

Unit-1: Meaning, Nature and Scope of Translation

Structure

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Meaning and Definition of Translation

1.2.1 Meaning of Translation

1.2.2 Definition of Translation

1.3 Nature of Translation

1.3.1 Qualities of a Good Translator

1.3.2 Audience and Purpose of Translation

1.4 Scope of Translation

1.4.1 Translation as Mediator

1.4.2 Translation as a Democratizing Agent

1.5 Translation as a Career

1.5.1 Increasing Importance of Translation in the Age of Globalisation

1.5.2 Areas of Translation

1.5.3 Importance of Translation and Interpretation

1.5.4 Job Prospects in Translation and Interpretation

1.6 Summing Up

1.7 Glossary

1.8 Unit-End Exercise

1.9 Model Answers to Self-Check Exercises

1.10 Further Readings

1.0 Objectives

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of translation
- Define translation and describe its different dimensions
- Describe the nature of translation and the intricacies involved in the process of translation
- Elucidate the scope of translation in the Indian multi-linguistic and multicultural context
- Discuss the opportunities available in the field of translation and interpretation

1.1 Introduction

Translation is as old as human civilization. Since the dawn of civilization, we, human beings, have been using language to translate our thoughts and ideas. We use a set of symbols or codes to communicate or transfer an idea or thought or a feeling to the person

whom we address during an act of communication. Here too we have translation. In this sense, we translate every day. With the evolution of human society, we became more anxious to know about the thoughts and feelings of people in distant places. Hence we used two sets of symbols and codes to transfer the thoughts and ideas of people speaking a different language to our own language. This gave rise to translation as we see and use it today.

The story of translation dates back to the third millennium BC. The Babylon of Hammurabi's day (2100 B.C.) was a polyglot city, and much of the official business of the empire was made possible by writers who translated **edicts** into various languages. In India too our first writers were translators. Free translations and **adaptations** of epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata have shaped Indian literature in a big way. Moreover, Indian Literature until the nineteenth century consisted mainly of translations, adaptations, interpretations and retellings. Translations of literary works and knowledge-texts on medicine, astronomy, metallurgy, travel, ship-building, architecture, philosophy, religion and poetics from Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Persian and Arabic enhanced our awareness of the world.

India is multi-lingual country where all the regional languages coexist simultaneously on an equal basis but the dominance of English continues. Over the years English has become the only means of communication in all political, business and educational affairs. Hence it is essential that we understand English and our Mother tongue to be able to connect to our own communities in the immediate environment as well as other cultural communities in the outer environment. Here comes the role of translation. Translation allows different cultures to connect, interact, and enrich one another.

In the Indian situation, the role of translation is very significant as it is the home to people speaking 22 recognized languages and hundreds of mother tongues and **dialects**. Every day in business and office communication, we are required to make use of English and one of our Mother tongues to communicate with people. So we are bilinguals by default and use translation as a means to communicate. It is through translation that people in the periphery and the centre, the dominant and the dominated cultures communicate with one another. We can say that India would not have been a nation without translation as we use translation to communicate and communication keeps us united as a nation.

In this unit we shall discuss in detail about the various meanings and definitions of translation, its nature, the process of translation, responsibilities of translators, scope of translation and various job opportunities available in the field of translation.

1.2 Meaning and Definition of Translation

1.2.1 Meaning of Translation

The English word **translation** has been derived from the Latin word *translation*, which itself comes from *trans-* and *latum*—together meaning "a carrying across" or "a bringing across. In other words, it is the business of carrying across a message/written content from one text to another, from one person to another and from one language(source language) to a different language (target language). It can happen within the same language (from one dialect to another dialect or from one form to another) or between languages. It is best seen as a communication process where the transfer of a message/written content from one language into a new language takes place.

However, poets engaged in the job of translation often think of translation as 'interpretation', 'taking a view', 'bringing to life', or 'transformation'. Whatever may be its meaning, every act of translation involves the expression of sense. A translation is a text that is considered to be different from the original (the source text) but it is also a fact that the source text and the translated text are the same in terms of the sense they convey. It is often said that translation gives new clothes to a piece of writing by putting it in a different form. This interactive relationship between source and translation goes on in the hands of mature translators of prose and drama but it is the best in poetry.

1.2.2 Definition of Translation

Roman Jakobson, a leading linguist and noted expert in the subject of translation, defined translation as "the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language." Through this process of translation, texts in one language are transformed into texts in another language with the same meaning. These materials range from the isolated words in a language to the complex network of sentences of philosophical texts.

