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3.0 Objectives

This Unit is based on two types of translation, viz., Literal Translation and Transcreation. It gives you an idea about various types of translation and their utility. After going through this Unit you will be able to:

1. Understand the basic nature and utility of various methods of translation along with the underlying difference among them;
 2. Have an idea of the various terms associated with translation and their utility;
 3. Derive the definitions of Literal Translation and Transcreation; know their synonyms and various factors governing such translation;
 4. Know what is mistranslation and the situations when Literal Translation and Transcreation are deemed to be either mistranslation or desirable;
 5. The pros and cons of Literal Translation and Transcreation.
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3.1 Introduction

Etymologically the word *translation* means a ‘carrying across’ or ‘bringing across;’ the Latin *translatio* means ‘across’ and *latus* ‘borne. ‘The translator's role as a bridge for ‘carrying across’ values between cultures has been discussed at least since Terence, the 2nd-century-BCE Roman adapter of Greek comedies. The translator's role is, however, by no means a passive, mechanical one, and so has also been compared to that of an artist. If translation be an art, it is no easy one. If a translation is to be true, the translator must know both languages, as well as the science that he is to translate.

It is obvious that a translator will do his bit of the job in reproducing the sense, meaning or message borne in the original text from the source language into the target language according to his own wisdom and vocabulary. Hence the method and the outcome of such work done by different individuals on the same text are bound to vary. These methods have in the course of time acquired different names and discussed by critics and veteran linguists the world over. Let us have a quick look at such various methods, the names that they have acquired their relevance and utility in the field of translation.

3.2 Methods of Translation and Their Utility

Translation is the communication of the meaning of a source-language text by means of an equivalent target-language text while interpreting; the facilitating of oral or sign-language communication between users of different languages. This general formulation of the central concept of translation, viz., equivalence, is as adequate as any that has been proposed since Cicero and Horace, who, in 1st-century-BCE Rome, famously and literally cautioned against translating *verbum pro verbo*, i.e., ‘word for word.’

In general, translators have sought to preserve the context itself by reproducing the original order of sememes and hence word order when necessary, reinterpreting the actual grammatical structure; for example, by shifting from active to passive voice, or *vice versa*. The grammatical differences between ‘fixed-word-order’ languages like English, French, German, and ‘free-word-order’ languages like Greek, Latin, Polish, and Russian have been no impediment in this regard. The particular syntax or the sentence-structure and characteristics of a text's source language are adjusted to the syntactic requirements of the target language.

Translators always risk inappropriate spill-over of source-language idiom and usage into the target-language translation. On the other hand, spill-overs have imported useful source-language calques and loanwords that have enriched the target languages. Indeed, translators have helped substantially to shape the languages into which they have translated.

When a target language has lacked terms that are found in a source language, translators have borrowed those terms, thereby enriching the target language. Thanks in great measure to the exchange of calques and loanwords between languages, and to their importation from other languages, there are few concepts that are ‘untranslatable’ among the modern European languages.

3.2.1 Interpreting

Interpreting, or ‘interpretation,’ is the facilitation of oral or language communication, either simultaneously or consecutively, between two, or among three or more, speakers who are not speaking or singing, the same language.

The term ‘interpreting,’ rather than ‘interpretation,’ is preferentially used for this activity by Anglophone translators, to avoid confusion with other meanings of the word ‘interpretation.’

Unlike English, many languages do not employ two separate words to denote the activities of written and live-communication (oral or sign-language) translators. Even English does not always make the distinction, frequently using ‘translation’ as a synonym for ‘interpreting.’

3.2.2 Sworn Translation or Certified Translation

Sworn translation, also called ‘certified translation,’ aims at legal equivalence between two documents written in different languages. It is performed by someone authorized to do so by local regulations. Some countries recognize declared competence. Others require the translator to be an official state appointee.

3.2.3 Literary Translation

It denotes the translation of literary works, viz., novels, short stories, plays, poems etcetera and should not be confused with ‘Literal Translation.’ The difference between the two lies in the sense that the former is related to the subject of the translation material to be translated, whereas the later with the method of translation. We should not confuse it with literal translation.

3.2.4 Literal Translation

This is a word-to-word translation. The translator goes on putting the synonym of each word of the text in the target language. In the process, s/he may not be aware of the inherent sense that it has been used in the source language, and also the syntax aspect of the target language, thus rendering non-communication of its underlying message or sense in the text reproduced in the target language. We may thus term it as ‘no translation.’ However, literal translation is indispensable in case of preparing dictionaries, glossaries of administrative and technical terminology etcetera where only words are translated from various angles of its sense and synonyms in the target language are put in its place.

Generally, the greater the contact and exchange that have existed between two languages, or between those languages and a third one, translation seems easier. However, due to shifts in ecological niches of words, a common etymology is sometimes misleading as a guide to current meaning in one or the other language. For example:

The English *actual* should not be confused with its cognates (words derived from same roots, **ପ୍ରାକୃତ**) viz.

actuel in French that means present or current,
aktualny in Polish that means present, current, topical, timely, feasible,
aktuell in Swedish means topical, presently of importance,
actueel in Russian or Dutch which means urgent and topical.

We can also examine these two words in Odia and Hindi, both the languages being very close to each other:

yeboj in Hindi means **प्राकृत** (Monkey) in Odia, but the same word **ବନ୍ଧ** in Odia means **yebojien** in Hindi, i.e., a port, where ships anchor and rest.

