobson's Views On Linguistic Aspects of Translation

In his article 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' Roman Jakobson distinguishes three types of translation;

1. Intralingual Translation or rewording : an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language.
2. Interlingual Translation or translation proper : an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other language.
3. Intersemiotic Translation or transmutation : an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non verbal sign systems<sup>26</sup>.

In the above stated types, 'translation proper' describes the process of transfer from SL to TL.

Jacobson further points out that though all messages may serve as adequate interpretations of code units or messages, translations can not carry full equivalence. This is the central problem in all types. An apparent synonymy too can not yield equivalence but has to take aid of a combination of code units to fully interpret the meaning of a single unit. Since each unit contains a set of non transferable associations and connotations, it can not have a complete equivalent.

Jacobson here gives example of the Russian word 'syr' (a food made of fermented pressed curds) which can be roughly translated as cottage cheese in English. He argues that either in the sense of synonymy or sameness there can't be complete equivalence.

Jacobson further declares that all poetic art is therefore technically untranslatable;

'Only creative transposition is possible : either intralingual transposition - from one poetic shape into another or interlingual

transposition - from one language into another, or finally intersemiotic - from one system of signs into another, e.g. from verbal art into music, dance, cinema or painting<sup>27</sup>.

Thus, Jacobson states that, the translation is only an adequate 'interpretation' of an 'alien' code unit and equivalence is impossible<sup>28</sup>.

### Jirý Levý's Theory of Translation

Levý's model of the intuitive process of translation is based on a pragmatic point of view. He argues that,

'translation is a process of communication; the objective of translation is to impart a knowledge of the original to the foreign reader'<sup>29</sup>.

According to Levý translation is a decision making process in which the entire text is considered by the translator. All the decisions made by the translator are contingent on a given choice. A number of variant equivalence are available to the translator and he makes the choices which are conditioned by a number of textual factors.

The basic components of this process are;

1. The situation : which is an abstract of reality.
2. The definitional instructions
3. Paradigms : the class of possible alternatives in the TL.
4. Selective instructions : which direct the translator's choice among the several available alternatives<sup>30</sup>.

The most important contribution by Levý to the theory of translation is his view to consider the totality of the text to

explain the translator's choice of particular items from the available paradigms in the SL and the TL. The translator's subjective standards in making decision too are taken into account by Levý.

Levý's model for evaluating translations provides interesting theoretical constructs where he states his concept for surplus decisions which has the potential of developing into a full-fledged model of translation evaluation.

His consideration of the entire text makes an important step in freeing the theory of translation from the narrow domain of sentence based approaches to translation proposed by Catford and Halliday.

## Literary Theories of Translation

Linguistic approaches to translation process view translation from a sentential perspective in a static way without referring to the relationship of the languages and cultures involved.

Catford and Halliday though mention 'context' or 'situation', their approaches do not reflect how the context of situation may dynamically change the nature of equivalence.

Nida's theory of translation process does present an ethnolinguistic view but his point of view is essentially that of a Bible translator. Jirý Levý frees the theory of translation from the narrow domain of sentence based approach. He considers translation as a process of communication with the objective of imparting knowledge of the original to the foreign reader. But he does not define, how exactly the situation is to be formally analysed, with respect to the constraints it places on the translation process and procedures.

Thus, the linguistic theories develop the understanding of linguistic process but they do not explicate the effects of the cultural contact simultaneously taking place in translations.

The Literary theorists like Andre Lefevére, Anton Popovič and Effin Etkind attempted to explore the processes of translation from a cultural point of view.

They viewed literature as a secondary organisation and the act of creating a literary text as a communicative act transferring the reality into an aesthetic experience with the help of traditional norms of text construction like genre, form, mode and rhetorical devices. The act of text production is complete only

when it is socially realized, accepted, established in the tradition and integrated with it.

The communicative process of text construction works with the writer as the encoder and the reader as the decoder. This communicative framework of text production shares its essence with Nida's ethnolinguistic theory, but the literary theories proposed by Lefevérre (1971) Anton Popovič (1970) are more dynamic in their treatment of the translation process. Levý clearly shows this dynamism in literary theories of translation.

