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**TRANSLATION STUDIES: CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC  
TRANSFORMATIONS**



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### Abstract

*This article discusses the changes within the field of Translation Studies, especially in the cultural and linguistic aspect. Translation is a way of conveying meanings, ideas, beliefs, traditions and values between different societies as well as a process of converting words from one language to another. The study is based on the examination of the problem of translation and the confrontation with cultural and linguistic differences, which are presented by the translator in a way that would not compromise the meaning of the source text. It highlights the importance of translation in facilitating communication and understanding between individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This research is done with qualitative approach of textual and comparative analysis between source text and translated text. It investigates the changes on the cultural expression, idioms, words, sentence structure and grammar levels in the process of translation. It also discusses different translation strategies used by translators to make the text understandable and meaningful for the target audience. The results of the study reveal that both linguistic and cultural adaptation is found in translation. Translators are able to adapt expressions, structures and meanings to the social and cultural background of the target language. The study also shows that translators function as cultural mediators who help mediate between societies via language. The study shows that cultural and linguistic changes play a crucial part in translation and have a considerable impact on cross-cultural communication and the sharing of knowledge.*

**Keywords:** *Translation Studies, Linguistic Approaches, Cultural Studies, Translation in the Foreign Language Teaching.*

### Introduction

Translation has gained significance in today's world due to its role in bridging differences in languages, cultures and societies. Translation in the field of Translation Studies is not just replacement of words from one language to another. It is a very complex process which requires carrying over meanings, sentiments, habits, opinions and cultures from the source language to the target language. Translation can be used to make it possible for people to comprehend literature, knowledge, history, and ideas created in other parts of the world (Catford, 1965; Bell, 1994).

Language and culture are closely connected with each other. All languages and languages systems stand for the traditions, customs, social values and worldviews of a specific society. This link sometimes poses challenges for translators when dealing with cultural expressions, idioms, metaphors and culture-specific terms. There are many words and phrases that do not have a one to one match between English and another language; this makes translation a difficult task. Translators thus employ various approaches to make the text readable without losing the original message of the text. Cultural transformation is one of the major aspects of translation. In the process of translation, there are some cultural elements that need to be adapted, modified or explained based on the interpretation of the target culture. This approach aids in the identification of the reader with translated texts while at the same time it results in changes of the original cultural meaning. In the same way, linguistic changes are those that translators make to the grammar, sentence format, vocabulary, and style to achieve fluency and clarity in the target language. These changes are essential since each language has its own linguistic patterns and structures.

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Some scholars have expressed their views on the significance of cultural and linguistic change in translation. Some scholars maintain that the translator should stay faithful to the source text and others advocate the adaptation of the source text to the culture and requirement of the target audience. The various views demonstrate that translation is both linguistic and cultural. In addition to conveying words from one language to another, translators also serve as the link between two cultures.

This study is designed to investigate the cultural and linguistic changes which occur during the translation process. It looks at the issues that arise for translators and how they apply strategies to ensure meaning and relevance within the culture. The study also underscores the importance of the translation process to enable intercultural exchanges and understanding between different societies. In this research, it is shown how translation is connecting languages and cultures.

## **1. Literature Review**

Translation studies has gained significance as a branch of research, as it deals with the connection between language, culture, and communication. Various academics have commented on the act of translation, not only as the conveyance of words from one language to another but as the conveyance of meaning, sentiment, and culture. Research has demonstrated that translation has been an important component of bridging societies and understanding different cultures.

According to Susan Bassnett (2014), translation involves the transfer of social values and cultural meanings between societies as well as language.

The fact that there are cultural differences that pose translation problems has been explained by many researchers. Often cultural expressions, idioms, traditions, and social practices cannot be translated word for word from one language to another. This is why translators work in a variety of ways to ensure that the message of the text is easily understood by the target audience. It has been claimed that the translation process is a complex process which needs both linguistic and cultural competence.

In the opinion of J. C. Catford (1965), translators must make grammatical and structural changes to preserve meaning due to linguistic variations between source and target languages.

Researchers explain that cultural expressions, idioms and traditions create challenges for translators, requiring adaptation and interpretation (Byram & Morgan, 1994; Chesterman, 2006; Alhashmi, 2019).

