

Critiquing Linguistic and Cultural Approaches to Ranendra's English Translation of the Tribal Novel *Global Gaon Ka Devta*

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Abstract. *Global Gaon Ka Devta* by Ranendra is the realistic portrayal of the continuous life struggle and conflict of the Asur communities which have been deprived and marginalised for centuries. Ranendra has become the dominant voice of the voiceless and downtrodden Asurtribe which have been forced to live in a dark and dismal condition by certain social structures. The innocent tribes are being crushed and plundered by the devtas of global village such as Shindaliko and Vedang with the support of local MLA, M.P and self-proclaimed godmen and so called religious contractors popularly known as babas. Translation is a vehicle of the democratization and dissemination of discourse and knowledge. Literary translation is a challenging act for the translators since it involves multiple linguistic and cultural barriers. This paper will try to evaluate and analyse the quality of English translation of *Global Gaon Ka Devta* as *Lords of the Global Village* by Rajesh Kumar. It delves deep into the plethora of problems which have been faced by the translator during the process of translation. It also explores the problems, promises, prospects and perspectives of translating tribal literature into English particularly fiction. The paper aims at exploring various issues pertaining to the translation criticism discourse which must be developed and shaped properly for the expansion of Translation Studies in the 21st century.

Keywords : *Asur*; problems; prospects; tribal literature; translation.

Global Gaaon Ka Devta is a fascinating novel which deals with the pathetic plight of the tribal people who have been exploited, deprived and marginalized for centuries by the so called devtas of the global village. In this 21st century all are taking of making this world a global village but in this process we have failed to save the real village. The villages are being extinct gradually. We all are trying to transform the world into global village. In the blind race of development all have set their different standards/criterion of development. Constructing sky rocketing buildings and establishing factories are the yardsticks of the development for the government but for someone or some communities it is the site/scene of destruction. Only the poor, deprived and marginalized section of the society are made the sacrificial goats in the name of so called development.

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In this process of development tribal people are being uprooted and forced to flee from their home, land and jungle.

Ranendra, a prominent and prolific writer, has attempted to provide a realistic portrayal of the Asur tribes who have been the victims of government lopsided policies. After a long period of unemployment, Master Sahib is appointed as a school teacher for tribal girls in rural Jharkhand on a remote plateau near open bauxite mines. He has heard of the Asur tribe who live there that they are primitive crude giants, or perhaps even the demons of myth. Master Sahib settles into an uneasy routine, prejudiced against his neighbours and surroundings. But when Lalchand Asur, the village chief's son, appears in his room battered and bloody, Master Sahib must perforce get involved with the community around him. As he makes friends with Lalchand and his brothers Rumjhum Babu, Doctor Ram Kumar, Lalita and Etwari. Master Sahib finds that the Asurs are desperately poor. He sees that they are being further impoverished by mine owners and opportunistic godmen, hungry to exploit the land and women. When the Asurs decide to strike against the mine owners, Master Sahib realizes that he is caught up in the age-old battle between the Asurs and Devas. And, that this time the Devas are the Lords of global capital, remote from petty human concerns. Ranendra's masterful parable brings alive the real plight of tribal communities today, their very existence threatened by a nexus of corporate rapacity and the hunger for development. *Lords of the Global Village*, with its spare prose and memorable characters, is a legend for and of our times.

Translation Criticism Discourse

Translation criticism should take into account all the factors and elements into the process of translation (Translation as a communicative act, intention, function, text type, register, strategies, principles, rules, constraints, audience). It comprises activities which are part of the process of translation (analysis and interpretation of the source text) but it is different from the forms of criticism involved in this process. Translation criticism should not be a mere identification of errors, an intuitive or Subjective appraisal judging translation as a good or bad, faithful without qualifying these adjectives. Translated text should be treated as an original text in the target language. It should not be judged on the basis of fidelity theory or loyalty theory of literary translation practice. As readers we should be free from prejudices and biases. Reception and perception of the translated text should change in the target language and then only Translation Studies as an independent department and literary translation

will flourish and expand across India. Teaching translated text is an act of interpretation and communication. Prof. A.K. Singh observes this situation in positive light:

In view of it, if we focus on Indian situation, we find that English classroom is a site of teaching through translation. In reality too we have been teaching much of translated texts but we have never noticed them. The literary criticism paper, for instance, is basically constituted of non-English texts. Plato, Aristotle and others write in English but in Greek. The works of Horace, Cicero and Quintilian are in Latin, which were later translated into English. Later on A. W. Schlegel, and Schiller wrote in German, not in English. Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard and Pierre Bourdieu did not write in English but they are being prescribed and taught in English classroom. But nobody questions the issues of their originality nor equips ourselves with new strategies to teach them as translated texts in Indian classrooms? The reason is in the mind-set because these texts happen to be translations of Indian works. (Singh, 29).

Evaluation of English Translation of *Global Gaaon ka Devta*

Translating tribal literary text into English is a challenging act and it is full of problems and prospects. Literary translation is different from knowledge text translation. The process of literary translation is not only a linguistic act but also a cultural act. Now a days there is common perception that translation is just about the exchange of equivalent words and syntax. But it is not the reality of this process. In the era of science and technology, a common perception has emerged that translation can be done easily through some apps and technology. But reality is different. One cannot become translator only if s/he knows the cultures of the source and target texts. Anthony Burgess rightly remarks that translation is not a matter of words only; it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture.