Some scholars define translation as an art or craft and some others call it a science. It is called an art as all good translations are expressions of the creative urge of the translators. Likewise, it is a science because of the technical formalities and complexities involved in its process.

Oxford University defines translation as '*The process of translating words or text from one language into another.*' *The Cambridge Dictionary also endorses that. This can mean the word to word rendering of the text in one language to another or replacing the equivalents of the words or phrases in one text to another. The translated text may have **formal equivalence** when the source text and the translated text look alike in form. It may have **functional equivalence** when the source text and the target text or translated text convey the same sense or perform the same function, though they have formal*

differences. It is often seen that the idioms and usage of the source language creep into the target language through translations which often enrich and shape the target language.

Translation is the communication of the meaning of a text in a source language (SL) into a comprehensive version of target language (TL) without causing any loss to the original message. It is often thought that if one is a bilingual s/he can be a good translator, which is not the truth. People having good communicative and writing experiences in both the languages can be good translators, which includes their being **bilinguals**.

While translating, a translator discovers the meaning of a text behind the forms in the source language (SL) and reproduces the same meaning in the target language (TL) with the forms and structures available in the target language. The form changes but the meaning or sense or message remains the same. Nowadays we find translators using computers to translate one language into another, but human beings still play the major role in deciding the final output. While translating **images/metaphors** and **emotive** expressions in literary texts, computers cannot replace human beings. Translating is more than simply looking up a few words in a dictionary.

We cannot confine translation to one or two definitions. It is elastic in nature and depends upon the person who does the translation. It differs from language to language, and from culture to culture. Hence it is not as easy as it is thought to be. While trying to be a different version of the original, it maintains its own uniqueness, an identity of its own. In the next section, we will discuss the nature of translation, responsibilities of a translator and the complexities involved in the process of translation.

Self-Check Exercise-1

Answer the following questions in about 10-15 words.

(a) What is the meaning of translation?

(b) Can we define translation in fixed terms? Give reasons for your answer.

1. 3 Nature of Translation

Translation is an interpretative process. The nature of translation depends upon the nature of the document. Translation of a technical or promotional document is easier and requires less skill and expertise than the translation of a text of literature. The vocabulary, grammatical rules and the sentence structures would match with the nature of the document, the source language and the target audience. A successful translation satisfies the needs of the target audience, either in terms of suitable structures or forms or in terms of the appropriate transfer of meaning from the source text to the target text.

Besides having equal expertise in the source language and the target language, a good translator should also have a flair for writing in the target language and be familiar with the socio-cultural context in which a text is set. A successful translator is not a mechanical translator of a text. S/he puts in his/her creativity to the fullest extent and goes into the soul of the content. We can visualize him/her as a co-creator of the target language text as the translated text he almost recreates the text reflecting his culture and personality.

While translating, a translator takes into account the **lexicon**, grammatical structure and cultural context of the text in the source language to understand the meaning built in the text and then transfers the same meaning to the text in the target language with the help of lexicon and grammatical structure appropriate to the target language and its cultural context. In this process, every care is taken to ensure that there is no or minimum loss of meaning. Earlier, faithfulness to the original text was considered to be one of the greatest responsibilities of the translators. But now, with the mushrooming of multiple cultures and languages and diversity of political views in a given context, the translator takes liberty with the original text to allow some accommodation or adaptation in order to keep pace with the sense or spirit of the original. Accommodation is inevitable in practice if the translation is to maintain the essence, impact, and effect of the text in the source language. This is particularly true of poetry where the text is highly emotive and artistic in nature. A translator may come across a couple of words which are culturally-rooted and thus untranslatable. Such words are difficult to be translated if the cultural context is missing. But the fact is that individual words may not be translatable, but language is.

1.3.1 Responsibilities of a Good Translator

A good translator is not born, but made. With a little care and some labour, a person can acquire the skills of a good translator. Some of the qualities that distinguish a good and successful translator from a bad or unsuccessful translator are mentioned below.

Faithfulness to the Original Text and the Author: A competent translator should try to get into the mind of the writer of the original text in the source language. S/He should also fully understand the sense and meaning of the original author. S/He should try to put

in every effort to ensure that the translation resembles the original text or is very close to the original text in terms of its sense and message. Expert and experienced translators know the requirements of a text, and make changes to communicate the style and essence of a text with minimal variations from the original. While trying to be faithful to the original text, s/he should not try to find difficult equivalent words in the hope that this will add to the perfection of your translation. A faithful translator should act like the author's **mouthpiece** in a way that he knows and comprehends fully whatever the original author has said in his text. The translation should have all the ease of the original composition.