Similarly, the word ‘samalochana’ (**ସମାଲୋଚନା**) carries the same meaning both in Hindi and Odia, but are used in different senses. In Hindi it is used in positive sense meaning ‘criticism’ whereas in Odia it normally carries a negative sense with the meaning of ‘telling the negative aspects’ of some one. These may be treated as the possible blunders in Literal Translation. This is the reason why Cicero and Horace, in 1st-century-BCE Rome, cautioned against translating *verbum pro verbo*, i.e., ‘word for word.’

3.2.5 Telephone

Many commercial services exist that will interpret spoken language via telephone. There is also at least one custom-built mobile device that does the same thing. The device connects users to human interpreters who can translate between English and 180 other languages.

3.2.6 Internet

Web-based human translation is generally favoured by companies and individuals that wish to secure more accurate translations. In view of the frequent inaccuracy of machine translations, human translation remains the most reliable, most accurate form of translation available. With the recent emergence of translation crowd sourcing, translation-memory techniques, and internet applications, translation agencies have been able to provide on-demand human-translation services to businesses, individuals, and enterprises.

While not instantaneous like its machine counterparts such as Google Translate and Yahoo, web-based human translation has been gaining popularity by providing relatively fast, accurate translation for business communications, legal documents, medical records, and software localization. Web-based human translation also appeals to private website users and bloggers.

3.2.7 Computer-Assisted Translation

Because of the laboriousness of translation, since the 1940s engineers have sought to automate or to mechanically aid the human translator. The rise of the Internet has fostered a world-wide market for translation and has facilitated language.

Computer-assisted translation (CAT), also called ‘computer-aided translation,’ ‘machine-aided human translation’ (MAHT) and ‘interactive translation,’ is a form of translation wherein a human translator creates a target text with the assistance of a computer program. The machine supports a human translator.

Computer-assisted translation can include standard dictionary and grammar software. The term, however, normally refers to a range of specialized programs available to the translator, including translation-memory, terminology- management, concordance, and alignment programs.

These tools speed up and facilitate human translation, but they do not provide translation. That is a function of tools known broadly as machine translation.

3.2.8 Machine Translation

Machine translation (MT) is a process whereby a computer program analyzes a source text and, in principle, produces a target text without human intervention. In reality, however, machine translation typically does involve human intervention, in the form of pre-editing and post-editing.

Early machine translations, as of 1962 at least, were notorious for this type of translation as they simply employed a database of words and their translations. Later attempts utilized common phrases which resulted in better grammatical structure and capture of idioms but with many words left in the original language. For translating synthetic languages, a morph syntactic analyzer and synthesizer is required.

The best systems today use a combination of the above technologies and apply algorithms to correct the ‘natural’ sound of the translation. In the end though, professional translation firms that employ machine translation use it as a tool to create a rough translation that is then tweaked by a human, professional translator.

With proper terminology work, with preparation of the source text for machine translation (pre-editing), and with reworking of the machine translation by a human translator (post-editing), commercial machine-translation tools can produce useful results, especially if the machine-translation system is integrated with a translation-memory or globalization-management system.

Unedited machine translation is publicly available through tools on the Internet such as Google Translate, Babel Fish, Babylon, and Star Dict. These produce rough translations that, under favourable circumstances, ‘give the gist’ of the source text.

With the Internet, translation software can help non-native-speaking individuals understand web pages published in other languages. Whole-page-translation tools are of limited utility, however, since they

offer only a limited potential understanding of the original author's intent and context; translated pages tend to be more humorous and confusing than enlightening.

Interactive translations with windows are becoming more popular. These tools show one or more possible equivalents for each word or phrase. Human operators merely need to select the likeliest equivalent as the mouse glides over the foreign-language text. Possible equivalents can be grouped by pronunciation.

Also, companies such as Ectaco produce pocket devices that provide machine translations.

Relying exclusively on unedited machine translation, however, ignores the fact that communication in human language is context-embedded and that it takes a person to comprehend the context of the original text with a reasonable degree of probability. It is certainly true that even purely human-generated translations are prone to error; therefore, to ensure that a machine-generated translation will be useful to a human being and that publishable-quality translation is achieved, such translations must be reviewed and edited by a human.

Claude Piron writes that machine translation, at its best, automates the easier part of a translator's job; the harder and more time-consuming part usually involves doing extensive research to resolve ambiguities in the source text, which the grammatical and lexical exigencies of the target language require to be resolved. Such research is a necessary prelude to the pre-editing necessary in order to provide input for machine-translation software, such that the output will not be meaningless.

3.2.9 Transcreation

God has not gifted the same wit to all the people. It cannot and should not be expected that the translator's vocabulary or wisdom is inferior to that of the author of the original text. Sometimes it so happens that a person with mediocre knowledge writes something of a high moral or historical value and a learned person with high creative skills takes it up for translation. If the translator is not satisfied with the script and reproduces it in a highly effective manner mixing it with local flavour of the target reader and language; we call it Transcreation or 'creative translation.'

Nevertheless, when the words in the original text appear literally graceful, it seems to be an injury to the author that they should be changed. But it is also a fact that what is beautiful in one language may often be barbarous, even sometimes nonsense, in another. Therefore it is not wise to limit a translator to the narrow compass of his author's words; it is enough if he chooses out some expression which does not vitiate the sense. In certain contexts a translator may consciously seek to produce a literal translation. Translators of literary, religious or historic texts often adhere as closely as possible to the source text, stretching the limits of the target language to produce an unidiomatic text. A translator may also adopt expressions from the target language in order to provide 'local colour'.

