CULTURE AND (UN-) TRANSLATABILITY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO FICTION

Anil K Prasad, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English, Faculty of Arts, Ibb University
Republic of Yemen, Email: aniljyo@yahoo.com

Abstract

The paper argues for a cultural perspective on translatability vs. untranslatability with particular reference to fiction taking into account the dynamic interface of language and culture. In the paper, the problems of (un-)translatability have been seen as resulting from the misreading of cultural signs. Citing examples from the texts which could be read by monolingual/bilingual readers or taught in monolingual / bilingual classrooms, the paper further argues for a comprehensive approach to decoding what lies between the lines and beyond the words of the SL text in question. The paper also explores the 'misunderstandings and conflicts which arise from mistranslation' and can be caused by the author's invisible or visible source text which s/he translates to write the text for the reasons of foregrounding the cultural distinctiveness of a particular community and of appropriating the language as a subversive strategy to reject the political power of the standard language or being motivated by the belief that 'the English text is unable to communicate a *non-English* cultural meaning.'

Introduction:

Toni Morrison uses various synonymic/metonymic variations of the word 'fly' in her novel *Song of Solomon* (1977) which opens with Mr Smith's 'leap from the Cupola' (4) of No Mercy Hospital and ends with its protagonist's giant leap into the air, metaphorically, his attempt to fly into the energizing streams of promise, responsibility and history. Finally,   the narrator's voice brings the novel to an open-ended conclusion: ' For now he knew what Shalimar knew: If you surrendered to the air, you could *ride* it.' (337) The last line of the novel, if read with the epigraph makes some sense yet the problem remains, ' The fathers may soar /And the children may know their names.' The song of Solomon as sung at the time of Mr. Smith's leap from the hospital: *'O Sugarman done fly away'* (8) and again towards the end of the novel as *'Solomon done fly, Solomon done gone'* (303). The translator is 'getting confused' (304) like Milkman, the protagonist of Morrison's novel, after hearing these songs interspersed in the novel through many voices. And the word 'fly' used at numerous places in the novel becomes problematic to the translator   if he does not go beyond the words, in this case of the word 'fly' which is related to the myth of flying African slaves in the history of Afro-American culture. As evident, the problems of cultural untranslatability go beyond the purely linguistic criterion and enters the realm of culture which requires (on the part of the translator) not only the knowledge of linguistic culture of the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL) but also the entire semiotic space of the two cultures in

question (Barthes, 1957, 1964; Baudrillard, 1968, 1970, 1981; Levi-Strauss, 1972; Eco, 1984, 1990; Lotman, 1978, 1990).. This knowledge will prepare a translator for a better understanding of the linguistic and non-linguistic signs as communication codes and their significations in the structural and ideological constructions (Fairclough: 1992) of the discourse types (Hatim and Mason: 1990). A translator, then, in addition to being both bilingual and bicultural is required to pay attention not only to '*what* signs mean' but also to '*how* signs mean', for the process of translation does not only entail 'dynamic' transference or equivalence on the linguistic level but also, more importantly, necessitates 'cultural transposition' to bridge cross-cultural differences.

The element of culture cannot be divorced from the process of translation when translation has emerged as an important field intersecting the boundaries of linguistics, language teaching, semiotics, literature, literary theory and criticism, philosophy, anthropology, mass media, and cyber and digital cultures. This cultural perspective puts the translator in a triangle in which he is a reader, a writer and interpreter. Translation deals with communication and is concerned with the use, interpretation of messages (Gorlée 1994: 189). This paper[1] attempts to offer a cultural perspective of the problems of (un-)translatability in contrast to the purely linguistically-oriented approaches which do not 'go far enough in considering the dynamic nature of language and culture' (Bassnett, [1980], 1991: 33-34), and are now 'generally considered dated and of merely historical interest' (Snell-Hornby, [1988], 1995:15). Illustrations from Yashpal's *Jhutha Sach*, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Naguib Mahfouz's *Al-Harafish*, Bharati Mukherjee's *Desirable Daughters* and Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* have been taken to show the transactions between the mother tongue, the 'other' tongue and the 'invisible source text.'