It is also widely discussed how translators contribute in the formation of meaning and understanding in other cultures. According to Lawrence Venuti (2008), translators actively shape meaning as their decisions affect how readers comprehend the translated material.

As, the research follows a qualitative and comparative textual analysis approach. Source texts and translated texts were compared to identify cultural and linguistic changes in translation. (Al-Wahy, 1999; Candlin, 1990)

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on the theory of translation studies which describes the process of how language and culture change in the process of translating. Translation is not just a matter of converting words from one language to another; it is also an exchange of ideas, traditions, beliefs, and cultural meanings. As a result, translators are key to bridging various societies and cultures.

The concept of cultural background of all languages was adopted in the study. Words, idioms and expressions that have no direct translation are included in a text when they may not have the same meaning in another culture. In this case, translators have to come up with adjustments to the sentence structure, word selection, and style to ensure that the message is understood by the target audience. The transformation of language and culture is known as linguistic and cultural changes. This framework also has links with the notion of equivalence in translation. The translator attempts to maintain the meaning of the source text while also making it natural, and comprehensible to the target

audience. In some instances, translators maintain the original cultural aspects, in others they adapt original culture to suit the culture of the readers (Belloc, 1931; Bell, 1978)

Furthermore, the cultural translation perspective is interpreted as an influence of translation by society, history and ideology. The decision of a translator may be influenced by cultural values and social conditions. For this reason, translation is regarded as a linguistic and cultural process. The aim of the study is also on the function of translation. There are various translation strategies that are employed based on the purpose of the text and readers' requirements. The research looks at the changes in language and culture in the process of translation and the balancing process of the translator between the original meaning and the understanding of the target culture.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

The method of this research is qualitative approach, which aims at examining cultural and linguistic changes in the field of translation studies. The qualitative method is suitable, as it provides an understanding of meanings, changes in language and cultural elements in translated texts. The research mainly focuses on textual analysis and interpretation rather than numerical data.

The main sources of the data for this study are selected original texts and translated texts. Various examples of translated literary and non-literary text are examined and how cultural expressions, idioms, symbols and linguistic features are altered in the translation process is identified. The study involves a comparative analysis of the source text and target text to see the similarities and differences and the translation strategies adopted by the translators.

The research uses descriptive and analytical method. The descriptive method is used to describe the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the texts, and the analytical method is used to explain how translators adapt the meaning according to the target language and culture. Vocabulary, sentence structure, style and cultural references are highlighted.

The secondary data is gathered from various books, research articles, journals, and from previous studies on the topic of translation studies and cultural transformation. These are sources which offer theoretical assistance and understanding of various approaches and concepts of translation.

The study also employs the comparative analysis to assess the preservation or alteration of meaning in the process of translation. It is hoped that this approach will give insight into the role of translators in overcoming language and cultural barriers and how translation affects communication between societies.

#### **5. Data Analysis:**

This study's data analysis is focused on the study of cultural and linguistic changes in translated texts. Selected source texts and their translated version(s) are compared, and the differences between the texts are noted. Analysis indicates that the process of translation is not just about converting words from one language to another, but also about matching meaning to the target culture and understanding.

A pertinent one of the noted aspects in the analysis is cultural transformation. In the target text, numerous cultural expressions, idioms, traditions, and social values from the source text are adapted to ensure the target reader grasps the meaning.

Sometimes translators substitute the culturally specific words with other equivalent words from the target language and sometimes give the meaning indirectly to maintain the original idea.

Linguistic changes are emphasized as well. In translated texts, the sentence structure, vocabulary, grammar and style often differ. Many translators tend to make the sentences simple or substitute words or phrases to keep them understandable and readable. These language changes aid the target readers in understanding the message better yet preserve the meaning of the text.

A second important discovery is the role of the translator in the shaping of meaning. Translators make decisions according to the purpose of translation and the cultural background of the

audience. They determine the reception and interpretation of the message. Some translators like to be faithful to the original text, others are more free-living in their adaptation of the text to the target culture. Comparative analysis also reveals that nothing may be exactly the same as the source and target text is difficult because each language and culture has its own characteristic. But translators try to achieve balance by maintaining the key message, the emotional impact and the cultural resonance of the original text.