- **Technical Expertise:** The translator has to be an analytical person with necessary flexibility, adaptability and expertise in the use of technology so that s/he can pay close attention to all details and adapt whenever there is a need. Moreover, s/he should have thorough knowledge of the subject that s/he deals with. A person translating the biography of a great personality should have thorough knowledge about the life and achievements of the person concerned. A translator should be an excellent writer with good research and language skills so that s/he can find out things which s/he requires and make use of them in appropriate places. Writing skills help a translator make intelligent choices in regard to words, structures and expressions. The translator should use forms of speech and expressions in common use so that the audience is able to comprehend them properly. Finally s/he should choose and order words appropriately to produce the correct tone and convey the desired meaning.
- **Using the Right Tools:** The experienced translators know how to use the tools like good monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, encyclopedias, e-dictionaries, glossaries of technical and standard works, etc. pertaining to the SL text and style guides to help him/her out in moments of difficulty. One should start using them from the beginning so that in course of time it becomes easy to find out the equivalent terms without wasting much time and energy on them. Having the dictionaries on the computer can also save a lot of time and labour. .
- **Focus on Creativity:** Expert translators are always creative. They always try to put the text in the target language in a new and attractive garb to make it more acceptable to the audience in the target language. They do this by using a new vocabulary, new expressions and structures whenever necessary to make the translated text more appealing to the audience. It is because of the creative component and the amount of liberty involved in an act of translation, a translator finds his/her job very rewarding and intellectually stimulating.
- **Focus on Reading as an Important Pre-requisite:** A serious translator should read a lot to have an in depth understanding of the **nuances** of the languages s/he deals with(both the source language and the target language). This habit is essential to help a translator gain command of the language. In the list of reading materials, one may put the classics, newspapers and digital material available online on the internet. .

- **Linguistic Competence:** A seasoned translator should be well-conversant with the grammatical, syntactic, semantic and **pragmatic features** as well as the socio-cultural contexts of both the source language and the target language. S/He may have the liberty to interpret an idea in a different way but in no case should try to insert his/her own ideas or personal impressions in the new product. Moreover, s/he should take care that the style chosen for translation is appropriate for the target audience and should sound natural and spontaneous to the readers of the translated text.
- **Specialization:** A mature translator should have sound knowledge of the discipline to which the target text belongs, particularly the materials which have highly technical vocabulary. You should be familiar with the new terminology and the latest developments in the discipline on which you are working. If one has expertise in translating literary texts, s/he will have difficulty in translating medical or business reports or technical reports.
- **Giving a Finishing Touch:** In an act of translation, you should have enough patience and do the job sincerely. You may also like to discuss your problem areas with the persons you think competent to address the problems. Before preparing the final product, you should go through the translated work two or three times and see if any last minute changes can be made to make it look more accessible and acceptable. You may like to change a few words, expressions or forms to improve the quality. Before letting the work out for publication, you should ensure that the product is suitable for the intended purpose and audience. You may have to change the style or language in accordance with the audience and purpose. Once you are satisfied with the work, you should put the original passage aside and listen to/read your translation with the ears tuned in, as if it were a passage originally written in the target language. You may also ask a friend of yours or an expert in the target language to listen to the translation and give suggestions for improvement. After incorporating the changes suggested, submit it to the agency or the organization who had assigned you the job.

1.3.2. Audience and Purpose of Translation

As translators we should also make it clear what kind of a text it is: technical, narrative, or interactive or descriptive. After describing the text that is to be translated, we must then mention the audience and purpose. A work of translation has a fixed audience and purpose. The same text may be translated for different audiences and serve different purposes. Say for example, *Gulliver's Travels* of Jonathan Swift has been translated into many languages for different purposes and for different audiences. The same text is read by children and the adult readers alike. When the purpose differs, the audience also changes.

When a text in a foreign or alien language is translated into a local language, we are required to impart a local flavor to it to suit the needs of the local readers. This is called

domestication. On the other hand, when we are translating a text for a global audience, from a local language, into a foreign or international language, we need to take into account the cultural set up where we expect the translated text to be accepted. This is called **foreignisation.** While deciding upon the audience, we also need to take into account the age-group, level of mental or intellectual maturity and the level of exposure to the content being translated. If we are translating, a book on discoveries and inventions for small children, we need not give the technical details of the discoveries and inventions. But it will be mandatory for us to give these details if our focus shifts from school children to university students or research scholars.