The interface of language and culture:

The problems of cultural (un-)translatability are related to a translator's understanding of the relationships between language and culture. Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), Sapir (1956), Whorf (1956) and Umberto Eco (1976, 1990) all seem to agree with what Lotman (1978: 211-232) said about the relationship between language and culture:

> No language can exist unless it is steeped in the
> context of culture; and no culture can exist

> which does not have at its centre, the structure of
> natural language.

This fact has been beautifully and emphatically endorsed by Bassnett (1991:14):

> Language, then, is the heart within the body of
> culture, and it is *the interaction between the two*
> that results in the continuation of life-energy. In
> the same way that the surgeon, operating on the
> heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it,
> so, the translator treats the text in isolation from
> the culture at his peril. (Emphasis added)

Referring to the problems of cultural (un-)translatability, Bassnett (1991:32) further remarks that Catford (1995: 102-3) 'seems to typify the problem of an overly narrow approach to the question of untranslatability'. While Mounin (Ibid: 35) 'feels that too much attention has been given to the problem of untranslatability at the expense of solving some of the actual problems that the translation has to deal with', Lawendowski (1978) believes that Catford is 'divorced from reality', and Bassnett (Ibid. 33-34) is of the view that 'because he (Catford) does not go far enough in considering the dynamic nature of language and culture, he invalidates his own category of *cultural untranslatability* and therefore in the process of translation 'a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria must also be considered' (Ibid: 13). Nida (1964:130) opines that the 'differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure'. Nida further argues that this 'complication' may vary in scope depending on the cultural and linguistic gaps between the languages involved.

As evident from the discussion above that there exists a dynamic relationship between culture and language therefore, a translator needs the skill 'to understand what lies in, under and beyond the words' (Bassnett: 2001) of many different languages. It is also evident that 'Translation is an activity which inevitably involves two languages and two cultural traditions' (Toury, 1978:200). A translator therefore should be not only expert 'in the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)' (Catford, I965: 20) but also be knowledgeable about the geographical, religious, social and material culture of the SL and the TL so that 'both his content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible' (Newmark, 1988: 46-47) to the readers of the TL. In absence of this expertise on the part of the translator the semantic and the communicative (Ibid) aspects will be lost in the maze of 'infinite interpretive drift' (Eco, 1990:28).

Interpreting   cultural signs:

A translator's task is more challenging when he has to identify the cultural phenomenon of the both SL and TL. The cultural elements involved can be geographical and environmental, religious, social and material. These can be further subdivided taking into account the subcultural elements of seasons, plants, beliefs, feelings, legends, myths, customs, traditions, dress, food habits, the ways of

greetings and address, the ways of naming and word order between the two languages involved.[2]

While reading Toni Morrison, an Afro - American writer, Bharati Mukherjee, an Asian American writer, Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian writer writing in English, Tayeb Salih and Naguib Mahfouz, famous Arab writers widely translated into English, Yashpal, one of the major Hindi novelists, or translating a piece from Hindi to English or vice-versa I encountered host of words whose translations into the TL remind me time and again that language, an essential constituent of a culture and society, also reflects the impact of geography and environment on both the SL and the TL. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* such lexical items as 'harmattan' ('…Okonkowo's fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan' p 3), 'kola nut', 'yam' ('Yam, the king of crops, was a man's crops' p 21 or 'He grew like a yam tendril in the rainy season' p 47), which related to the environment of Western Africa have become the part of the familiar vocabulary through their inclusion in the English language and therefore they do not need to be translated. Secondly, their translation into another language will diminish the flavour of the original SL text. On the other hand, there are other lexical items pertaining to religious and social behavior of the Igbo community which have been provided with alternative words in English to avoid lack of communication gap between the reader and the message. The editor has explained the word related to religion like 'chi' used by Achebe in his novel *Things Fall Apart* in a glossary as 'personal god'. In order to understand the narrative perspective the translator should be aware of the role of the writer by capturing the witnessing voice of the narrator. This is possible only when the translator has the knowledge of cultural, historical and literary histories of Africa in general and of Nigeria in particular. Similar strategies can be followed in translating character names idioms, proverbs, myths and legends from the SL text to the TL text.[3]