'A translation is not a monistic composition but an interpretation and conglomeration of two structures. On the one hand there are the semantic content and the formal contour of the original, on the other hand the entire system of aesthetic features bound up with the language of the translation.'<sup>31</sup>

This is what Popovič states:

'The aim of translation is to transfer certain intellectual and aesthetic values from one language to another ...

Translation by its very nature entails certain shifts of intellectual and aesthetic values ... A translation involves an encounter of linguistics and literary norms and conventions, a confrontation of literacy and literary system.'<sup>32</sup>

This argument of Popovič has the polysystemic view of both language and literature, denoting that literature is never a static monistic whole, but part of the ideological milieu of a given era.

Proposing a semiotic point of view, Popovic in his definition of translation equivalence, distinguishes four types;

1. Linguistic equivalence :Where there is homogeneity on the linguistic level of both SL and TL texts; that is lexical equivalence.
2. Paradigmatic equivalence : Where there is equivalence of 'the elements of a paradigmatic expressive axis' i.e. elements of grammar.
3. Stylistic (translational) equivalence : Where there is a functional equivalence of elements in both original and translation, aiming at an expressive identity with an invariant of identical meaning.
4. Textual (syntagmatic) equivalence : Where there is equivalence of the syntagmatic structuring of a text, i.e. equivalence of form and shape.<sup>33</sup>

The combination of insights from both the linguistic and literary theories adds value to the study of translation. Linguistic theories give an understanding of linguistic and semantic problems whereas literary studies put an emphasis on the need to view translation as a value oriented and culturally defined act of communication.

Any act of translation is a linguistic act because it is a cultural act. In the words of Lotman,

'No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its centre, the structure of natural language.'<sup>34</sup>

Thus, translation is a conglomeration of linguistic, semiotic and communicative acts. The brief review of some important theories taken in this part of the chapter helps us to understand, that, though the various theories of translation explain the translation process and procedure in terms of the conditions inherent in their own systems, they do not provide structural features of translation process which involves linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic and cultural aspects.

Levy's statement about the translation theories would help us to understand that,

'Translation theory tends to be normative, to instruct translator on the OPTIMAL solution; actual translation work, however is pragmatic; the translator resolve for that one of the possible solutions which promises a maximum effect with a minimum of effort'<sup>35</sup>.



## Part : II

### **Theatre Translation : Nature and Problems**

What is generally understood as translation, involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two will be similar and the structures of SL will be preserved as closely as possible. That is a replacement of textual material from a SL by equivalent textual material into a TL. The important point is not to consider equivalence only as synonyms in the target language. Had it been so simple then any person with the knowledge of two languages would have had undertaken translation very easily. As Paul Valéry states,

'Translation is not presenting similarities but it is an art of creating analogies. Where the translator tries to create, the same impact and to produce the same result using various devices'<sup>36</sup>.

The two languages are linked not by synonyms but by equivalent textual material. This poses a complex problem, because equivalence comes with linguistic references, with cultural references and semiotic references. Hence, the translation takes place on all these three levels. Each structure lays stress on a certain linguistic feature or level.

Every literary unit from individual sentence to the whole order of words is in relation to the concept of system. The translator needs to understand that a literary text is made up

of a complex set of systems existing in a dialectical relationship with other sets. Every language has a system of literature which comprises of the culture of the language, particular connotations, specific tastes of its authors and their readers, modes of the language and many other related elements.

As Robert Scholes points out,

'Individual works, literary genres and the whole of literature are related systems and literature is a system within the larger system of human culture.'<sup>37</sup>

Translation is a sub system of literature. The importance of this sub system within the main literature keeps fluctuating. For example, if we study Marathi literature of the nineteenth century which was regarded as 'the era of translation' in history of Marathi literature, we find that translation was regarded as an important subsystem of literature.

As the tides change by various historical and social currents, the changes in the relationship between the main system of literature and the translation are inevitable. The translation is then at the centre or pushed to the margin.

Within this sub system of translation itself, the focus never spreads uniformly. The theatre dates back to Cicero and Horace and since Seneca, there have been numerous translations, adaptations and versions of many plays in many languages in Europe. But there is very little and inadequate material available on drama translation theory or theatre translation.