Audience and purpose are closely inter-related. Audience determines the purpose and purpose also determines the audience. . The audience could be any group: very young children, adolescents, young adults, mature adults, senior citizens or people working in different professional organizations or engaged in different vocations. They could be a mix of consumers belonging to different age groups yet working in the same professional work-setting. .

If children are our audience, we can translate something to entertain them, inform them or educate them. But if adults are our audience, we may have purposes other than the ones we have mentioned for children. Even for books written with the same purpose, entertain for example, the language and style may differ. While translating an entertaining text for the adults we shall have the liberty to include contents which are violent, sexually explicit or frightening but while translating the same text for children we will be required to remove all such words and expressions which might have adverse impact on the psychological growth of children.

After a work has been translated, it has to be published either in the printed form or in the digital form as is done on a website. The format of the text should match with the medium where it is to be published. If the book has to be brought out in the printed format, it has to be formatted accordingly to match one of the designs available in the market. Likewise, for publishing a translated document on the website, all technical formalities and requirements are to be met so that it can be easily published on a website.

Self-Check Exercise-2

Answer the following questions in about 10-15 words.

(a) Write down three main qualities of a good translator.

(b) How do audience and purpose define the quality of translation?

1.4 Scope of Translation

In the earlier days, translation was considered to be a sub-branch of linguistics. Gradually it developed into an inter-disciplinary field of study. In the last three decades of the 20th century Translation Studies started functioning as an **autonomous** branch of study. Today, in this age of globalization, the scope of translation is immense. It stretches from our immediate environment to every sphere of life. The significance and relevance of translation in our daily life is **multidimensional** and extensive. Translation helps us to know about the developments in the field of creative arts, education, literature, business, science and politics. It has shifted from the traditional conception of the fixed, stable and unchangeable nature of the text and its meaning to a text with wide scope for variations.

In the post-modern world, translation has become so relevant that people visualize it as a socio-cultural bridge between communities and countries. People now feel the importance of interacting and remaining connected with the people of other socio-cultural communities, both in their respective countries as well as countries across the world. In this backdrop, translation has acquired an increasing importance and satisfies individual, societal and national needs. Let's take the Indian society as an example. Whatever we see as Indian, be it literature, culture, history, politics, economics, it is a reality only because translation has made it possible for people to understand, interpret and compile the literature, culture, history, politics and economics of the respective states. In other words, we can say that it has become a unifying factor for the country. K Satchidanandan, eminent poet, critic and former Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi, India has rightly said:

“Translation has helped knit India together as a nation throughout her history. Ideas and concepts like 'Indian literature', 'Indian culture', 'Indian philosophy' and 'Indian knowledge systems' would have been impossible in the absence of translations with their natural **integrationist mission**.”

1.4.1 Translation as a Mediator

Translators are the mediators between the source language/culture and the target language/culture. It is their responsibility to ensure that this linkage between the known language/culture and alien language/culture is properly established so that the readers don't lose the essence of the original. Translation of a language opens the doors to unknown cultural and linguistic environments. In course of translation, the translator is also required to use new terms, coinages and expressions to suit the requirement of the text in the source language. This way s/he creates new vocabulary and contributes to the richness and greater **expressibility** of the language into which a text is translated. This helps the readers in the target language know and understand the vast expanse of

knowledge available in the source language, hitherto hidden from them. At the same time translation also promotes the growth of local literature and culture by bringing the great wealth of literatures and cultures from foreign lands.. When we translate the great masters of world literature like Shakespeare, Homer, Dante, Valmiki, Kalidasa or more contemporary writers from Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Kafka, to Gabriel Garcia Marquez, J. M. Coetzee, Pablo Neruda, Octavio Paz and others, we not only enrich our own knowledge base, but also raise the standards of our own local or regional languages.

1.4.2 Translation as a Democratizing Agent

Translation is a strong democratizing agent. It strengthens democracy by giving equal status to all languages and doing away with the dominance of a particular language. When a text from one language, say for English, is translated into a regional language or dialect, the speakers of the language/dialect are able to read and understand the literature and vast resource of knowledge available in English. The ideas, thoughts and feelings of the author in English are thus transferred or carried across to the regional language/dialect into which the text is translated. This not only enhances the knowledgebase of the target population but also increases their self-esteem and confidence in handling routine affairs. Most importantly it gives an opportunity to the weaker, disadvantaged and **marginalized** sections of people sections like the poor, women, dalits, tribals, minorities, the disabled and others to make their voices heard. Translation comes to them as a tool for **empowerment** as they can express their thoughts, ideas and issues in a foreign language, take them to the outer world and make the audience in the other worlds understand them.