While evaluating English translation of Global GaaonkaDevta, I have observed that the translator has encountered plethora of problems in the process of tribal text translation. Following are the challenges that translators face during this journey:

1. Challenges of Translating cultural specific words: Finding equivalent terms for the cultural specific words is a Herculean task for the translators. Cultural words of the source text can not have their equivalent in the target texts since no two cultures are alike. Cultural issues play vital role in the process and product of translation. Rajesh Kumar has translated this tribal novel into *Lords of the Global Village*. The translator has kept all such words as they are and has explained them at the end of the novel. This strategy has helped the translator to maintain the local flavour which is essential for literary translation. This also shows translator's profound loyalty for the source text. Cultural specific terms which are kept intact are

Akhra: A meeting hall
 Chouki- a wooden bed
 Johar- a form of tribal greetings
 Jhoomar- a tribal dance
 Sohrai: A tribal festival
 Siyani- a sagacious woman
 Sarhul: tribal new year festival
 Murikatva: traditional head hunter
 Jadura- a dance performance

2. Translating Kinship Terms

Aaji: grandmother
 Ayo: mother
 Bir- brother
 Bhaat -jhor- boiled rice and gravy
 Bhabho- younger brother's wife
 Bhabhi- elder brother's wife
 Da: short form of Dada used for elder brother
 Devar- husband's younger brother
 Samadhi: Daughter or son's father- in- law
 Janani: One who bears children
 Mause: mother's sister's husband
 Mause: Mother's sister

3. Translating cosmetic items

Alta: a red cosmetic decoration on the palms

Sindoor- vermilion powder

4. Translating rituals and religious terms:

Homa: a fire ceremony

Yajna: A fire ceremony

Puja: religious ritual to please gods

Pahan- high priest

Pujar- priest

5. Translating Miscellaneous words

Tola: a generally castebased settlement, locality

Tahsildar: land revenue officer

Thana: a police station

Sakhuaa: A species of trees with large leaves

Raqba- unit of measuring land

Naihar: Father's village but it should be mother's village

Katta: a country made pistol

Khani: a form of chewing tobacco

Jan sewak: a junior village lever officer

HalkaKarmachari: a junior block lever clerk

Abhyaran(S) - Sanctuary

Dhenki- (A)a wooden stick used to pound rice

6. Translating dress

Kurta: a long

Dhoti:a long piece of cloth worn by Indian men

7. Translating Food items

Khbir: a sweet dish which is made of milk, rice, sugar and different dry fruits.

Puri:a deep fried small chapati

Roti: chapati

Bhaat- jhohr- boiled rice and gravy

Hanriya- country liquor

Khichadi- a preparation of rice and pulses

Ghughani-(Bengali) – a preparation of chickpeas

Dhuska(Bhojpuri)- fried patties made from ground rice and lentil batter

Translation Criticism

Understanding of two cultures- source text and target text is prerequisite and precondition of translating any literary texts. The major problems

that the translator encounter while translating any piece of literature are of two types- Linguistic and Cultural. The prime purpose of the translator is to negotiate two different languages and cultures. While translating *Global Gaaon Ka Devta* into English as *Lords of Global Village*, translator Rajesh Roy has adopted various styles and strategies to deal with the plethora of problems that he has encountered. He has tried to maintain cultural and local flavours and loyalty to target English readers. But he has missed to maintain linguistic loyalty to the source language. Translator's language has completely transform the original text in terms of diction, style and syntax. The language of the source text is simple and the syntax is ordinary that is used by the common people of that regions. But translator's language is grand, style is dignified and syntaxes are standard and elevated which are not used by people of those places who are illiterate or little educated. The translator must have faced herculean problem in translating this novel because words of many languages such as English, Hindi, Asuri, Bhojpuri, Magahi, Sanskrit and Urdu have been used in this novel.

I would like to quote some examples from the text for the evaluation of translation :

नियुक्ति पत्र देखकर खुश होऊ की उदास होऊ, समझ में नहीं आ नहीं आ रहा। लंबी बेरोजगारी, बदहली, उपेक्षा, अपमान की गाढ़ी रात के बाद रौशन आयी थी। मैं अब नौकरीशुदा था।

(Should this appointment letter send me into the throes of ecstasy? Or should it depress me? What should I do? A ray of light has appeared after a long dark night of unemployment- a night of privations, insult and humiliation. I have finally landed a job.)

When I observe the language, diction, and syntax of translated text then I find that the translator has used elevated and dignified language and syntax. The diction is standard and impressive. It does not seem to be a language of a science teacher (TGT). It does not seem like translation but transcreation. It has been done deliberately to suit the tongue and taste of the English readers.

(Should I be happy or sad to receive the appointment letter? I am unable to understand. A ray of light had appeared after a long dark night of unemployment, misery, neglect and insult. I was employed now.)

एका एक उसके कमरे में गिरते- पड़ते घुसने और लिपटने से मैं घबरागया।, किन्तु वह खुद ही भय से कांप रहा था। कुछ ही सेकेंड लगे होंगे मुझे संभलने में

(His unexpected entrance unsettled me, but the poor fellow himself was shaking in terror. It took me a couple of seconds to compose myself.)

(His sudden falling entry and clinging scared me. He himself was panicked. I controlled myself in a moment.)

The translator has taken creative liberties at many points. There is no chapterisation in the original text but the novel has been chapterised by the translator in the translated text.

Rajesh Kumar in his translator's note has accepted that it is not the best of translations and improvement can be made any time by any translator since this act of translation and process of evaluation are subjective in nature. He remarks:

I won't claim that this is the best if translations, because judgement is a subjective matter and one's writing can always be improved upon by a better writer. This is the case with every book, in every language, and this very temptation for improvement and excellence constitutes the core of human existence and survival (Translator's Note, *Lords of the Global Village*)

So, it would have been better if language used in the target text be like the language of original text – simple and ordinary language suited to characters of that regions. Understanding the socio-lingual and cultural gaps is a must for the translator in order to translate any tribal text since tribal language and culture are different from our language and culture.

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