Current translation practice is dominated by the dual concepts of 'fidelity' and 'transparency'. This has not always been the case, however; there have been periods, when many translators stepped beyond the bounds of translation proper into the realm of *adaptation*. Adapted translation retains currency in some non-Western traditions. The Indian epic, the *Ramayana*, appears in many versions in the various Indian languages, and the stories are different in each. Similar examples are to be found in medieval Christian literature, which adjusted the text to local customs and mores.

Since transcreation is not deemed to be 'true translation,' learned people always discourage such practice. However, it has its own relevance and sometimes an author becomes famous by dint of the beauty of a transcreation of his work. Now-a-days, transcreation has become indispensable in the field of advertisement in the global market and the corporate people hold it in high esteem in comparison to 'true translation. 'The term 'Transcreation' has become almost synonymous to copy writing for effective advertisement. On browsing and searching the internet for this subject, you will get not a single word about transcreation in the process of translation in literature.

3.2.10 Adaptation or Free Translation

An adaptation, also known as a 'free translation', is a procedure whereby the translator replaces a term with cultural connotations, where those connotations are restricted to readers of the original language text, with a term with corresponding cultural connotations that would be familiar to readers of the translated text. Adaptation is often used when translating poetry, works of theatre, and advertising.

3.2.11 Mistranslations

Literal translation of idioms is a source of numerous translators' jokes and apocrypha. The following famous example has often been told both in the context of newbie translators and that of machine translation: When the sentence 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak' was translated into Russian and then back to English, the result was 'The vodka is good, but the meat is rotten.' This is generally believed to be simply an amusing story, and not a factual reference to an actual machine translation error.

3.3 Various Terminology Associated With Translation

Before we proceed further in going into details of the literal translation and transcreation or whatsoever, we should be well aware of the various terms that we may come across during the process.

3.3.1 Calque (Loan Translation)

Not to be confused with Literal translation.

In linguistics, a calque or loan translation is a word or phrase borrowed from another language by literal, word-for-word, or root-for-root translation. A calque is an expression introduced into one language by translating it from another language. Calque is also known as 'loan word' because the expression does not originally exist in that language; the basic expression is borrowed from another language, its 'word by word' or literal translation into the target language forms a similar expression, then it is assimilated into that language in the similar sense or meaning. Such an expression in course of time gains its legitimate place and added to the vocabulary of that language as its own term. e.g., 'Superman' is a calque for the German 'Übermensch;' ନଭଖୁମ୍ବା or ଗଗନରୁମ୍ବା in Indo-Aryan languages for the English Sky-scraper.

Used as a verb, 'to calque' means to borrow a word or phrase from another language and translate its components so as to create a new lexeme (base-expression or word with a specific meaning) in the target language.

'Calque' itself is a loanword from the French noun *calque*, meaning 'tracing; imitation; close copy;' the verb *calquer* means 'to trace; to copy, to imitate closely;' *papier calque* is 'tracing paper.' The word 'loanword' is a calque of the German word *Lehnwort*, just as 'loan translation' is a calque of *Lehniübersetzung*.

Proving that a word is a calque sometimes requires more documentation than does an untranslated loanword, because in some cases, a similar phrase might have arisen in both languages independently. This is less likely to be the case when the grammar of the proposed calque is quite different from that of the borrowing language or when the calque contains less obvious imagery.

Calquing is distinct from phono-semantic matching. While calquing includes semantic translation (translation according to its meaning, (ଭାବାରୂପାଦ) , it does not consist of phonetic matching, i.e., retaining the approximate sound of the borrowed word through matching it with a similar-sounding pre-existing word or morpheme in the target language.

Types of Calque

This terminology is not universal, calques are classified into five groups:

(a) **Semantic Calque:** where additional meanings of the source word are transferred to the word along with the same primary meaning in the target language. For example: 'mouse.'

The computer mouse was named in English for its resemblance to the animal. Many other languages have extended their own native word for 'mouse' to include the computer mouse. The semantic calques in various languages have been formed with the same meanings as for a rat and for the computer component; viz., Arabic: *fā'ra*, Dutch: *muis*, Finnish: *hiiri*, French: *souris*, German: *Maus*, Greek: *pontiki*, Hebrew: *akhbár*, Hungarian: *egér*, Icelandic: *mús*, Lithuanian: *pelė*, Polish: *mysz*, Portuguese: *rato*, Russian: *мыш'* , Spanish: *ratón*, Turkish: *fare*.

- (b) **Phraseological Calque:** A calque in which an idiomatic phrase is translated word-for-word; for example: 'flea market (କବାଡ଼ି ବଜାର).' The common English phrase, 'flea market', is a phraseological calque of the French '*marché aux puces*' ('market with fleas').
- (c) **Syntactic Calque: (Syntax=Sentence-structure)** where a syntactic function or construction in the source language is imitated in the target language;
- (d) **Loan-Translation or Loanword Calque:** Literal translations in which individual components within words or compounds are translated to create new lexical items in the target language also known as calques. This type of translation falls under literal translation. The loan-word or phrase may remain in its original form or adjusted with a slight change, but carries the same meaning in the target language as that of the source language; e.g., 'sky-scraper' in English means a lofty building. It is translated into Odia as 'ଗଗନଚୂଳା ଢଳ ନଭଶୂଳା' with the same meaning.
- (e) **Morphological Calque:** Where the inflection of a word is transferred. Some authors call a morphological calque a 'morpheme-by-morpheme translation'.

3.3.2 Lexeme

A 'lexeme' is the minimal unit (as a word or stem) in the lexicon (vocabulary) of a language; For example, 'go', 'went', 'gone' and 'going' are all members of the English lexeme 'go'.