On the other hand, translation also helps us to showcase to the world, especially the colonizers, our rich cultural heritage and tell them that our literature and culture are as good as theirs and thus fight colonial **prejudices**. The British had translated from India only what they wanted and things that suited their prejudiced approach to Indian literature and culture. Now the tables have been turned; now we are writing back, telling them what they have to read to understand our peoples, literatures and cultures. Just like the writers from the English world, our writers have acquired international acclaim and have been embraced everywhere as English writers.

Self-Check Exercise-3

Choose the correct option and fill in the blanks.

- (a) The significance and relevance of translation in our daily life is _____ and _____.
- (i) multicultural, intensive (ii) multidimensional, extensive
(iii) multilingual, inclusive
- (b) In the post-modern world, it has become so relevant that people visualize it as a _____ bridge between communities and countries. .

- (i) political (ii) economic (iii) socio-cultural
- (c) Translators are the mediators between the source language/culture and the target language/culture. .
 - (i) Mediators (ii) mentors (iii) messengers
- (d) In course of translation, the translator contributes to the _____ and greater _____ of the language into which a text is translated.
 - (i) Richness, expressibility (ii) brightness, admissibility (iii) happiness, hospitality
- (e) Translation _____ democracy by giving equal status to all languages.
 - (i) weakens (ii) strengthens (iii) softens

1.5 Translation as a Career

1.5.1 Globalization and the Increasing Importance of Translation

With the rapid inflow of MNCs into the country due to the globalization of Indian economy and the increasing need for translation in sectors like Universities, publishing houses, research organizations conducting market surveys, medical science, tourism, entertainment, public relations and mass communication, international organizations, embassies, diplomatic service, BPO's, now translation and interpretation services are being offered by many organizations which provide training and placement facilities for the people working in the field of translation. All the Government Ministries like External Affairs (MEA), Agriculture, Science & Technology, Textile and Education and so on require Junior Translators, Senior Translators, Subject Experts and Assistant Director (for official languages). Private companies such as HP, Oracle, Samsung, Hyundai, LG, Thomson, GE and Aventis, etc also provide opportunities for language experts. You can also take up assignments with the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC), Delhi if you are good at your job. In the state of Odisha, after the implementation of the Odia Language Act by Government of Odisha, Odia has become the official language with effect from 15th August 2016. The opportunities are endless provided you have the quality and competence to deliver good work in time. Translation is set to be a multi-billion dollar industry in the near future. So there can be a no better occasion than this to start a career in translation.

Now a person having sound knowledge of more than one foreign language is preferred to be posted as an interpreter or translator to facilitate the services required by the business personnel or tourists from foreign countries. The services include working as interpreters in Seminars, conferences or business negotiations and guiding the tourists on their visit to tourist destinations. Some other associations like Indian Translators Association has developed relations with leading translator associations at regional, national and international levels with a view to exchange information, upgrade the quality of translation and technological skills of its members and help them maintain professional

standards in the industry. Simultaneously, it constantly acts as an interface between government bodies and affiliates of the Translation Industry of India. Likewise, Indian Translators provides services like translation and desk top publishing for over 100 languages. One can get a source document translated, typeset and printed ready for its target market with the help of the human and technical expertise it has.

1.5.2 Different Areas of Translation

We are living in an age of translation and the avenues for translators are constantly expanding. Some of these areas and vocations are indicated below:

Literal Translation

Literal translation is first stage of translation in which we simply transfer words from one language to another. We usually resort to this kind of translation when we want the reader in the target language to understand the overall meaning of the text in the source language. This is different from the higher levels of translation in which the interpretation of the source text varies from one person to another person as the style, linguistic expressions and **undertones** differ. Beginners are encouraged to start with literal translation but at the same time they should understand the differences between the structures of the source language and the target language.

Literary translation: Literary translation is one of the most popular types of translation because it makes the world literature available in the regional languages and takes the literature in the regional languages to the audience around the world. Many institutions at the local, national and international levels provide opportunities in literary translation. The classics from all the countries are being translated into the local languages and the classics in the Indian languages are being translated into English and other foreign languages. Thus exchange of literature from one country to another, from one state to another within a country have become a reality with the help of translation. Sahitya Akademi at the Central level and state level, National Book Trust, regional literary associations, associations of translators and publishing houses engage capable translators to translate the chosen classics from the foreign languages to the Indian languages and vice versa. In the recent years it has been noticed that the young non-resident Indians who do not know their languages are eager to read their literatures in translation in the languages they know. Moreover, foreign readers and intellectuals show interest in Indian literature as they want to know the direction in which it moving. Organization of literary festivals and book fairs all over the world speak volumes about the relevance and significance of literary translation in our time.