For instance, in order to maintain contextual meaning, the English expression "break the ice" was translated into Roman Urdu as "guftagu ka aghaz karna." In order to convey cultural knowledge, the phrase "time is money" was translated as "waqt bohat qeemti hai." To maintain cultural wisdom, the phrase "all that glitters is not gold" was translated as "har chamakne wali cheez sona nahi hoti." In order to enhance readability and cultural relevance, translators frequently alter sentence structure and colloquial language, according to the qualitative content analysis. One may find many such expressions where the languages can not be literally translated. This study's translated Roman Urdu samples are illustrative adaptations created for research and comparative analysis purposes. Translation serves as a link between languages, cultures, and social identities, as the analysis shows.

The analysis suggests that in order to make the translated material relevant and legible for the intended audience, translators frequently modify sentence structure, terminology, and cultural allusions (Adjemian, 1976; Bock, 1982).

The overall analysis shows that translation is a linguistic and cultural, rather than a pedagogical, process. It is important in facilitating the transfer of meaning, ideas and cultural values from one language to another, between different societies.

## **6. Discussion**

This study is discussed in terms of cultural and linguistic changes that impact translation. The analysis demonstrates that translation is an intricate process rather than a mere word-for-word substitution of words and phrases, and is subject to language, culture, and meaning. To be able to translate accurately and to produce a translation that is meaningful and understandable to readers, translators need to know both the source culture and the target culture. The results show that one of the major challenges in translation is cultural elements. Many cultural expressions, traditions, idioms and beliefs cannot be translated directly because their meanings are so tightly intertwined with a specific culture. Thus, these elements are frequently altered or changed in order to be understood by the target language audience, and the alterations may be very different from the ones present in the source text. This demonstrates the role of translation as a bridge building between different cultures.

The study also talks about the changes in language that happen in translated texts. There will be changes in grammar and vocabulary, sentence structure and style, as every language has its own set of rules and patterns. Different linguistic strategies are employed by translators to allow the text to be as fluent, clear, and understandable as possible while keeping the meaning intact. These changes are aimed at enabling readers to comprehend the translated content naturally and effectively. The role of the translator also has to be emphasized, as mentioned in the discussion. Translators are not just language specialists, but cultural mediators as well. Their decisions affect the interpretation of the translated text. Some translators prefer to adhere to the original phrasing, others to the understanding and comfort of the target readers. This variation in translation methods results in a variation in the meaning and style of the translated text.

The discussion also clarifies that the full equivalence between two languages is hard to achieve, due to the fact that languages are related to different cultural backgrounds and social realities. Consequently, the meanings can be translated differently. But translators try to be accurate to the original text while being easy to read in the target language. The study concludes that in general, translation is a linguistic and cultural process. It helps in promoting communication, understanding,

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and exchange between different societies. Cultural and linguistic changes thus form an integral part of translation and are an important factor in the process of global interaction and knowledge sharing.

## Conclusion:

To conclude, this study has attempted to bring to the fore the significance of the cultural and linguistic changes in the study of translation. Translation is not just the transfer of words from one language to another, but also the transfer of meanings, ideas, feelings and culture values. Thus, the study demonstrates how translators are important in the effective communication of different languages and cultures. Pertaining to this, Bassnett (2014) also states that language and cultural changes are essential to translation studies and support intercultural dialogue and information exchange.

The results indicate that translators serve as cultural mediators, establishing an appropriate balance between target readers' comprehension and integrity to the original text. As a result, translation turns into a linguistic and cultural process (Venuti, 2008).

The findings of the research further prove that there are significant differences in the process of translation based on culture. Idioms, traditions, expressions, and culture-specific terms are expressions that are difficult to translate into the target language because they might not have an exact translation. Hence, translators employ various methods to ensure that the text is comprehensible while retaining the meaning and message of the source text. The study also shows that there is a need for linguistic changes in translation. Different grammatical, lexical, sentence and style variations give a natural and fluent translation for the target readers. The changes help ensure that the translated text remains clear, meaningful, and culturally appropriate.

Moreover, the study elucidates the social and cultural influences on translation. Translators have to make decisions based on the objectives of the translation and the requirements of the audience. Due to this, translation becomes a linguistic/cultural process which influences the communication process between societies.

On the whole, the research findings suggest that cultural and linguistic changes are integral to translation. They contribute to the understanding, exchange of knowledge and between people of different languages and backgrounds. In the modern world, translation can thus be seen to have a crucial role in the process of establishing links between cultures.

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