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2 I would like to refer to Edwin Gentzler's appreciative comments (in his paper "Translation Studies and Academic Allies", for the bibliographic details see below in the Works Cited.) on the scholars who have taken the "fictional turn" in translation studies. According to him, 'which involves reading works by particular ethnic-American writers and dissecting the transnational aspects of the texts, which are often strikingly apparent… While writers such as Toni Morrison, Maxine Hong Kingston, Chang-Rae Lee, Rudolpho Anaya, Leslie Marmon Silko, and other increasingly popular writers, may write in English, the texts are overloaded (over-determined) by both overt and covert translational practices. Their texts may include conversations with grandparents/*abuelos* recorded in English, but which clearly took place in a different language, as well as stories, myths, songs, and beliefs that were "translated" from other cultures and that contribute so much of the mystery or so-called "magic" to these texts. In addition, almost all these works introduce bilingual lexical terms and stage the misunderstandings and conflicts that arise from mistranslation, making translation studies crucial to understanding how these texts operate'(2006:25). I think these remarks are equally applicable to the texts like Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* which are replete with proverbs, songs, folktales, myths, and beliefs of other cultures.

3 In the paper cited above Edwin Gentzler makes an important point in this connection. He says,' " In "Post-colonial writing and Literary Translation," for example Maria Tymoczko has argued that the many of the features of postcolonial, hybrid fiction and those of translation are much the same (1999:25-25). Food, tools, garments, customs, laws, plants, animals, and many lexical and semantic items, from both ethnic American cultures and source text translation cultures are often unfamiliar to an English-only audience. The strategies that translators use, according to Tymoczko, are surprisingly analogous to the writing strategies used by ethnic-American and postcolonial writers. These common strategies, argues Tymoczko, serve to introduce new formal resources, thereby revitalizing languages and creating openings for new kinds of imagery. …I suggest that this phenomenon needs to be studied more: not only can approaches developed in translation study *help unpack the often subtle and hidden bi-cultural meanings of such texts*, they can also underscore the crucial importance of literary translation to the evolution and revitalization of any literary system'(26). (Emphasis added)

However, there are some lexical items related to the geographical culture of a place, which are problematic if there is a word for word translation even if the lexical equivalents are present in the TL. This is because their semantic universe is not open to the connotative effect they will have on the TL reader. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* like Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* draws heavily on the language of his mother tongue in trying to foreground the cultural distinctiveness of a community which is in a state of turmoil due to its contacts with the culture of the colonizer. Hence the use of the indigenous terms for the seasons such as 'Kartik', and 'Vaisakh' and their impact on the simple living of the villagers of Kanthapura . A translator needs to decipher the meaning so these native names of the seasons taking into account the colonial and postconial overtones with which the text is packed with. A somewhat related problem is the Arabic or Hindi translations of the word 'summer' in the second and the first lines in Shakespeare's Sonnets Nos. 6, and 18 respectively: 'Then let not winter's ragged hand deface/In thee thy <u>summer </u>ere thou be distilled:' and "Shall I compare thee to a <u>summer's</u> day? /Thou are more lovely and more temperate:' will not match with the readers' perception of the summer season (whose 'more lovely and more temperate' season is spring) unlike the readers who inhabit the different climatic zone where summer is 'more lovely and more temperate'. Here the problem of cultural untranslatability raises some questions, which make the work of a translator both 'baffling and fascinating'. Firstly, does it not invalidate, in such cases, the inclusion of 'shared assumptions' being brought into the translation process, particularly in Machine Translation? Secondly, does it not impinge on the concept of 'internationalism', which advocates for a process of translation that diminishes the cross-cultural boundaries instead of maintaining/strengthening them? Two linguistic or cultural systems that cannot be mutually translated are divided by a boundary, a region of indeterminacy, which then can be crossed and maintained by interpretation.

   The problems of translation take different *turns* when the source text language is not the mother tongue of the writer, on the other hand it is the 'other' tongue, the language of his/her 'intellectual make-up' not the language of his 'emotional make-up' (Rao, 'Foreword': v). Chinua Achebe, Raja Rao and Bharati Mukherjee are such writers who choose to write in English rather than in their mother tongues. And when the writers like 'Toni Morrison, Maxine Hong Kingston, Chang-Rae Lee, Rudolpho Anaya, Leslie Marmon Silko, and other increasingly popular writers' (see Gentzler 2006:25-26) write their 'texts' (not only the works of fiction) in English they also translate the cultural codes of the language of their 'emotional make-up' into English. And this poses the problems of translation for the translator in capturing the 'subtle and hidden bi-cultural meanings of such texts' (Ibid). Translation has other dimensions when a text is read by the readers other than the language the text is originally written in and translated into another language and taught in the situations which can be monocultural, bi-cultural or even multicultural. For instance, a reader from India whose mother tongue is neither English nor Arabic or from the English speaking world whose mother tongue is English, is reading a novel originally written in Arabic and translated into English. In a class-room situation translation acquires some other significant dimensions when a teacher whose mother tongue is not the mother tongue of the writer nor