3.3.3 Morpheme:

Phonetic matching, i.e., retaining the approximate sound of the borrowed word through matching it with a similar-sounding pre-existing word (or morpheme) in the target language. The same word exists in both the source and target language but may have different meanings. For example: **yeboj** (Hindi) : **ମାଙ୍କଡ଼** (Monkey), **ବନ୍ଦର** (Odia): **yebojeen** (Port, where ships anchor and rest). Similarly, the word 'samalochana' in Hindi is used in positive sense meaning 'criticism' whereas in Odia it carries a negative sense meaning telling the negative aspects of some one.

3.3.4 Metaphrase:

It is also called literal translation. Literal or word-for-word translation; corresponds in one of the more recent terminologies to 'formal equivalence.' Formal equivalence sought via 'literal' translation attempts to render the text literally, or 'word for word' if necessary, at the expense of features natural to the target language; Needless to say that the expression 'word for word' is itself a word-for-word rendering of the classical Latin '*verbum pro verbo*.'

Strictly speaking, the concept of metaphrase, of 'word-for-word translation,' is an imperfect concept, because a given word in a given language often carries more than one meaning; and because a similar given meaning may often be represented in a given language by more than one word.

3.3.5 Paraphrase or periphrasis

A saying in other words; corresponds in one of the more recent terminologies to '*Dynamic or Functional*' equivalence that conveys the essential thoughts expressed in a source text; if necessary, at the expense of literality, original sense and word order, the source text's active vs. passive voice, etc.

Paraphrase, sometimes called periphrasis, is a translation procedure whereby the translator replaces a word in the source text by a group of words or an expression in the target text. For example:

The Portuguese word *saudade* is often translated into English as 'the feeling of missing a person who is gone.'

A similar example is 'dor' in Romanian, translated into English as 'missing someone or something that's gone and/or not available at the time.'

I am not (apparently) handsome; I *am* (essentially) handsome.

Adding words: I am not handsome today; I am always handsome.

Paraphrase: I don't look handsome; I *am* handsome.

3.3.6 Equivalence:

The question of fidelity vs. transparency has also been formulated in terms of (a) ‘*formal* equivalence’ and (b) ‘*dynamic* or *functional* equivalence’ respectively; the two approaches are applicable to any translation.

‘Formal equivalence’ corresponds to ‘metaphrase’, and ‘dynamic equivalence’ to ‘paraphrase’. The two terms have often been understood fundamentally as sense-for-sense translation, i.e., translating the meanings of phrases or whole sentences and word-for-word translation or translating the meanings of words and phrases in a more literal method.

There is, however, no sharp boundary between functional and formal equivalence. On the contrary, they represent a spectrum of translation approaches. Each is used at various times and in various contexts by the same translator, and at various points within the same text; sometimes simultaneously. Competent translation entails the judicious blending of functional and formal equivalents.

Common pitfalls in translation, especially when practiced by inexperienced translators, involve false equivalents such as ‘false friends’ and false cognates (ସକାତୀୟ). A word is cognate with another if both derive from the same word in an ancestral language.

The term ‘dynamic equivalent’ however, is also used in electric, physics, acoustics, economics and yoga and that has nothing to do with the method of translation.

3.3.7 Pidgins:

It is a mixed terminology (ମିଶ୍ରିତ ଭାଷା). Often, first-generation immigrants create something of a literal translation in how they speak their parents' native language. This results in a mix of the two languages in something of a pidgin. Many such mixes have specific names, e.g. Spanglish or Germish. For example, American children of German immigrants are heard using "rocking stool" from the German word ‘Schaukelstuhl’ instead of ‘rocking chair’.

3.3.8 Syntax : (ବାକ୍ୟରଚନା)

This corresponds to the structure of the sentence that is different from language to language. It is related to the position of the nouns, adjectives, verbs etcetera in a sentence.

3.3.9 Oxymoron : (ବିରୋଧାଭାସ)

Contradiction in terms. It corresponds to conjoining contradictory terms; e.g., ‘deafening silence.’ The concept of ‘*literal translation*’ is an oxymoron, because ‘*literal*’ denotes something existing without interpretation, whereas a ‘*translation*’ by its very nature, is an interpretation of the meaning of words from one language into another.

3.3.10 Sememe: (Synonym, ପ୍ରତିଶବ୍ଦ)

Meaning matching, i.e., retaining the meaning of the borrowed word though a word with similar matching meanings pre-exists in the target language. For example, ‘jungle’ is a word synonymous to ‘forest’ in English; Still, the word ‘jungle’ is used in English in lieu of ‘forest’ in its original meaning and pronunciation. It is simply transliterated, i.e., written in roman script instead of an Indian script.

3.3.11 Localization

It is the process of culturally adaptating a product, generally a web page, a mobile app, software or a video game, but you could even localize food (as in the case of McDonald’s), design and anything you can think of; e.g., The Simpsons localized i.e. culturally adapted for the Muslim world. Homer never drinks beer but soda and never eats pork. It is always made clear that the meat is lamb or beef.

One of the great examples of cultural localization: the completely different web pages Coca Cola has in various countries like US, UK, Portugal, Israel, Japan and Taiwan etcetera can be quoted in this order.

3.3.12 Transliteration:

Writing the text of the source language in its original terminology in the script of the target language without translating, so as to enable the target reader read it with the original pronunciation as in the source language irrespective of the fact whether s/he understands it or otherwise. For example Sanskrit verses

like Geeta and the Vedas have been transliterated in Roman and various other scripts for the readers who do not know Devanagari script.

3.3.13 Untranslatability

Untranslatability is a property of a text, or of any utterance, in one language, for which no equivalent text or utterance can be found in another language when translated.