We all know that our freedom struggle and later democratic struggles for social reformation had been greatly influenced by the translations of the works of Victor Hugo,

Tolstoy, Rousseau, Gandhi, Tagore, Emile Zola, Maupassant, Gorky, Bankim Chandra, Premchand and Subramania Bharati. The Government of India has recently launched a new mission, Indian Literature Abroad (ILA) to popularize Indian literature among the foreign readers. Big Indian publishing concerns like Penguin, Macmillan, Orient Longman, Oxford University Press, Harper-Collins, Hatchett etc as well as smaller regional publication houses like Gyanjug, Granthamandir, Friends Publishers are encouraging translations of literary masterpieces on a large scale.

Knowledge Translation: The National Translation Mission, launched by the National Knowledge Commission sponsors projects to translate textbooks and classical works in areas like sociology, history, geography, geology, medicine, chemistry, physics, mathematics, linguistics and political science into the Indian languages so as to raise the standard of education in the respective Indian languages. Besides, it also democratizes education by enhancing the accessibility of these resources to the rural poor and the backward sections of society. Competent translators can get ample scope to make use of their knowledge and skills to translate the resources available in English into their own regional languages and thus enrich the repertoire of resources in the local language.

Media Translation: With the mushrooming of media industries in the print, electronic, visual and auditory media- newspapers, magazines, radio, television, cinema, internet-enabled entertainment services, especially in the regional languages, the need of translators from one language into another has increased manifold. Publication of newspapers and journals and running TV channels in the local as well as national languages have become an exciting and rewarding business and offers multiple avenues for employment and engagement. In the cinema industry, translators are also engaged to take the films to the masses in several languages through dubbing and sub-titling. There is no dearth of opportunities for people having good command over the source language and the target language and sound knowledge of the media where they wish to work.

Machine Translation

In view of the increasing demand for translation, the complexity involved in the process of translation and absence of competent translators, the scientists and linguists have collaborated to automate translation or to aid the human translator in terms of specially designed soft-ware programmes with an in-built mechanism for substituting the structures in the source language into a chosen language. **Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) tools** are increasingly being used by people across the world to meet the demands and the challenges of the global market. The invasion of the Internet in every walk of life has enhanced the role of translation in modern life and has facilitated the use of machine translation in a big way. While taking decisions whether to use machine translation or a professional human translator, we should take into account some

important factors like cost, timeliness, target audience, quality and legal implications of the text being translated and complexity of the subject matter. Sometimes, in human translations also intervention of machine translation has the potential to enhance the speed of translation and deliver the products in time. A translator is also benefited if s/he is supplied with substitutes for technical **jargon**, specific terminology or keywords or a glossary to meet his/her requirement during the process of translation. However, it is almost impossible to think that machines can altogether replace human translators. We shall be discussing the details of machine translation in a separate unit later.

1.5.3 Increasing Role of Translation and Interpretation

In our time, when geography is becoming history and internet is invading every space, the importance of English has reduced and languages like Hindi, Mandarin, Japanese, Arabic and other regional languages have gained momentum. Translators and Interpreters for languages like English, Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Korean, Arabic, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese and Hindi are in great demand across the world. In this changed scenario, economic opportunities are in plenty for people who can translate from one language to another, particularly from English to the local or regional languages. People who are well conversant with more than two languages can act as translators or interpreters and earn a dignified livelihood. A translator works with the documents and recorded versions and works at his own pace whereas an interpreter is required to communicate the sense intended by a speaker through the spoken mode. Translation is the desk work where everything's are taken in the written form while interpreters manage translation orally. In both the cases, the focus is on the transmission of the message, not on the substitution of equivalents for each and every word. An interpreter may be required to interpret in real time as is done during meetings, conferences, speeches etc. In such cases the interpreter receives the message in the source language and then interprets and transfers the message to the audience in the target language. On the other hand, in **liaison interpreting** or consecutive interpreting, the interpreter interprets the speech of a speaker during the pauses s/he takes and then puts the message in the target language for the audience. This happens mostly when the heads of governments of one country visit a foreign country and they are invited to speak to an alien audience speaking a different language. You can take up these assignments as a full time regular employee of an organization, as a freelancer or as a part time assignment along with the job you have. As a free lancer, you have complete freedom and can work for multiple organizations and work at your own pace and convenience but on the condition that you are disciplined and organized and are able to meet the deadlines.

