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Problem of The Dalits in a caste ridden fabricated society in Vijay Tendulkar's play "kanyadaan," An Analytical study

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Abstract:

Literature is not only texts and contexts: It is also the flavor of personality, spiced with the writer's ideology and praxis. So, in a multilingual, multicultural country such as India, the canon of literature is rich in its regional flavor of the language as well as culture. In the case of drama, there is the added reach of performance as theory. In order to gear up a national perspective and create a body of national literature, the activity of translator of vernacular texts into various other regional languages, inter-regional and Intra-national, is necessary. What is not always appreciated in the act of translation is the loss of the spice of the author's author ship. My contention is that the act of translating from the source language into English or any other regional language involves aesthetic and political compulsions. This paper is therefore an attempt to study the compounding aesthetic and political compulsion of translations of vijay Tendulkar's Marathi play Kanyadaan.

Keywords; Personality, contention, persecute, compulsion, accessible, translation.

Owing to the intensions of the translators, it is clear that kanyadaan in English was meant to be a performance text where as kanyadaan in Bengali was meant to be a literary text. Now the question arises as to whether these translated versions have been received successfully by their respective receptors. From a close survey of the reception of these translated texts, it has been found that kanyadaan in English has been received quite successfully as a performance text by theatre goers of today. Lilettle dubey has produced kanyadaan in English which has been successfully received and rewarded by audience's worldwide. She has towered with the play not only throughout Indian but wise aboard and has to date approximately fifty successful productions to her credit.

Translation in the case of drama is slightly different. Theatre offers radical variations on the idea of nation's tradition because individual plays can become texts and performance vehicles in multiple languages through inter-lingual translations. So in most causes the public and per formative aspects of a drama as a medium as well as the issues and ideas focused on in the plays seem to demand in the modern Indian context a translation that can be accessible in the immediate cultural language of the receptor.

The translation of kanyadaan into English and Bengali has also not escaped such anesthetic and political compulsions. But before we analyze the case, it is necessary to know about the process of translation that the translators have undertake in each of the case. According to Gowri Ramanarayan , who translated kanyadaan into English, the process involve a thorough survey of the

Hindi version and a close interaction with the author along with the Marathi version. “ I used vasant Dev’s hindi translation for my first draft and then sat with tendulkar and went through the Marathi, hindi versions, and my English translation to ensure accuracy in mean ing:

The English translation of the Marathi play therefore can be said to be processed via the hindi version . in case of the Bengali translation , veena alase, whose first language is Marathi, translated the play into Bengali directly from he Marathi origins . since something is always lost in the process of translation , the number of versions that is considered during the process also decreases the probability of accuracy with the original. Conversely again, sometimes a longer process of translation renders it to be spectator friendly intend preferring some linguistic accuracy which destroys the spirit of the import. So what is more important for a translation to be successful is the power of expression to bring out the bhava and rasa of the original. And this success primarily depends on the aesthetic and political problems failed during translation. The lesser the compulsion to adhere to certain artistic or political ideologies, the easier it is to convey the texture and feel of the original to make it a good translation.

Now let consider firstly the case of anesthetic compulsions of kanyadaan, It has been previously discussed that the anesthetic compulsion depends mostly upon the difference between source language and target language and the cultural meanings that are woven into the texture of the language. The story of kanyadaan is based on a Marathi family. While dealing with issues of a young daughter’s marriage, her turning into with and a mother, various Marathi social customs are found being reflected through the Marathi language. This Marathi culture predominates in Maharashtra, but its feel can also be felt in the other regions of india. But this cannot be so accurately suggested in English. For example, in Marathi culture, there is a particular custom to be followed by a would-be-mother. This process of being a mother is clearly depicted through the word called ‘Balantpan’ in Marathi. The word Balantpan itself suggests the custom that has to be celebrated and performed by the girl’s parents. Inability to follow the custom denotes a mark of disgrace and dishonor for the family. So in kanyadaan , when Jyoti does not want to come back to her parents inspire of the inhuman torture of the husband in her stage of pregnancy.

This statement with the word Balantpan has a much greater implication of the culture the characters belong to than the Bangali translation and English translation as “delivery”. The word ‘delivery’ used in both cases in place of Balantpan suggests the meaning of the process of being a mother only partially. The cultural meaning that the Marathi word suggests neither can be translated not properly suggested. The custom of Balantpan is much more generalized with the use of the word ‘delivery’. This loss of expression of a word dating a culture is a major loss in the process of translation. Though while in the act of translation, one is always to be nearer the original, such compulsions are also taken care of and looked upon to render the translation its readability. What are ultimately lost through such compulsions or the force of the language and sometimes the colour prism of culture.

In the Marathi version of the play, the antagonist Arun Atavle comes from the ‘mahar’ class. But in the Bengali version it has been changed into ‘mentar’ class where as in English it is referred as ‘sweepers’ and ‘scavengers’. While the fact that both mahars and mehtars are considered to be

untouchables, in the Indian context of social structure, each of these classes have their own position. One cannot be intermingled or equated with the other.

Where as the concept of ‘mahars’ is restricted in Maharashtra and is less or not understood by the Bengalis or English-speaking people, even ‘mehtars’ is a class that can be found in Bengal or the eastern region of India. Can be to some extent suggested through the use of ‘mehtar’ in Bengali, as both the class of people are untouchables and their occupation too is more or less the same. But to use these words in the English translation would have rendered it a bad literal translation as for most English-speaking people, the concept of mahars and mehtars is totally unknown.