those of his students . For example, a teacher (whose mother tongue is neither English nor Arabic is teaching Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* to those whose mother tongue is Arabic and English is for them a foreign/second language. Toni Morrison, born and brought up in America, writes in English, certainly is the language of her 'intellectual make-up ', what about the language of her ' emotional make-up?' Her 'works introduce bilingual lexical terms and stage the misunderstandings and conflicts that arise from mistranslation, making translation studies crucial to understanding how these texts operate'(Gentzler 2006:25). Obviously, these texts reflect translation practices which 'clearly take place in a different language' (Ibid). What is that language? Is that the language of their visible or invisible source text? Is that the language of their 'emotional make-up' in the sense Raja Rao uses it? Then this visible or invisible source text needs to be decoded during reading the texts or teaching them. The flying motif and the song of Solomon along with many other examples are such sub-texts within the text of Morrison's *Song of Solomon* the cultural meanings of which need to be deciphered.

Likewise in Raja Rao's novel *Kanthapura* expressions like *Harikathas* (p 8), *Swaraja too is three-eyed* in 'Siva is three-eyed,' he says , 'and Swaraja too is three-eyed: Self-purification, Hindu-Moslem unity, Khaddar.'(p 10), *sahib* in ' And the old *Sahib* is dead, and the new one…. He is not a bad man, the new *Sahib*.' (p 59) would be difficult to be translated without knowing the sociocultural and political contexts in which they occur. While teaching[4] this novel to the Arab students of English in a course on Comparative Literature I encountered difficulties in translating these expressions into English and making the students understand the cultural significance of these expressions in the thematic structure of the novel. A quite interesting problem is posed by the word *sahib* which means in Arabic 'friend' or 'the owner/master of something.' The expression *pukka sahib* poses similar problems for the non-Urdu/Hindi readers of Forster's *A Passage to India*. Again, it is problematic for the Arabic readers when they try to equate it with the more common meaning of the word sahib as 'friend.' In the Hindi/Urdu colloquial expressions such as 'professor sahib', 'doctor sahib', 'engineer sahib' etc. the meaning is closer to the connotations of a 'gentleman' not 'friend' (see Tulloch Ed. *The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus*, 1997:1357). The meanings of these expressions depend on the translator's knowledge of the sociocultural background of the region where these expressions are used. Besides, to understand the meanings of the expressions used by Raja Rao in *Kanthapura*   it is important to know the

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4 I would like to refer once again to Edwin Gentzler's comments in the same paper cited above   which he makes in connection with Samia Mehrez's arguments in "Translation and the Postcolonial Text: The Francophone North African Text" (1992) as to how 'much of the author's intended meaning is only decipherable by the bilingual reader, who automatically and often subconsciously translates while reading the text. If there is a translation process ongoing, either by the author or by the reader, then translation studies scholars need to be closely involved in the study and teaching of such texts' (26).These comments, which are also relevant in the context of Achebe's and Rao's novels which are important postcolonial texts, will certainly help the scholars working in the field   'build a truly comprehensive and inclusive discipline of translation studies that can adapt to the changing nature of the academy'(40).

context in which this novel has been written. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is an attempt to 'rewrite' the history (as also in the case of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* the story is unfolded through the point of view of the colonized people) of the Indian national upsurge inspired by Gandhi's ideas and personality in the form of 'a rich *sthala-purana*' or the legendary history of a place (Rao, 'Foreword': v). The English language, in the novel, has been used 'to adapt the colonial language to local needs' and as a way of ' far more subtle rejection of the political power of the standard language' (Ashcroft. et al. [1995], 2003: 284). This is why; the words and expressions of the Indian languages have been employed in the narrative.