1.5.4 Job Prospects in Translation and Interpretation

Job prospects for translation and interpretation vary from desk top translators to secretarial, executive and public relation assignments. If you are a freelancer, you can get work in translation bureaus, research organizations, international organizations like UNO, FAO, foreign companies, Reserve Bank of India, publishing houses etc. Alternatively, you can work in government and non-government agencies, universities, training centers and multi-national companies as a regular employee. The salary may range from Rs. 10, 000 to 1 lakh in accordance with your experience, knowledge and understanding of the latest happenings of the world. You should look for the job that interests you most and start preparing accordingly. In addition to all essential skills required for translation, you should have a good mastery over the computer skills. .

Translation is not just word-by-word translation of text from one language to another; it is putting the soul of a text into the body of another. Before starting translation as a career, it is wise for you to have look at the works of famous translators to have an idea of the level of originality and creativity required to make a piece of translation look natural and professional. It is essential that a beginner in the field of translation should understand the skills of translation before starting the translation of any work. Starting from ordinary subjects or technical subjects with less ambiguity you should gradually move to complex and difficult texts like literary **masterpieces** and knowledge texts in various disciplines. Similarly you should move from small assignments to large assignments and projects so that you can keep on sharpening the skills to match the requirements of the employers. The more is the exposure, the more is the rate of success.

Self-Check Exercise-4

Answer the following questions in about 30 words. .

(a) When did the Odia Language Act come into force? What does it say?

(b) What is the difference between literal and literary translation?

(c) What is the difference between translation and interpretation?

(d) What are the advantages of a free-lance writer?

(e) What are the job opportunities available for people working in the field of translation?



1.6 Summing Up

In this unit we discussed the meaning and definition, the nature and scope of translation and translation as a career. While discussing the meaning of translation, we discussed its derivation from the Latin word *translatio* and other meanings attached to it by the poet translators. Starting with the definition given by Roman Jakobson, we discussed the definitions given in the Oxford Dictionary, definition of translation as an art and as a science and translation as an act of communication involving the transfer of meaning from a text in the source language text to the text in the target language. Under section **Nature of Translation** we discussed translation as an interpretative process, the intricacies involved in an act of translation and the responsibilities of good translators like faithfulness to the original text, technical expertise, focus on creativity, focus on reading as a prerequisite, using the right tools, linguistic competence, specialization, and giving a finishing touch. Under the same heading we also discussed audience and purpose of translation in which we discussed how audience and purpose determine the quality of translation. Under the next section **Scope of Translation** we discussed the integrationist role of translation in India, the emergence of translation as an independent discipline, translation as a mediator between two cultures and translation as a democratizing agent by giving equal status to all languages and making the voice of the marginalized communities heard. Under the last section **Translation as a Career**, we discussed Globalisation and the increasing role of translation, different areas of translation like literal translation, literary translation, knowledge translation, media translation and machine translation, increasing role of translation and interpretation and job opportunities in translation and interpretation.

1.7 Glossary

Edicts: Government orders which are forcefully and unfairly given, practiced especially in the olden days

Adaptations: Changing a text to suit the needs of a particular audience. Classics of great writers are adapted for school going children.

Dialects : A form of a language spoken by a people in a particular part of a country. It may contain some different words, rules of grammar and ways of pronunciation.

Formal equivalence: *Two items are said to be formally equivalent when their structures or forms are same and they look alike.*

Functional equivalence: *Two items are said to be functionally equivalent when their functions or meanings are same.*

Bilinguals: People who know two languages and can use both the languages for everyday communication.

Metaphors: An expression which describes a person or object by referring it to something having similar characteristics Example: Milkha Singh is lion (Milkha Singh has been compared to a lion as he supposed to have the strength of a lion).

Emotive expressions : Expressions which cause strong feelings and emotions in human beings

Lexicon: All the words in a particular language or subject which are used in everyday communication as well as academic writing

Accommodation: Accommodation is a technique used in translation to make changes in the translated text and insert elements which are essential to make it natural.

Mouthpiece: A person who expresses the opinions of one particular organization or person or speaks on behalf of the person or the organization concerned.

style guides: Manuals which guide the writers and translators about the formalities for language and style to be used in written communication.

pragmatic features: Features which are concerned with the application or use of a particular text or item in a realistic social set up

domestication: Domestication is the process in which elements of a foreign language or culture are put to domestic use or given local colours.