Here too, there is a difference to be noted in the transitions. While both the Marathi and Bengali versions strictly use the word ‘Balit’, in the English translation it is used as ‘Harijan’. In India, and especially in Maharashtra, the word ‘Dalit’ has a very special significance; ‘Dalit’ means to be stamped under foot.

So the word ‘Dalit’ indicates a caste of people who have been oppressed by the higher class. It is a term advocated by caste activities and scholars as an identity for the under caste who have been historically oppressed. Again Arun Atavle, who belongs to such an oppressed caste, bears a surname. Perhaps Tendulkar has purposely framed Arun’s name as Arun Atavle and make him a Dalit to indicate the very genuine, unlimited anger within Arun, the anger which has a historical base. This anger can be specified only by taking historical revenge against his caste enemies. So it is out of this suppressed anger that Arun in the course of the play tortures Jyoti, the woman he loves and humiliates Nath, and destroy the very Brahmin family he married into.

Any Indian and specially maharashtrians who know the historical background of the Dalits and their oppression can easily understand the feel of the play. Hence the use of ‘Dalits’ is quite justified both in the Marathi and Bengali version of the play. But this history of caste oppression may not be understood by people who are not acquainted with the Indian culture. Thus, with the use of the word ‘Harijan’, ‘Scavengers’ ‘Untouchables’ and ‘Sweepers’ in the English translation, the translator has tried her best to suggest the thought behind the issues of lower caste and their torture by the upper castes.

When kanyadaan is produced in Marathi, the use of the term ‘Ohai’ goes on very smoothly. In Bengali, ‘Bhai’ denotes brother. In spite of this distinction, veena Alase has preserved the word ‘Bhai’, for the father in kanyadaan. Similarly ‘Bhai’ is a complete unknown term for the English language. Yet it is retained by Gowri Ramnarayn. Though both the translators are well aware of the difference in meaning or the non-existence of the word in their specific target language, they have purpose fully retained the word with the same connotation to imbibe upon the receptors the Marathi culture, and more specifically, a decent well-mannered progressive Marathi family.

As men tied earlier, aesthetic compulsions also arise as different language use different linguistic forms and ornamentation style. Thus the use of a metaphor in one language may not be possible in another language. In case of the Indian regional languages, the linguistic forms may vary but ornamentation can still be retained to some extent as most of the regional languages of India etymologically have derived from Sanskrit which renders almost similar syntactical rules for each regional language. But when the same ornamentations are meant for translation into English, it

becomes a difficult task. Therefore in most cases, because of the difference of origin of the source and target language, the literary style remains untranslatable.

In the English translation, this kind of ornamentation is not possible. So the translation of the above passage goes the following way omitting purposely the metaphoric statement. “Don’t touch me. Fly from my shadow, otherwise my fire will scorch your comfortable viewers”. Thus it is found that the process of translation of the Marathi play kanyadaan has confronted both the translators Gowri Ramnarayan and veena alase with various aesthetic compulsions. Being a play text, and considering the case of per formability, both the translators as well. A close survey of the case of per formability would clearly point out the political compulsions that the play has undergone while being translated.

English has even a greater advantage over Hindi as a target language.”English has made it possible for an Indian text to be read or ‘discovered’ as translation more widely hence though English may not be the most suitable language for translating Indian literary texts, it offer the widest area of discovery through and un translation.” According to Lilette Dubey, the director of kanyadaan is English, “If not for the translation, I would have missed something so powerful.” She further adds the necessity of having more of English translations of regional plays and wishes to “source plays from different regional languages and commission English translation so that the works would reach a larger audience.” Therefore, it is clear that as English has a greater reach among readers and audiences, choosing English as a target language for kanyadaan over Bengali or even Hindi gain an advantage.

The primary reason for translation of any regional works of literature in to English or Hindi or any other suitable target language is to widen the canon of national literature. In spite of this Criteria, it has been found that works of certain authors, or regions are translated more in number than the others. In case of Vijay Tendulkar, the figures are quite astonishing. While he has to his credit about thirty full length plays, of this number, precisely fourteen half of his plays have been translated in to Hindi, three in Bengali, two in Kannada, one in Gujarati, and about nine plays in English. His play Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe has been translated in to sixteen regional languages in India.

Compared to other regional play wrightes like Girish karnad, Badal sircar, Mohan Rakesh, to name a few, mostTendulkar’s plays have undergone translations in the case of Tendulkar it self prove that his plays have a greater demand among the audience. The themes and issues of the plays are far more global than regional. He is more universal in choosing the issues of his plays. His plays, in general, deal with human nature he explores is in the Indian context. But none the less, each of this issue has a universal appeal that demands translation.

The English translation of the play, in generalizing the class concept by using words like ‘untouchables’ have hit the core of the play. According to Tendulkar, the play was not exactly a play about Dalits, but Nath saheb’s loss of idealism. Arun could have been a victims will be tomorrow’s victimizers. Thus, for the English translation particularly it can be said that it is the aesthetic compulsion that has restricted the use of class denoting terms, rendering full scope to convey the play Wright’s thoughts thoughts and concepts. This is definitely a gain in the translation process. On

the other hand, the Bengali translations, in spite of handling comparatively lesser aesthetic problems, have been prompted by greater political compulsion. It is the political compulsions that have on the one hand, restricted such a successful translation of the play as a literary text to be part of any university syllabus and on the other, have resulted in a lesser number of productions due to the arising controversies regarding the caste issues.

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