In India, translations of novels and poems were undertaken and published widely, but the modern drama remained largely untranslated, except for Michael Madhusudan Dutta's two plays, 'Ratnavali' and 'Sermista' translated by the author himself for publication in 1858 and 1859 in Calcutta. But an interesting development started in the 1970s with the translation of modern Indian plays from one language into another, as well as, into English for the purpose of stage enactment. The trend was probably set by the Bangla play 'Evam Indrajeet' by Badal Sarkar when it was translated and performed successfully in Hindi, Marathi and English. Other plays from other languages have also gone round like this through several languages before achieving English guise and thereby becoming accessible to any English reading Drama enthusiast in India<sup>38</sup>.

The bulk of genre focused translation study has neglected theatre and hence, except for the statements of individual theatre translators there is very little material available. The need to streamline and extend the discussion on theatre is tremendous. More documentation, more information, more study about the concepts of theatre translation, the changes and modification in the concepts and practices should be taken on priority to enable the theatre translator make better equipped to tackle the problems he faces while translating. The disadvantages of working without an adequate theory are numerous. For example, the statements of individual theatre translators often imply that the methodology used in the translation process is the same as that used to approach prose texts.

Though the literary genres and the whole of literature are

related systems, even the most superficial consideration of the above approach will show that the dramatic text can not be translated in the same as the prose text. Every genre has one or many specific aspect(s) to focus on, and application of general theory in such cases not only fails but can create tremendous problems.

The unique combination of literary and non literary elements set the theatre text apart from poem and fiction. The theatre has the audio visual aspect to set it apart from other genres. The audio visual aspect is enhanced by the help of stage, setting, lights, sound and costumes.

The theatre does carry some similarities with poetry and fiction or novel. Poetry and drama are linked with each other since ancient days in Europe. There are many Sanskrit plays which are basically poetic dramas and Shakespeare's plays too are poetic in nature. In modern times too we have T. S. Eliot writing poetic dramas. The verse structure that is used in both poetry and drama is similar.

Fiction and drama have story elements in common. The fiction writer has to be elaborate in his attempt to create the proper setting of the story, whereas the dramatist can just decorate the stage in the required setting of the story. The novel, if set in historical setting, uses archaic language for its effectiveness, which poses the problem of proper concentration before the reader, but, the play, though set in the similar historical setting has an advantage of the visual impact. The archaic language spoken by the historical character on stage gets synchronized with the proper setting and use of music and lights and therefore is more effective on stage.

The novelist attempts to create the mental image of a character in the reader's mind but the visual appearance of the character in flesh and blood, on stage adds to the credibility of the character. The gestural text proves to be useful here.

Though, the story element plays an important role in both fiction and drama, one must understand that the dramatist's arena is confined to stage. He has to change and create the scene structure keeping the limitations of the stage in mind. Whereas the novelist is at his own will to go back and forth, change and stretch the scenes, plays and times. Thus, the uniqueness of theatre itself is one of the most important problems of dramatic text.

Theatre is an independent yet complex genre. It is an all comprising genre. It consists of architecture, music, sculpture, painting, dance, poetry and many more elements. The famous ancient scholar Bhart Muni has rightly said,

न संयोग न तत्कर्म नाटयेस्मिन् यन्न दृश्यते  
सर्वशास्त्राणि शिल्पानि कर्माणि विविधानि च ।

that is, there is not a single science or art that is not utilized by the theatre.

Of course, drama is not pure literature but a mosaic of various arts which has shades of literature, stage setting arts, and dramatic elements. It is adorned with poetry, stories, sets, costumes, music, lights and acting. Thus, literature and theatre are indissolubly linked with each other.

## Functions of Various Systems in Theatre

The various systems that work in tune with each other to make the theatre successful can be divided into two major areas. - 1) Linguistic systems and 2) Non linguistic systems. But one must remember that though the systems are divided into two major systems, they are not essentially independent of each other. In this respect Peter Bogatyrev's concept of theatre discourse can be useful to enhance the point.