Foreignisation: Foreignisation is the process in which elements of a local or domestic language or culture are changed according to the tastes and requirements of an audience in a foreign country autonomous: independent, having own identity

Multidimensional: Something or some quality which has multiple equally important aspects or dimensions

integrationist mission: The mission which aims at unifying or integrating the nation through a common action which links all the states and creates opportunities for interaction

expressibility: The power of a person or a language to express all aspects of human emotions and feelings so as to make a communication sound natural

marginalized people: People who are considered lower in social order in a conservative society

empowerment: The process or act through which people are made to feel more confident and take control of their lives

prejudices: When you form an unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling about someone or something without giving it enough thought, you are prejudiced.

undertone: A particular but not obvious characteristic or quality or meaning that lies hidden in a piece of writing or speech

Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) tools: The tools being used for Computer Aided Translation are called CAT tools. They are soft-ware programmes used by professional translators to make the translations uniform and reduce the time and energy spent on looking for equivalents.

Jargon: Special words, phrases and expressions which are used by particular groups of people in a vocation or profession, especially in their workplace

liaison interpreting: Liaison interpreting or consecutive interpreting is interpreting a message when the speaker takes a pause during his/her and conveying the message to the audience in the target language **afterwards**

masterpieces: Important works of great writers, mostly the classics which withstand the passage of time

1.8 Unit End Exercises

Answer the following questions in about 200-250 words.

- (1) Why does Satchidanandan call translation an integrationist force?
- (2) How can a translator make a piece of translation natural and attractive?
- (3) How can translation be a democratizing agent? Explain with examples.
- (4) How do the freelance translators and translators as regular employees differ?
- (5) What are the opportunities available for translation in different areas? What is the future of translation?

1.9 Model Answers to Self-Check Exercises

Self-Check Exercise-1

- (a) The English word **translation** is derived from the Latin word *translatio*, which is a combination of *trans* and *latum* and means "a carrying across" or "a bringing across). It is the business of carrying across a message/written content from one text to another, from one person to another and from one language(source language) to a different language (target language).
- (b) We cannot define translation in fixed terms as it elastic in nature and may vary from person to person as per the individual choices in regard to words, expressions and structures. It may also vary according to the culture where the text in the source language and the text in the target language are located.

Self-Check Exercise-2

- (a) Write down three main qualities of a good translator.
 - (i) A good translator should also have a flair for writing in the target language and be familiar with the socio-cultural context in which a text is set.
 - (ii) A good translator puts in his/her creativity to the fullest extent and goes into the soul of the content. We can visualize him/her as a co-creator of the target language text as the translated text he almost recreates the text reflecting his culture and personality.
 - (iii) A good translator should be well-conversant with the grammatical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features as well as the socio-cultural contexts of both the source language and the target language.

- (b) Audience and purpose are closely inter-related. Audience determines the purpose and purpose also determines the audience. Unless a translator is clear about the audience and purposes of his/her translation, s/he cannot do justice to the work undertaken. He cannot decide upon the code (language) and course of action he should use to complete the act of translation successfully.

Self-Check Exercise-3

- (f) (ii) multidimensional, extensive
- (g) (iii) socio-cultural
- (c) (i) Mediators
- (d) (i) richness, expressibility
- (e) (ii) strengthens

Self-Check Exercise-4

- (a) The Odia Language Act came into force with effect from 15th of August 2016. It Now Odia has become an official language mandatory for official communication.
- (b) In literal translation one has the liberty to translate a text word by word just to convey the overall meaning of the text in the source language in the target language. On the other hand, literary translation means the translation of literary texts where one is required to properly understand the underlying meaning and nuances of the text in the source language and convey the same in the target language with the help of appropriate words, expressions, tone and style.
- (c) Translation is basically a desktop job which requires a person to translate the documents or texts in the source language into the target language at his own pace. It is mainly carried out in the written mode. On the other hand interpretation is the receiving, interpreting and conveying of the spoken message of a person to the audience in the target language in the spoken form. It is carried out through the spoken mode.
- (d) A freelance translator enjoys more freedom than an in-house translator or translator who is engaged as an employee in an organization. He can work for multiple organizations at his own pace and charge his own price in accordance with his ability and expertise.
- (e) Job opportunities available for translation and interpretation vary from desk top translators to secretarial, executive and public relation assignments. As a freelancer, you can get work in translation bureaus, research organizations, international organizations like UNO, FAO, foreign companies, Reserve Bank of India, publishing houses etc. Alternatively, as a regular employee, you can work in government and non-government agencies, universities, training centers and multi-national companies.

1.10 Further Readings

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