Terms are, however, neither exclusively translatable nor exclusively untranslatable; rather, the degree of difficulty of translation depends on their nature, as well as on the translator's knowledge of the languages in question.

Quite often, a text or utterance that is considered to be 'untranslatable' is actually a *lacuna*, or lexical gap. That is, there is no one-to-one equivalence between the word, expression or turn of phrase in the source language and another word, expression or turn of phrase in the target language. A translator can, however, resort to a number of translation procedures to compensate for this. Therefore, untranslatability or difficulty of translation does not always carry deep linguistic relativity implications; denotation can virtually always be translated, given enough circumlocution, although connotation may be ineffable or inefficient to convey.

3.4 Literal Translation

Not to be confused with literary translation or with loan translation.

3.4.1 Literal Translation and Its Synonyms:

Literal translation, direct translation, or word-for-word translation or metaphrase is the rendering of text from one language to another one word at a time with or without conveying the *sense* of the original whole.

In translation theory, another term used for 'word-translation' or 'literal translation' is 'metaphrase;' and that for phrasal translation, 'paraphrase.' The latter is the method adopted in translating according to the sense of the text in the source language.

3.4.2 Usage of Literal Translation

In translation studies, 'literal translation' denotes technical translation of scientific, technical, technological or legal texts.

Literal Translation is considered to be a bad practice of conveying word by word translation of non-technical type literal translations has the meaning of mistranslating idioms, for example, or in the context of translating an analytic to a synthetic language, it renders even the grammar unintelligible.

The concept of *literal translation* may be viewed as an oxymoron (ବିରୋଧାବାସ, contradiction in terms), given that *literal* denotes something existing without interpretation, whereas a *translation*, by its very nature, is an interpretation of the meaning of words from one language into another. Therefore, if we resort to literal translation of sentences, passages and texts, we will present a 'no translation.' It can be used in the translation of terminology only.

The term 'literal translation' often appeared in the titles of 19th-century English translations of classical, Bible and other texts.

3.4.3 Cribs, Ponies or Trots

Literal translations ('cribs,' 'ponies,' or 'trots') are sometimes prepared for a writer who is translating a work written in a language he does not know. For example, Robert Pinsky is reported to have used a literal translation in preparing his translation of Dante's *Inferno* in 1994 as he does not know Italian. Similarly, Richard Pevear worked from literal translations provided by his wife, Larissa Volokhonsky, in their translations of several Russian novels.

3.4.4 Poetry to Prose

Literal translation can also denote a translation that represents the precise meaning of the original text but does not attempt to convey its style, beauty, or poetry. There is, however, a great deal of difference

between a literal translation of a poetic work and a prose translation. A literal translation of poetry may be in prose rather than verse, but also be error free. Charles Singleton's translation of *The Divine Comedy* (1975) is regarded as a prose translation.

3.4.5 As Bad Practice

'Literal' translation implies that it is probably full of errors, since the translator has made no effort to convey, for example, correct idioms or shades of meaning, but it might be also useful in seeing how words are used to convey a meaning in the source language. For example, we can observe what type of blunders is caused by literal translation from a few examples given below:

1. 'Ministry of External Affairs' actually denotes ବିଦେଶ ମନ୍ତ୍ରାଳୟ in Odia; but its Literal translation will be ବାହ୍ୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ମନ୍ତ୍ରାଳୟ
2. 'ମାଟିଆ' means 'earthen pot' in Odia; if translated literally it becomes 'Mother-stand'
3. Italian sentence: *So che questo non va bene*: Actual meaning is 'I know that this is not good.'
Literal translation: Know (I) that this not goes (it) well. This has English *words* and Italian *grammar*.
4. An example of a loan-translation: (It is done literally carrying the same meaning as the original expression in the source language.)
 - English : Sky-scraper (lofty building)
Literal Translation in Odia, Hindi, Bengali, Assamese etcetera will be:
 - (a) 'akash-jhadu' meaning sky-broom or sky-sweeper; and
 - (b) 'gagan-chumbi' meaning sky-kisser.

Out of these literally translated expressions if we select 'akash-jhadu' for use then we will commit a serious blunder.

This expression has been translated literally in almost all the languages the world over, but used with the same meaning as a 'lofty building.'

3.5 Transcreation

3.5.1 What is Transcreation:

As has been said earlier in the previous sections, when the translator is not satisfied with the script and reproduces it in a highly effective manner mixing it with local flavour of the target language; we call it Transcreation or creative translation. It is a fact that what is beautiful in one language may often be barbarous, even sometimes nonsense, in another. The expressions in the source language text may not match the cultural sentiments of the target group of audience. Therefore it is not wise to limit a translator to the narrow compass of his author's words; it is enough if he chooses out some expressions which do not vitiate the sense. A translator may also adopt expressions from the target language in order to provide "local colour".

Transcreation or creative translation is the process of adapting material for a given target audience instead of merely translating it. Transcreation ensures that the intended impact and emotion of your source message is not lost in translation, and that the original intent, style and tone are maintained. Translation stays faithful to the source text while Transcreation is an art that customises the material for your target audience.

The goal of transcreation isn't to say the same thing in another language. Indeed, it is often not possible to say exactly the same thing in another language. The aim of the game with transcreation is to get the same reaction in each language, something that translation in itself won't be able to achieve. It's not just what you say; it's how you say it. Thus creative translation has developed the term 'Transcreation' into a specific process for tackling the translation of highly creative language, rather than merely a general term to describe creative translations.