Bogatyrev discussing the function of the linguistic system in theatre in relation to the total experience declares that :

'Linguistic expression in theatre is a structure of signs constituted not only as discourse signs, but also as other signs. For example, theatre discourse, that must be the sign of a character's social situation, is accompanied by the actor's gestures, finished off by his costumes, the scenery, etc. which are all equally signs of a social situation'<sup>39</sup>.

### Linguistic System

The linguistic system in a play is made up by the dialogues, the language used by the characters, the dialects, the registers and the jargon as well as the paralinguistic system.

Dialogue :- It is an essential element of any play. Dialogues convey the message of the writer, the story or the dramatic essence is introduced and developed by them and are used to 'create' the character.

The acmé of the skill of a playwright is in the skillful yet natural weaving of linguistic expressions or dialogues from

start to end. Small, big, terse, lengthy, prosaic or poetic dialogues, monologues, monosyllabic utterances, exclamations, silence all of these are linguistic expressions. Its placements and inter relationship mirror the writer's point of view, his theatrical knowledge and the intensity of his efforts to stage the play.

The linguistic expressions or dialogues take place between two characters or are related to an event or another character. Direct or indirect contact to the audience is expected here. The dialogue delivery is not merely chatting or blubbing sentences out, but has an intense and direct relationship with the core of meaning of the play. The actions and reactions, moves and counter moves develop the dramatic essence and unfold the story through various scenes and characters. Dialogues is the only means to convey it.

Language : A character in a play almost invariably speaks in a language and stamps its identity with the language it uses. The dramatist makes use of dialects and jargons to introduce, unfold and develop a character.

Use of rustic language, non-standard language for a character immediately conveys his social status or the role he is playing. A servant would not use a fine and elitist language and similarly a doctor would unknowingly use the medical jargon and convey his identity in the mind of the audience.

Paralinguistic system : With the linguistic system, paralinguistic system too plays a major role. Pitch, intonation, speed of delivery, accent, resonance, stresses and rhythm within

the language help to enhance the force of dialogue and thus, a character's anguished speech or desperate insistence become more effective.

### Non Linguistic System

Non linguistic system carries, stresses, pushes and enhances the efficacy of the play with help of linguistic systems. These systems can be further divided into mechanical and non mechanical systems.

Mechanical systems : Mechanical systems comprise of stage setting which consists of sets, light, sound, costume and makeup. A Proper, crafty and creative use and manipulation of these systems makes a play performable.

Non mechanical systems : Non mechanical system is made up of actors, singers and dancers. Actors are the backbone of a play. They carry the play on their tough shoulders. A fine and creative use of linguistic as well as mechanical systems by the actors make the play more than successful. The performability is impersonated by the actors.

The linguistic and mechanical systems bring the quantitative efficacy and the qualitative mark is stamped by the actors only and the overall effect is produced.



### Specific Problems in Translating Dramatic Texts

Drama is an audio-visual medium. In this respect, it stands out among other genres like poetry and novel. The full potential of any drama is realized only in its performance. That's why a theatre text or dramatic text is written and read differently. If it is written and read devoid the intention of its ability to perform, it is regarded as something incomplete. The theatre text is written with an intention to perform it with the help of other corelated systems of stage like acting, setting, makeup, sound, lights and so on. A poem or a novel is for personal reading but drama is essentially a team work. The translator has to take into account the structure of the play, its structural basis and its language. Language is like the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy. So the translator can not neglect the body - the culture that surrounds the text.

The text presents the translator with a central problem whether to translate the text as a purely literary text or to try to translate it for its function as one element in another more complex system.