Mukherjee's *Desirable Daughters* is also a kind of *sthala-purana*, a legendary story of the bride of Mishtigunj town in Dhaka which spreads out to and mingles with the story of the female protagonist Tara who lives 'in a part of San Francisco called Upper Haight' (24). The cultural codes of Bengali, the language of the 'emotional make-up' of the writer are rendered as '*"bhadra lok", the gentlefolk, the "civilized" folk, for whom the English fashioned the pejorative term "babu", with its hint of fawning insincerity and slavishly acquired Western attitudes,' ' biye-bari, a wedding house*' (7) '*ghar-jalani, a woman-who-brings-misfortune-and-death-to-her-family*', '*gauri-daan, the giving-of-virgin-bride-as-a-gift ritual'* (15) and *'bishey bish khai,the,* only antidote for poison is poison' (304) obviously keeping in mind an audience whose mother tongue is not Bengali. The misunderstanding that will arise from the author's translation and explanation of the word 'babu' as a 'pejorative term' as the narrator informs us and with the connotation of respect as one of the connotations the word as can be inferred by in the author's dedication of the novel to her husband ' To Clark-*babu.* ' needs to be resolved by a translator. The mother tongue expressions used in the text such as 'bhadra lok', 'babu', 'biye bari', 'ghar-jalani', and 'gauri-daan' are some cases in point which needs to be translated beyond their linguistic values so that their connections with the thematic structure of the novel can be established. In the process the *'two-dimensional world'*(3) could be successfully linked with the *'consciousness'* (5) of the author-ptotagonist-narrator's complex interrelationships with the New World in the shaping of which the culture of an immigrant subject living between two worlds plays a significant role. Likewise, certain food items are related to certain auras of festivity that their translation into the TL text will lose their original flavour. For example, in Yashpal's *Jhutha Sach* (1958-60) the people are celebrating the declaration of independence at midnight of 14 August 1947 and

> At the New Club, preparations were being made for a grand dinner in the night of 14th August. On this gala occasion, all the members were invited with their families and friends with a request to each of them to cooperate by preparing a special dish for all…
> Kanak was also helping her sister Kanta to prepare *dahi-baras* but her mind was restless.
> (Trans. mine *The Unreal Truth* 365)

The Indian food item that was being prepared called 'dahi-baras' is difficult to be translated into English with the same connotations of celebration and festivity. If a translator is able to decode the meaning potential of these expressions as cultural codes, then only he is a successful translator.

   Mahfouz's *The Harafish* (1977, Eng Trans. 1994) as the title of the English translation (see Crystal 1995: 141 for the study of social and psychological implications in personal names and place names) needs to be explained so that its social and historical meaning can be driven home to its non-Arabic readers. Explaining the meaning of the word 'harafish' the translator, Catherine Cobham writes:

> The historical meaning of *harafish* is the rabble
> or riffraff. In the novel it means the common
> people in a positive sense, those in menial jobs,
> casual workers, and the unemployed and the
> homeless. (Translator's Note)

On the other hand, Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (Originally in Arabic *Mausim al-hijra ila al-Shimal* 1969), Zayd Mutee Dammaj's *Ar-Rahina* (1984) translated into English as *The Hostage* and in Hindi as *Bandhak*, and Yashpal's *Jhutha Sach* (Trans. English *The Unreal Truth*) do not pose serious problems for the translators. In most of the cases the titles of the books defy translation consequently, they do not have the same suggestive and evocative value in the TL, in such a case, explanatory notes should be added or the translator takes the liberty to rename the book closely following the thematic threads as in the case of the title of Mahfouz's *Bayn al-Qasrayn* (1956) which has been translated into English as *Palace Walk*. The problematic of this point can be further illustrated with regard to Achebe's title of the novel *Things Fall Apart* which is taken from Yeats's poem "The Second Coming." Is it possible to translate this phrase successfully into another language without taking into account the whole range of Yeats's fascination for the occult, magic, and spirituality which have important associations with Achebe's novel? Then, is translation process only an exercise in searching for linguistic equivalences? Such questions make us feel that translation is a 'process' in the real sense of the term; it never gets completed. It has been remarkably well said that it is like a painting that is abandoned. I would like to add something here to add positive connotation to the word 'abandoned'. It is like a painting that is abandoned for the time being to be 'done' again with the refined shades of cultural connotations to avoid the dangers of 'overtranslation' and 'undertranslation' enriching the texture of colours; facilitating communication with footnotes and glossary.