3.5.2 How Old is Transcreation:

Though the modern market-oriented executives of the corporate sector claim that transcreation is a novel development in the field of translation due to the market demands, it is sheer lack of knowledge on their part that this is a very old phenomena that dates back to the medieval age. The famous translation works of *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Srimadbhagwat* etcetera in all Indian regional languages are masterpieces of transcreation only. The learned authors of these epics not only translated in verses the *Valmiki Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata* written by *Maharshi Vyasadeva* in their native languages, but also gave them local flavour by depicting their respective regional festivals, deities and social beliefs, taboos etcetera therein.

3.5.3 The Present Trend:

However, transcreation is a term used now-a-days, chiefly by advertising and marketing professionals to refer to the process of adapting a message from one language to another, while maintaining its intent, style, tone and context. A successfully transcreated message evokes the same emotions and carries the same implications in the target language as it does in the source language. Increasingly, transcreation is used in global marketing and advertising campaigns as advertisers seek to transcend the boundaries of culture and language. It also takes account of images which are used within a creative message, ensuring that they are suitable for the target local market.

Terms used now-a-days with meanings similar to transcreation include ‘creative translation’, ‘cross-market copywriting’, ‘international copy adaptation’, ‘free-style translation’, ‘marketing translation’, ‘internationalization’, ‘localization’ and ‘cultural adaptation’. For each of these words and phrases, the thrust is similar: taking the essence of a message and re-creating it in another language or dialect.

In the post globalisation era, Transcreation is widely used for the following sectors:

- (a) Marketing and Advertising
- (b) Retail Industry
- (c) Brand adaptation & research
- (d) Slogan localisation,
- (e) Script translation & subtitling

3.5.4 Purpose of Transcreation

The goal of transcreation is to transfer the intent, style, vocal tone, and emotional salience of the text or message from the source language to that of the targeted audience. It refers to the process of taking a text or message that was created in one language and conveying it in another language effectively so as to reach hearts as well as minds of the target audience. Thus, the ability to transcend language and cultural boundaries is paramount to achieving an effective global marketing strategy. Not only must copy be translated correctly, but other factors must also be considered, such as culture, mores, dialects, idiom, humour, and context. Any perceived lack of respect for heritage, local values, beliefs and cultures may have a negative impact on consumers. To meet these challenges, companies that market internationally are increasingly using transcreation to market their products in different countries as well as different cultures within a country.

3.5.5 Examples of Market Oriented Transcreation

- (a) The computer chip-maker Intel wanted to bring its successful ‘Intel: Sponsors of Tomorrow’ campaign to Brazilian markets, but research showed that ‘Sponsors of Tomorrow’, rendered in Portuguese, implies that Intel would not deliver on its promises immediately. The line was modified to read, in Portuguese, ‘Intel: In love with the future’, thus appealing to the presumed passionate nature of the target audience.
- (b) In the 1990s, the Swedish automobile manufacturer SAAB launched a new convertible model and, in the ensuing advertising campaign, wanted to establish the idea that the car allowed passengers to experience wide-open spaces. In the U.S., the ad’s headline read ‘Saab vs. Oxygen bars’, because oxygen bars were popular in the U.S. at the time. In Sweden, where there were no oxygen bars, the same ad ran with the headline ‘SAAB vs. Klaustrofobi’. By substituting ‘oxygen bar’ with the Swedish word for claustrophobia, the transcreators changed the literal meaning of the message but appealed to the same emotions as did the U.S. ad.

3.5.6 Avoiding the Pitfalls of Cross-Cultural Marketing

Transcreation was developed to avoid many of the pitfalls inherent in cross-cultural marketing. Those include:

- (a) Cultural differences. Cultural boundaries can be formidable barriers to communication. Mistakes here may damage the brand in ways that can be difficult to repair. In 2011, the German sportswear retailer Puma introduced a limited line of trainers clad in the colours of the United Arab Emirates' flag, in honour of the UAE's 40th National Day. Many Emiratis were highly distressed by this product, believing it trivialized their nation's flag. Furthermore, in Arab culture, the shoe is considered dirty as it touches both the ground and the foot. As a result, Puma promptly withdrew the shoes from the market.
- (b) Word usage. Mistakes as simple as using words that have different meanings in different languages can also lead to trouble. In a famous example, automobile manufacturer Honda introduced its model named 'Fitta' into the Scandinavian countries and discovered, belatedly, that the word 'fitta' is a vulgarity in many Nordic languages. The company renamed the model 'Honda Jazz' and continued to market it there.
- (c) Puns, idioms and slogans. As any translator knows only too well, wordplay and idiomatic speech are exceedingly difficult to bring from one language to another. The same goes for slogans, which, so familiar to a population's ears, lose their literal meaning over time. In these instances, the transcreator must change the literal text, while attempting to create a similar effect on target audiences.
- (d) A purported example of disastrous word usage that has been persuasively demonstrated to be apocryphal is the case of the Chevrolet Nova. Legend has it that sale of the automobile lagged in Latin American countries due to the fact that, when the syllables of the model's name are separated ('no va'), the meaning in Spanish is 'doesn't go'. While the story is humorous, there are many reasons to discount it, not least that the car sold well in Mexico and Venezuela. However, it does bring to the fore many of the concerns faced by transcreators, such as word usage, cultural context, global vs. local marketing, etc.
- (e) If you're developing a tagline or some form of creative message, don't choose words or phrases that aren't likely to make sense to your target audience. That includes playful idioms. Every culture has its own sayings that don't make much sense to outsiders.
- (f) It's also very important to avoid offending your target audiences. Do a gut-check on your graphics to make sure they don't fly in the face of your audience's beliefs.