As work in Theatre Semiotics has shown, the linguistic system is only one component in a set of inter related systems that comprise the 'spectacle'. It is impossible to separate text from performance. If an artificial distinction is created between the two, it leads to the literary text acquiring a higher status. The pre-eminence of the written text then leads on to an assumption that there is a single RIGHT way of reading and hence performing the text.<sup>40</sup>

The written text is a functional component in the total process that comprises theatre. The written text and performance thus, are indissolubly linked. Peter Bogatyrev points out that the function of the linguistic system in theatre is always in relation to the total experience.<sup>41</sup>

When the theatre translator faces the criterion of translating a theatre text with playability as a pre requisite, he is clearly facing a different problem from other translators translating poetry or novel. The reason is a theatre text, written with a view to its performance contains several distinguishable structural features that make it performable. So the translator risking major shifts on the linguistic and stylistic planes has to determine the structures and translate them in target language. He can not save himself from the changing concepts of performance over the period. With concepts of performance, acting styles, concepts of theatre also differ considerably in different national contexts. So the translator has to be alert on the timescale as well as placescale.

To make a play acceptable to the TL audience is another problematic area for the translator. On Indian scenario Rupantar or adaptation (meaning 'changed in form' or 'in changed form') and Anuwad ('speaking after' or 'following after') are the commonly understood senses of translation. Adaptation is an easy way out for many of the translators of theatre texts. Under the disguise of imparting the unequalled feeling of 'at homeness' to the countless readers of the entirely alien world of expression and references many devices are tried. The original cultural references are changed to suit to the TL flavour, to make the

audience feel a 'native presence' new cultural references are added, a few of the original references are totally eliminated, the scenes and their chronology is tampered with, the ends too are changed.

To fill in the gap in the SL culture and TL culture the translator has to be on constant vigil for an apt equivalent. Sometimes there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in TL for an SL item. But some structures can be readjusted and reordered and translatable. If the translator fails in his choice of the equivalent it creates a pale impression of the translation. The translator should stretch and explore all the limits of translatability if he does not explore enough among the available equivalents, the carelessness unnecessarily harms the basic emotion of the play or the particular scene.

The visuality in the dramatic language is its central power. Any negligence to it mars the effect of the translation. If the translator is unable to catch in the proper equivalent phrase or word in TL, it slips through and can do irreparable loss to the translation. The length of the sentences in SL and TL, the particular rhythm and stress system of each language play an important role in creating the visual impact of language.

If the SL play is in historical set up and written in archaic language. The translator is posed with the problem of whether to translate in the archaic language or in contemporary language. The answer lies in the question : what is the motivation behind the translation? If it is the story that is important, the translator may change the language. If it is the age or the style of the

play or the writer and his style is to be presented then the translator has to use his translational skills accordingly.

Another problematic area in theatre translation is the acceptability of SL features in TL. A careful balance of characters, scenes and speeches which is quite natural to SL culture can look and read heavy and contrived in TL. To avoid this contiguous disjoint the translator has to make suitable changes and make the translation contextually smooth.

A verse structure in SL, for example, blank verse in English, which is quite natural to it does not have an exact equivalent verse structure in Marathi. So the dramatic rhythm and cadence which bring a kind of fluidity, spontaneity to a play in blank verse in a stressed, timed language like English are difficult to experience in Marathi.

But 'Muktachchanda' in Marathi is more or less an equivalent verse structure to blank verse. We find a fine and creative use of Muktachchanda by Mr. Vinda Karandikar in his Marathi translation Raja Lear of King Lear by Shakespeare.

Similar problem is faced while translating ballads or a dance drama like ballet. While translating a Marathi 'Sangeet' Natak with full of 'Dindi', 'Aarya' and different types of 'Natyageet' the problem of equivalent structure is very difficult to solve.

Similar is the problem with regard to a particular form or style to a language. For example, 'Kirtankari' style and the style of Musical dramas in Marathi have their own charm and they are used effectively to create and convey the right mood and

message to the audience. These styles do not exist nor do they have any equivalent styles in English. Translation of plays in such styles create problem of untranslability or, what Catford distinguishes as linguistic and cultural level. There is no substitute in the target language.

So, the translator, if he can not find an equivalent style has to create a new one! For example, a Marathi play 'Mahanirvan' by Satish Aalekar is fully soaked in the flavour of 'Kirtankari' style. The speciality of this style lies in brief dialogues which are repeated for impact and use of typical and customary rhymes. The play is translated as 'The Dread Departure' by Gauri Deshpande in English. In her attempt to create an equivalent style of 'Kirtankari' style which can be acceptable, she has used terse and brief and rhyming sentences as well as sing song style for the particular rhymes structure in Kirtankari style.