   Coming back again to Mahfouz's *The Harafish*, a 'clan chief' is known by his 'signs' of a donkey-cart, a wooden stick, physical strength and moral prowess to resist the temptations of wealth and a life of ease offered by the 'notables' of society. Asur al-Nagi and his son Shams al-Din live and die by these sociocultural codes. On the other hand, Shams al-Din's son Sulayman Shams al-Din al-Nagi marries into the upper class and makes 'A holy alliance of power and prestige' (p

105) as ironically commented by Sheikh Said. Sulayman's marriage differentiates him socially and culturally from his clan in terms of prestige, rank, and social standing. At the same time it alienates him from his original society, his first wife, his children from his first wife, his friends and after his illness even from his second wife. Language, culture and the norms of society change; new sign system appears, the old signs disappear. The concept of culture is situated in/refers to an intellectual, psychological, and sociological space in the mind of the human beings. A 'text' is a space in which language(s) and culture converge dynamically. The act of Sulayman's marriage into the al-Samari family needs to accompany other acts of sociocultural differentiation such as replacing the donkey-cart with a carriage, owning a shop with an office, sending children to schools for getting education and wearing dresses made of fine clothes. Now his needs are not natural, they are cultural. The cultural codes control the semantic universe of a society. A translator's task is to enter the semantic universe of the cultural codes of the SL text and to choose the appropriate meaning potential of the linguistic signs through an analysis of the text. The approach to decoding what lies between the lines and beyond the words is based[5] on the assumptions that: a) 'every thought is a sign' (Peirce cited in Chandler, [1994], 2003), and b) any cultural identity is expressed in 'signs' and therefore are 'identity demarcations' (Askegaard, 1991: cited in Bezuidenhout: 1997).

Evidently, a text is a sociocultural event therefore; it cannot be viewed in a vacuum. The food item mentioned in the passage from Yashpal cited above is an integral part of the sociocultural background of a particular area and therefore expresses that particular moment in the history of its people. Its original name is retained because the English translation will not be able to convey its sociocultural semantic value in the text therefore the existence of the 'untranslatables' for the signs in one culture might not exist in the TL or can express different significations. Similarly, Mahfouz's title of the novel *The Harafish* poses problems of translation for the same reason because the same words and concepts do not necessarily exist in the culture of the TL and furthermore might create cultural gaps in communication of the translated text. The proper understanding of function and value of a linguistic 'sign' in a cultural context will be reached only after we locate the 'relationship between signs and what they stand for… and those who use them' (Bassnett, 1991:27).

5The role of signs and their significations in the process of translation have also been pointed out by other theorists like Roman Jakobson (1959) as 'Intersemiotic translation'/ 'semiotic transposition' and again by Georges Mounin (1963) who perceives translation as a series of operations of which the starting point and the end product are significations and function within a given culture (cited in Bassnett 1991: 14-15). Saussure's dyadic classification (Culler: 1976; Harris: 1987; Thibault: 1997; Chandler: [1994], 2003) of the 'sign' which does not include referential context and the communication situation of the language user has been extended by Peircean semiotics which offers a wider scope within which translation and semiotics can be put together. Translation is an ongoing process of endless semiosis and goes beyond the linguistic domain by virtue of including non-verbal signs. Therefore, recent researches in this field have shown that it has extended Saussure's linguistic structuralism into other realms of myth, fashion, media, politics and religion and is in the process of being further extended into a poststructuralist stance of 'situated social semiotics' (Jensen 1995: 57).

Conclusion:

No semiotic form, material entity or event, text, or action has meaning in and of itself. The meanings these have are made in and through the social meaning-making practices which construct semiotic relations among forms, material processes and entities, and social actions. A given community or subcommunity has regular and repeatable patterns of meaning-making. These are the patterns which are typical of that community. They help to define and constitute the community, as well as to distinguish it from other communities.   Thus the perception that the TL and the SL texts exist in a space with   signs which manifest their meanings   through an interface of language and culture offers an important insight. This might perhaps be a comprehensive approach to resisting 'deceptive equivalence' in the process of translation stressing the role of cultural context in shaping meaning aiming at communication, use and interpretation of messages.

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