3.5.7 Maximizing Cultural Relevance

Dedication to the process of transcreation frees the translator from having to accede to the dictates of copywriters who may be thousands of miles away and working in a completely different culture and language. Transcreation allows local marketers to take the essence of a global advertising message and tailor it to their market. Thus, a global advertising campaign subjected to transcreation becomes suppler, while still adhering to an overall global strategy.

The tasks of a transcreator include establishing an emotional connection between the audience and the message, and maximizing cultural relevance. Many factors may differ across cultural and linguistic boundaries and must be considered, as these differences can significantly limit the effectiveness and impact of a cross-market campaign. These factors include cultural heritage, shared values, practices, and prevalent social cueing and reception thereof, including expression of emotions, gestures, body language, and facial expressions. These factors in turn influence consumers' behaviour and their reactions to advertising elements such as text, tone of voice, humour, settings, casting, and tonality.

There are also differences in how local consumers perceive a product. A product or service that is regarded as an everyday item in one country can be perceived as luxury in another, in which case, the advertising strategy needs to be adjusted accordingly. Products may also have varied development paces. For example, the development of mobile telecommunications markets has been quicker in Asia than in Western Europe.

Why a transcreation after all? Better just hire a team of copywriters in the target country who can produce the text from scratch! Well, it is no doubt desirable that the 'feel' of the original text be maintained, which requires someone who has an intimate knowledge of the source language. We should understand why the message works and therefore, produce something that is localised for the target language.

3.6 Transcreation and Translation

Translating involves more than replacing a word with its equivalent in another language; sentences and ideas must be manipulated to flow with the same coherence as those in the source document so that the translation reads as though it originated in the target language, respecting any cultural references that may need to be adapted to correspond with those of the intended audience. Colloquialisms, slang, and other expressions do not translate literally. In all cases, the message must be kept with the same connotations: humour, instruction, threat, etc.

Unlike mathematics, where there is usually a right and a wrong answer, language is much more subtle and nuanced so that no two translators will produce exactly the same finished texts even though both are equally accurate.

All but the most basic of translation involves the translator adding their own skill and judgement in order to best capture the essence of what the author of the original document means.

As a general rule, the more abstract a document the more variation between two translations of it are likely to be even though they both remain ‘correct’, or ‘accurate’. For instance, there will be much more variance in the translation of a poem than there will be in the translation of a set of operating instructions for a toaster. The former is loaded with emotion and personal interpretation, the latter is a set of instructions with little ambiguity.

Translation and transcreation are related processes, but they are not identical. Translation has a centuries-long history and has been marked in practice by two ‘ideal’ approaches, viz., metaphrase (word-for-word translation) and paraphrase, i.e. ‘say in other words’. Due to idioms and the wide variety of local usages, word-for-word translation has long been considered inadequate and the best translations take into account the vocabulary, grammar, syntax, idiom and local usage of the target audience while remaining faithful to the text, and context, of the original document.

Transcreation means ‘translating’ and ‘recreating’ the original text in a new language whilst making sure it is still appropriate in the context for which it is intended. The person producing the transcreation must understand the desired outcome thoroughly, and be given the freedom not only to translate the original but also to make significant changes to it in the process.

Transcreation expands upon translation by focusing not so much on the literal text, but on discerning the emotional response by viewers in the source language and working to elicit the same response from viewers in the target market. It is about ‘taking a concept in one language, and completely recreating it in another.’

Absolute fidelity to the text is secondary to eliciting the desired emotional response by the target audience. Because differences between cultures are so numerous, eliciting the same emotional reaction may also necessitate changes in the context of the message.

Many linguists have qualifications in other fields, such as accountancy, engineering or law. This means that they are in a good position to translate documents from these industries, as the often highly specialised, technical terminology will preclude other translators from fully understanding the texts. Translators those who are more inclined towards creative writing make good transcreators. For truly creative pieces, translation needs to be taken a stage further, which is where transcreation comes into play.

With translation, words such as ‘faithful’ and ‘accurate’ are normally used to describe the quality. But with transcreation, you should be thinking more along the lines of ‘creative’, ‘original’ and ‘bold’.

Grammatical correctness is crucial to translation and there is never any room for error, which is why many a scholars opine that a translator should only ever translate into their native language. But fluency in a foreign tongue and an in-depth understanding of one’s own language doesn’t automatically qualify someone to transcreate. They must have conceptual and linguist dexterity too.

In summary, and without wishing to sound pretentious, translations can almost be thought of as being closer to works of art than to mechanical mappings from one language to another. Incidentally, this is why machine translations and back-translations must be treated with care.

3.6.1 Example to Clarify Difference between Translation and Transcreation

‘Don’t go postal’ underneath a picture of a stressed office worker holding a stack of urgent letters was the proposed strap line for a new super-fast fax machine back in the days when faxes were just starting to become affordable.

The strap line’s intent was to use dark humour to imply that it’s better to fax the documents than post them and risk them being late and the negative consequences that could bring about. The tag line was never actually used as it was considered to be in bad taste. It’s only three words but the number of words is not the point, it is how you convey the same message where there is no direct translation or cultural hook.

The transcreator suggested: ‘Fax, Relax.’

Even though the words are completely different, the strap line succeeded in conveying the meaning of the original tag line. This is a very simple example and but I hope it makes clear the difference between translation and transcreation.