भाऊराव : ... (सुरात) जिवंतपणी यातना बोलून दाखवता येतात. परंतु एकदा का पंचप्राण कुडीतून गेले, की बातच अलाहिदा. यातना फक्त सोसायच्या. ... (सुरात) ... बोलून दाखवल्या, तरी कोणास ऐकू जात नाहीत. ऐकू जात नाही, कितीही आक्रोश केला, तरी कुणी लक्ष देत नाही. कारण काय तर, पंचप्राण नाहीत.<sup>42</sup>

Bhaurao : ...(singing) when you're alive your sorrows are for sharing. But when you are dead, they are only for bearing. If you try to share, no one's gonna care. You can shout but you have no doubt. And why does none hear your cry? Because you haven't got any juice, you're dry<sup>43</sup>.

The vast cultural difference between SL and TL sometimes compels the translator to make some quaint adjustments and this stretching exercise results into an odd translation in the above stated example of Mahanirvan by Satish Aalekar, hindu cremation customs are used as backdrop. The conceptual content is partially translatable in English, but the customary religious songs are totally untranslatable in English. But the songs serve as the infrastructure of this satire on Hindu cremation customs. Gauri Deshpande has translated those songs in carols. Though it serves the purpose of 'religious touch' it sounds odd because of the different connotations they carry.

Use of different dialects in the play and their appropriate and equivalent translation is one more problem that a theatre translator faces. Catford points out,

'Dialect is a language variety, marked by formal and/or substantial features relatable to the provenance of a performer group of performers in one of the three dimensions - space, time and social class'<sup>44</sup>.

The different registers, dialects are simply unavailable in TL. Different colloquial words like "यार", "पचका" in Marathi to pose a problem. The translator, then, either has to make do with not so equivalent dialects or has to create one. If the character in the play is speaking in a rustic dialect, the rustic dialect in TL does not every time has a similar expression.

Sometimes a corresponding expression is available in TL, but it merely substitutes one word for another. It does not substitute the right emotion or the right sign of SL in TL. Some

special dishes or festivals are inherent to a culture. For example, dishes like 'Shrikhand', 'Puri' or festivals like Diwali, Dashahara are linked with indian culture. If the translator tries to uproot these traditional specialities or customs to suit to the TL culture the essence of the work in SL will be destroyed. So the translator should as far as possible try to retain the specialities in the TL with explanatory notes to them.

The translation of idioms, metaphors, puns and other such linguistic expressions in the play, that are culture bound, also stage a problem for the translator. Translation of such linguistic expressions involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages. In the translation of idioms and metaphors, the process may involve discarding the basic linguistic elements of the SL text so as to achieve Popovic's goal of 'expressive identity' between SL and TL text.

Dagut's remarks about the problems of translating metaphor are interesting when applied also to the problem of tackling idioms:

'since a metaphor in the SL is, by definition, a new piece of performance, a semantic novelty, it can clearly have no existing 'equivalence' in the TL : what is unique can have no counterpart. Here the translator's bilingual competence - 'le sens' ... is of help to him only in the negative sense of telling him that any equivalence in this case can not be 'found' but will have to be 'created'. The crucial question that arises is thus whether a metaphor can, strictly speaking, be translated as 'such' or whether it can only be 'reproduced' in some way.<sup>45</sup>

So the translator has to consider the function of the linguistic expression or idiom or metaphor first and then determine the stylistic equivalent that would substitute the SL expression with an equivalent function in the TL.

The linguistic expression unique to a culture bound sub genre in SL also poses a difficult problem to a theatre translator. Marathi theatre culture is obviously a sub culture in the vast culture of Indian Theatre. 'Tamasha', 'Dashavatar', 'Gondhal' are very unique sub genre, in Marathi. It is very difficult to find an equivalent sub genre even in other Indian languages or sub cultures. Because the worlds in different sub cultures in different societies which are part of a one vast society have their own identity. They are not the same world with different labels attached to them. So translating such linguistic expressions and sub genres in English create problems of cultural as well as linguistic untranslatibility. A commendable attempt to translate the form of 'Loknatya' in English is carried out in a translation of 'Vichacha Mazi Puri Kara' a famous Loknatya by Vasant Sabnis as 'Tempt Me Not'.

As Dr. G. N. Devy points out, 'Translations from the languages of the dominated people into the languages of the dominating people are attempted very little in number and with a great degree of 'artistic' freedom which in fact is an articulation of the commanding political position'.<sup>46</sup>

Dr. Devy further points out that translations are motivated by the languages' political characters. In a country like India, where language is the main source of social stratification,



translation, therefore become a more sensitive barometre for social transitions. Therefore, a translated play from English into Marathi may attract more audience but the viceversa will be unpredictable.

There are innumerable problems that a theatre translator faces and with each text he translate, the problems do not diminish but either change the nature or multiply in number. With other types of translations, the central issue is concerned with the function of the text to be translated. One of the functions of theatre is to operate on other levels than the strictly linguistic and the role of the audience assumes a public dimension not shared by the individual reader, whose contact with the text is essentially a private affair.

A theatre translator should always remember that a text is complete only when it is performed. Blind following of the surface structure in the SL into the TL would not achieve the desired effect, so the re-creation of the deep structure of each sentence in the theatre terms is necessary. For that a functional view must be adapted with regard to meaning as well as to style and form. A central consideration of the theatre translator must, therefore, be the performance aspect of the text and its relationship with an audience. The translator should resist the temptation of imposing the value system of the SL culture on to the TL cultur. The translator can not be the author of the SL text but the author of the TL text has a moral responsibility to the target language readers. This practical view would make the translation readable as well as performable.

PART : III

**About Vijay Tendulkar and the One Act Play Bali**

Vijay Tendulkar is regarded as a master craftsman in theatre art not only in Maharashtra but throughout India. His plays are not confined only in the borders of Maharashtra but have reached far and wide through translations of his plays in Hindi as well as in English. His play 'Silence, the Court is in Session' was a watershed in the national theatre scene. It was translated in all the important languages in India.

Like Badal Sarkar, Mohan Rakesh and Girish Karnad, Tendulkar is a very successful writer. He has translated plays of these notable writers in Marathi. For example, 'Tughalak' by Girish Karnad, Mohan Rakesh's 'Aadhe Adhure' as 'Pahila Raja'. Tendulkar's other famous plays like 'Vultures' translated by Priya Aadarkar, 'Sakharam Binder' translated by Kumud Mehta and S. Shahane, and 'Ghashiram Kotwal' translated by Vasant Deo in Hindi and 'Panchchi Aise Aate Hai' translated by Dr. Sarojini Verma in Hindi are appreciated by the critics. At the same time Tendulkar is a controversial writer for themes and topics like sex and violence in his plays.

He has translated plays of Western writers like Jean Patrik, and Tennessee Williams. 'Hasty Heart' by Jean Patrik as 'Lobh Nasawa Hi Vinanti' and 'Street Car named Desire' by Tennessee Williams as 'Wasana Chakra'.

He has written a number of short plays or one act plays. In a play like 'Bali', his skill in structuring a dramatic mystery is illustrated. It is also possible that he is influenced by the modern western drama and writers like Osborne, Arthur Miller, also the absurdists like Beckett and Ionesco. For instance, 'Bali' seems to have been inspired by Eugene Ionesco's Amedee or How to Get Rid of It which also has a corpse lying in the anteroom. Although the corpse in that play is passive, it is very much present on the stage. Similarly, in Bali the dead body of Prabhakar is lying in the other room but its presence is very much felt on the stage - through out the play. Added to this is the mystery of the murder and how it is unravelled.

### Bali

Bali is a murder mystery. Suspense is the soul of such mysteries. Once the suspense is over, the play ends. In Bali, apart from the suspense revolving around the murder of Prabhakar, Vijay Tendulkar has employed psycho analytical technique to deal with the characters.

When the curtain rises, the story begins at a stage with the culmination of the past events and suspense at its height. Kamalabai, wife of Prabhakar, who is lying dead in the other room, is talking to Doctor Dange. They are discussing Prabhakar's death which has taken place by poisoning and Kamalabai is about to confess as to how the death occurred. The audience tries to unravel the story in their minds as the dialogue of these characters progress.