3.6.2 Comparison of methods adopted in Translation, Localization and Transcreation

In the translation jargon (group-terminology, **ଶବ୍ଦାବଳୀ**), you would also hear about localization and transcreation, which are not exactly the same as translation. What’s the difference?

| Aspects of the original text | Translation | Localization | Transcreation |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Main characteristics | The content stays the same | The meaning stays the same | Different content developed to meet business objectives |
| Language | Literal word-for-word translation of everything | Translate the meaning of the words in a way that is culturally appropriate | Developed in local language; English may be used as part of the brand vocabulary |
| Images | No change | Change to meet local expectations / product needs | |
| Layout | No change | Minimise changes | Change to meet local expectations |
| Brand vocabulary | No change | No change | Enhance and expand |

Last but not least, transcreation is the process of re-creating in another language, which is generally the case of spots, campaign advertisement, etc. In fact, these generally consist of word games and if translated literally would simply not work for the target audience.

Haribo is to Germans what Cadbury is to the British: an institution. So when they decided to launch their products in the UK, it was important that the tagline was spot-on. The English literal translation of the German slogan was ‘Haribo makes kids happy and adults too.’ It was pretty flat as it lacks the punchy rhythm and rhyme of the original. And so the following line was born: ‘Kids and grown-ups love it so, the happy world of Haribo’.

The Spanish version on the right literally reads; ‘hot, hot... ..search and find’. It is not a literal translation of the English version, but a well-rhymed Spanish variant.

Another tasty example is Nestlé’s global tagline: Good food. Good life. It’s simple, clear and straightforward enough to be translated easily into other languages.

It is very important to adapt concepts, words, design, etcetera; culturally speaking, to satisfy clients’ expectations and economically speaking, not to lose money. This can be best perceived from an example:

Here you have a wonderful case of ‘lost in translation’, which was corrected only later, after a significant loss of money. ‘Pajero’ for a Spaniard means ‘tosser.’ That is why Mitsubishi could not sell a single

Pajero in Spain. Finally, they realised the huge cultural mistake and completely changed the name into 'Montero'.

3.7 Summing Up

Translation is done in various methods; the first of all being a 'word-to-word' and 'word-by-word' one. It however conveys the meaning if the original text is in simple affirmative and has a direct meaning. Such a translation is called literal translation. In the jargon of translation there is another expression as 'literary translation' which denotes the translation of various types of literature. Among the two, the first is a method of translation and the second one corresponds to its subject. Literal translation is essential for preparing glossaries of terminology, thesaurus, translation of poetry, finding calques (loan words) etc.

Before translating something the translator has to read carefully and understand the direct and inherent implied meaning and sense of the text with reference to its context; otherwise s/he may commit serious blunders. In the process s/he has to ponder into the vocabulary of the target language and use the words and syntax most appropriate to the message being conveyed. Sometimes it so happens that a word in the target language synonymous to the desirable sense is not available. In that case the translator has to either coin his own word or borrow one from the source or another language intimate to the target language having the same meaning. Such words enrich the target language, just as English has been enriched with imported words from languages the world over.

Some times the translator feels the original text boring or mismatching to the socio-cultural fabric of the target audience. At some other occasions s/he feels an inner urge to reproduce the text in the target language in a very beautiful and impressive manner and unable to resist, does so. He even changes a few words or the entire set of words used in the original text and conveys its inherent message skilfully making all the more catchy, crunchy and enchanting. This is known as 'transcreation.' Epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata written in various regional languages of India are best examples of Transcreation as the original story is reproduced with local flavours. In modern age with the globalisation of trade and commerce and the IT sector taking long strides, transcreation has become synonymous to the effective advertisement.

3.8 Self-Check Exercises

1. Differentiate between transcreation and translation.
 2. Write down the synonyms used for Literal Translation.
 3. What do you understand by:
(a) Adaptation or Free Translation (b) a lexeme (c) Morpheme
(d) An Oxymoron (e) Phraseological Calque (f) Semantic Calque
 4. What do you know about the various usage of Literal Translation?
 5. What do you know about loanword or loan translation? What is its synonym?
 6. How do you distinguish between Literal translation and Literary Translation?
 7. Distinguish between Metaphrase and Paraphrase. What relation do they have with formal and dynamic equivalence?
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3.9 Model Answers

1. Translation is the process by which a given text in a particular language is reproduced in another language without distorting its content and sense; whereas Transcreation means 'translating' and 'recreating' the original text in a new language with the freedom not only to translate the original but also to make significant changes to make it more effective and enchanting, keeping intact its meaning in its original context.
2. Synonyms of Literal Translation: Direct translation, word-for-word translation, metaphrase.

3. (a) Ref. Sub-section 3.3.10 (b) Ref. Sub-section 3.3.2 (c) Ref. Sub-Section 3.3.3
(d) Ref. Sub-section 3.3.9 (e) Ref. Sub-section 3.3.1 Types of calque (b);
(f) Ref. Sub-section 3.3.1 Types of calque (a)
4. In translation studies, literal translation is used in technical translation of scientific, technical, technological or legal texts. (Ref. Sub-section 3.4.2)
5. Ref. Sub-section 3.3.1. The synonym for Loan translation is calque.
6. Literary Translation denotes the translation of literary works, viz., novels, short stories, plays, poems etcetera into another language; whereas literary translation is the word-by-word method of translation of a given text. The difference between the two lies in the sense that the former is related to the subject of the translation material to be translated, whereas the later with the method of translation.
7. Literal or word-for-word translation is known as Metaphrase which in the modern terminology is called formal equivalence. Paraphrase corresponds in the more recent terminologies to '*Dynamic or Functional*' equivalence that conveys the essential thoughts expressed in a source text; if necessary, at the expense of literality, original sememe and word order, the source text's active vs. passive voice, etc. Paraphrase, sometimes called periphrasis, is a translation procedure whereby the translator replaces a word in the source text by a group of words or an expression in the target text.