Kamalabai and Doctor Dange's discussion is interrupted with the arrival of Solicitor Karmarkar, who is a schoolmate and a good friend of Prabhakar. After the solicitor, comes another friend and schoolmate of Prabhakar, Police Inspector Patole. No suspense story can be complete without a solicitor, a police inspector and a doctor. These characters are present in this play too but not in their professional gowns but are seen as good friends of each other as well as the dead man.

They come and talk highly of Kamalabai and her courage as well as her patience in nursing a sick and disabled man like Prabhakar for so many years. Here the guilt starts pinching Kamalabai. While chatting, Inspector Patole mentions a case of poisoning and states proudly that the killer can never get away with his deeds from the mighty hands of police. All this results in Kamalabai's suicide. Here Inspector Patole plays the arm of justice. He unknowingly finds out the truth, unravels the mystery and punishes the guilty. The truth triumphs.

The technique of 'play within play' is very creatively used showing Tendulkar's dramatic skill. An unintentional trap is created and the good natured friends unknowingly punish the culprit. Through the theme and the weaving of dialogues is quite attractive, the initial intensity in the dialogues of the doctor and Kamalabai somehow vanishes in the lengthy and the narrative type of dialogues between the friends which loosens the grip over the audience. But Tendulkar has been successful in showing the various moods of characters changing constantly.

Vijay Tendulkar has taken all the efforts to keep the suspense at its height all the time. The play is mainly a dialogue play and not an action packed play. That's why simple expressions, half uttered sentences, silences, gestural movements even a simple sigh come with a wide range of nuances. The words and sentences shift themselves at two to three planes creating a dramatic effect and multiple shades of meaning. These broken yet captivating dialogues daub the play in a different colour, colours of suspense and mystery. Tendulkar's skill in sounding the dialogues natural is one of the strong points of the play. He has created tension and suspense in the dialogues, thus making dialogues the central attraction of the play. The dialogues between Doctor Dange and Kamalabai are fine examples in this respect.

To conclude, Tendulkar successfully holds the interest of the audience till the last dialogue of the play and keeps the audience guessing as to who the real murderer is. This is the strongest point of the one act play 'Bali'.

The English translation of 'Bali' is an eclectic use of different theory of translation proposed by Catford, Nida, Jacobson, Levý as well as Popovic. Catford's distinction between linguistic and cultural untranslatibility, Nida's ethnolinguistic view accepting cultural influences in translation process, Popovič's stress on transferring the aesthetic values from one language to another were helpful in the translation process. Each one of them proposes a theory of translation emphasizing one particular aspect. So the collective use of these theories proved valuable. The basic point of view in the English translation

of 'Bali' was to make it a functional translation.

Vijay Tendulkar, being a notable and successful dramatist deserves exposure at the national level. The various techniques he uses in his dramas, the handling of the unusual subjects in his dramas need to come to light for the readers residing in different states of India.

The reason to choose 'Bali' for translation lies in its interesting subject and structure. The terse and effective dialogic structure to create tensions and interactions among the characters, the handling of the subject in an unusual way i.e. where the police inspector comes at the place of murder not with a view to investigation and yet unknowingly unravels the mystery of murder, were quite interesting. The semantic, syntactic and cultural problems inherent in any translation and especially in this one act play were quite interesting, from the point of view of a translator. So among many other interesting one act plays of Vijay Tendulkar, Bali was chosen for its subject and its structure.

Thus, in the first part of this chapter a brief review of important theories of translation is taken. In the second part, the nature of theatre translation and the problems that a theatre translator faces are discussed and the third and last part of this chapter presents a brief sketch of Vijay Tendulkar's plays and his qualities as a playwright. It also presents description of the salient features of the one act play 'Bali'.

In the following chapter II the translation 'Bali' in English is presented and in Chapter III, specific problems

encountered in the translation of 'Bali' are discussed. The fourth and the last chapter of Conclusion summarizes the first three chapters and presents empirical conclusions.

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